



Leading Innovations through New Collaborations



Metro South
Health



Queensland
Government



2021 Funding Guidelines

LINC Grant – \$50,000 for two years (eight grants available)

More information & Funding Guideline: <https://www.tri.edu.au/LINC>

Grant Application:: <https://metrosouth.smartygrants.com.au/>

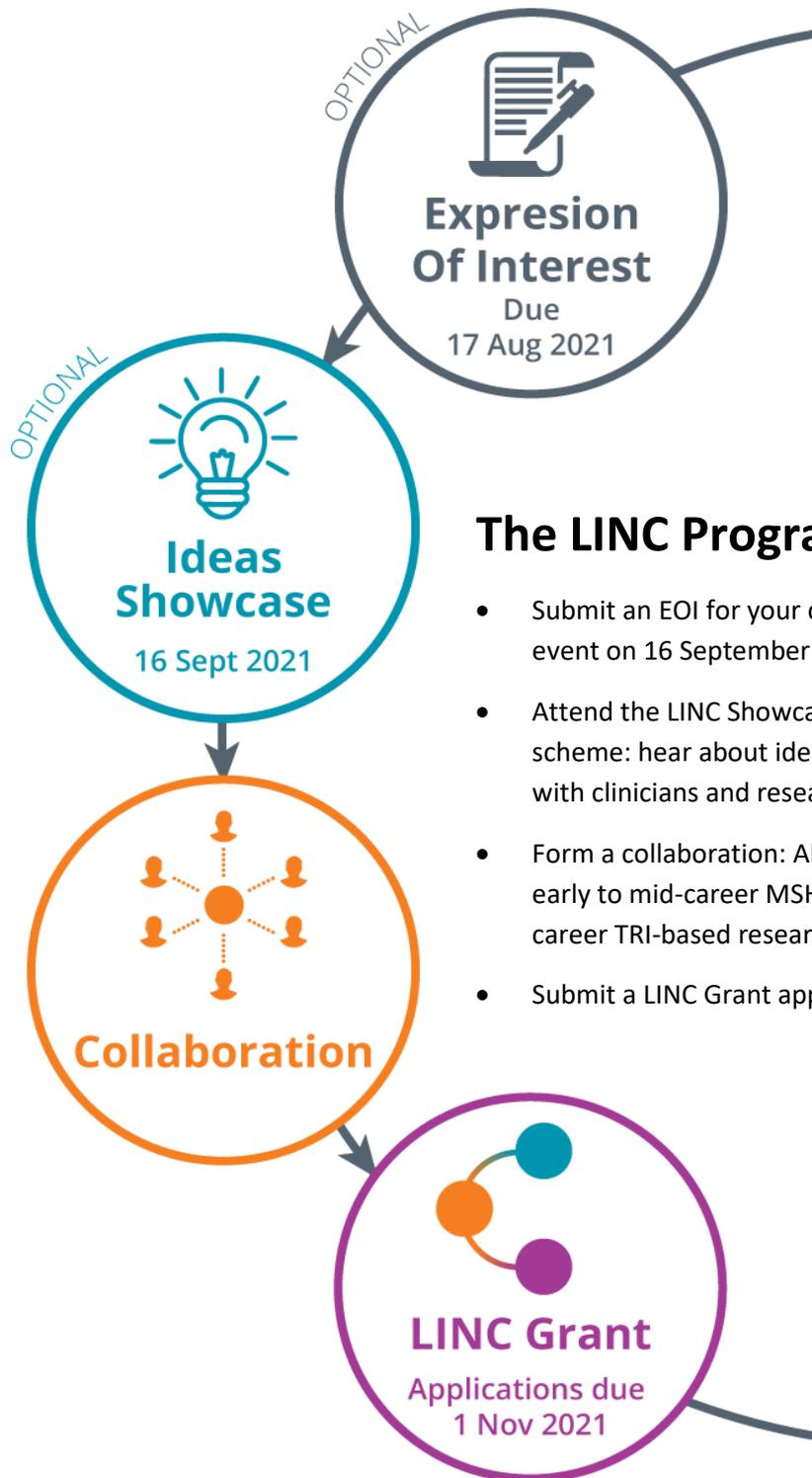
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CONTENTS

1.	LINC SCHEME INTRODUCTION & HIGHLIGHTS	4
2.	OBJECTIVES	5
2.1	Research Collaboration & Capacity Building	5
2.2	Driving Translational Research	5
3.	FUNDING BODIES	5
4.	LINC SCHEME OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT	5
5.	SHOWCASE EVENT	6
5.1	Showcase Presentation Expression of Interest Timeframe	6
5.2	Expression of Interest form	6
5.3	EOI Review	6
5.4	Showcase Program	6
5.5	Showcase presentations	7
5.6	Attending the Showcase	7
6.	2021 LINC GRANT SCHEME OVERVIEW	7
6.1	Eligibility: Principal Investigators (PI)	7
6.2	Mentors and Co-Investigators	7
6.3	Research Project	8
7.	LINC GRANT APPLICATION PROCESS	8
7.1	Application Timeframe	8
7.2	Application Form	8
7.3	General Instructions	9
8.	EVALUATION PANEL	10
8.1	Initial Assessment for Eligibility	10
8.2	Confidentiality	10
9.	EVALUATION CRITERIA AND WEIGHTING	10
9.1	Scoring	10
9.2	Evaluation Criteria	11
10.	RANKING AND RECOMMENDATION	11
10.1	Awarding of Grants	12
10.2	Feedback & Issues/Disputes	12
10.3	Milestone reporting	12
11.	DISBURSEMENT OF GRANT FUNDING	12
12.	INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY	13
13.	ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	13
	Certification Page	14



The LINC Program at a glance

- Submit an EOI for your chance to present at the LINC Showcase event on 16 September.
- Attend the LINC Showcase for the launch of the LINC grant scheme: hear about ideas for research projects and network with clinicians and researchers.
- Form a collaboration: All LINC-funded projects must have an early to mid-career MSH or Mater clinician and an early to mid-career TRI-based research as joint PIs.
- Submit a LINC Grant application by 1 November 2021.

1. LINC SCHEME INTRODUCTION & HIGHLIGHTS

Welcome to the inaugural LINC Scheme, a joint initiative of the Translational Research Institute (TRI), Metro South Health (MSH) and Mater to support high quality, new, collaborative research projects with clinical translational potential.

Launched in 2021, the Scheme awards matched funding from TRI and Metro South Health Study, Education and Research Trust Account (SERTA) or from TRI and Mater. Up to eight (8) grants of up to \$50,000 are on offer for 2022: Five (5) grants are available to TRI-MSH collaborations and three (3) to TRI-Mater collaborations.

Through this program, our core aims are to:

- i. Foster research projects with a novel, potentially translatable clinical outcome
- ii. Create long-term, collaborative partnerships between early to mid-career researchers (EMCRs) based at TRI and early to mid-career clinicians from MSH and Mater, and to generate pilot data along with a joint research track-record.

An opportunity to present potential collaborative research projects/ clinical dilemmas, as well as network and form research partnerships will be provided through the LINC Showcase event. All researchers interested in the LINC Scheme are encouraged to enter an EOI to present their (1) research ideas requiring clinical input and (2) clinical questions needing research collaborations at this event.

The LINC Scheme in summary

Funding amount and purpose

Up to \$50,000 for two years

Pilot funding for developing an innovative, collaborative research project focused on meeting a clinical need as well as obtaining preliminary proof-of-concept data. Must be led jointly by an early to mid-career researcher based at the TRI and an early to mid-career clinician employed by MSH or Mater.

Important dates for the 2021 LINC Scheme

Date (2021)	Actions
18 July 2021	LINC Showcase EOIs open
17 August 2021	Showcase EOIs close
24 August 2021	Successful EOIs announced
16 September 2021	LINC Showcase & networking event
17 September 2021	LINC Scheme opens
1 November 2021	LINC Scheme applications close at 5:00pm AEST
Mid-November- Early December 2021	Peer-review of submitted applications
17 December 2021	Announcement of funding outcomes
28 January 2022	Signed Conditions of Award & Certification forms due
11 February 2022	Completed Grant payment Request form due
9 February 2024	Final Report due <i>[final milestone payment linked to the report]</i>
12 April 2024	Due date for expenditure of grant funding

2. OBJECTIVES

The LINC scheme aims to foster new, collaborative research projects between early to mid-career researchers based at TRI and early to mid-career clinicians employed by MSH or Mater. The scheme is designed to provide funding over two years to establish a new collaboration, develop clinically relevant projects and obtain preliminary research data. The Scheme's key objectives are:

2.1 Research Collaboration & Capacity Building

- 2.1.1 Foster new, genuine, long-term, independent and self-directed research collaborations between MSH and Mater clinicians and TRI-based researchers from its partner organisations: The University of Queensland, Queensland University of Technology, Mater Research, and Queensland Health.
- 2.1.2 Build high-quality research capacity between MSH and Mater early to mid-career clinicians and TRI-based early to mid-career scientists.
- 2.1.3 Nurture research capability in early to mid-career clinicians from MSH and Mater and early to mid-career researchers based at TRI.

2.2 Driving Translational Research

- 2.2.1 Foster new, quality research projects addressing clinical, disease, treatment or consumer-led issues. The projects may challenge or build upon existing understandings, systems, paradigms or assumptions and/or open up entirely new lines of investigation.
- 2.2.3 All projects will have the potential to generate new knowledge to help prevent, improve diagnosis and treat or improve the delivery of health care for health conditions in the community. They will have the potential to be translated into health care policy or clinical practice.

3. FUNDING BODIES

The LINC Scheme is supported with by three (3) funding bodies:

- Translational Research Institute Pty Ltd as trustee of the Translational Research Institute Trust ("TRI")
- Metro South Health Study, Education, and Research Trust Account ("SERTA")
- Mater Research Ltd

The award of research funds is governed by the regulations associated with each funding body that decide the type and number of grants they support and the level of funding to be provided. Each grant comprises matched funding from either TRI and SERTA or TRI and Mater.

4. LINC SCHEME OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT

TRI, MSH and Mater will work together to manage the LINC Showcase, grant application and assessment process, offers of grants, and reporting/evaluation processes. The LINC Scheme grant application and assessment processes will be in accordance with these Funding Guidelines as well as the Metro South Health Research Management and Mater Research policy and procedures, which can be accessed at:

- <https://metrosouth.health.qld.gov.au/research/about-us/policies-and-procedures>
- <https://www.materresearch.org.au/Researchers/For-researchers/Ethics-and-Governance/Mater-Policies-and-Fees>

5. SHOWCASE EVENT

TRI will host a Showcase event prior to the opening of the LINC scheme. The Showcase event will be held at the TRI Auditorium on Thursday 16 September from 4:00-7:00pm, including a networking function with cocktail food and drinks served in the TRI Atrium.

The purpose of this event is to allow MSH and Mater clinicians and TRI-based researchers the opportunity to present potential collaborative research opportunities, for example:

- clinical dilemmas that require both a clinical and based research effort to solve
- research projects that require clinical input to progress.

Please note: Presenting at the Showcase is *not* a prerequisite for applying for the LINC scheme. Clinicians and researchers who do not present at the Showcase may still be eligible to submit a LINC Scheme grant application.

5.1 Showcase Presentation Expression of Interest Timeframe

EOIs open:	5:00pm AEST, 18 July 2021
EOIs close	5:00pm AEST, 17 August 2021
Successful EOIs announced	24 August 2021
Event:	4:00-7:00pm, Thursday 16 September 2021

5.2 Expression of Interest form

- MSH and Mater clinicians and TRI-based researchers are invited to submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) form to present at the LINC Showcase.
- The Showcase EOI application must be submitted using SmartyGrants at:
https://metrosouth.smartygrants.com.au/2021_TRI_LINC_EOI
- EOI applicants must be a registered SmartyGrants user (the proposed speaker can nominate someone to submit the EOI on SmartyGrants).

5.3 EOI Review

- An internal panel comprised of TRI, MSH and Mater representatives will review EOIs. The decision of the panel is final.
- Successful applicants will be notified by email on 24 August 2021.
- Unsuccessful applicants are encouraged to attend the Showcase event and take advantage of the opportunity to network with other researchers.

5.4 Showcase Program

Irrespective of whether clinicians/researchers are selected to present at the Showcase, *all* EOIs will be included in the event program.

5.5 Showcase presentations

- Successful Showcase presenters will be allowed up to seven minutes to present and a further five minutes to answer audience questions. Presenters are encouraged to provide a high-level overview of an area in which they would like to pursue a research collaboration.
- At no point should presenters share any information that is confidential, and for which intellectual property protection may be sought in the future.
- At no point should presenters share any information that may be constituted as disclosure of unprotected intellectual property.
- PowerPoint slides can be used. They must be submitted to TRI prior to the Showcase event.
- The Showcase event will also include presentations also from scientists and clinicians who are already involved in successful collaborations.

5.6 Attending the Showcase

All MSH and Mater clinicians and TRI-based researchers are invited to attend the Showcase event. Tickets will be available at no charge via Eventbrite: <https://lincshowcase2021.eventbrite.com.au>

6. 2021 LINC GRANT SCHEME OVERVIEW

All grant applications for the LINC grant scheme must demonstrate the components outlined in 6.1 to 6.3.

6.1 Eligibility: Principal Investigators (PI)

A LINC grant application requires two equal Principal Investigators. Both PIs must be at an early to mid-career level.

The **PI A** will hold a clinical appointment (of any clinical discipline e.g.: doctor, nurse, allied health professional, etc.) with MSH or Mater, and will have an interest in research. The applicant will be an early or mid-career clinician (relative to opportunity). If PI A (as determined by the grant assessment panel) has a significant research track-record or are greater than 15 years post their clinical qualification they will not be considered as an early or mid-career clinician.

The **PI B** must be employed by a TRI partner institution (The University of Queensland, Mater Research Ltd, Queensland University of Technology, Queensland Health) and be based at TRI at least 20% of their time. PI B must be an early to mid-career researcher within their first 10 years (relative to opportunity) of academic or other research-related employment, following completion of postgraduate research training.

6.2 Mentors and Co-Investigators

PI A and PI B must each include a Co-Investigator who is able to provide a mentoring role for the duration of the project:

- The mentor for PI A must be an experienced clinician.

- The mentor for PI B must be an experienced researcher with a track-record in designing and implementing translational research.

Both mentors must be:

- willing and have the capacity to provide expert guidance for the duration of the project
- employed by MSH, Mater or TRI respectively or external to MSH or Mater if the field of research determines the expertise lies outside both organisations.

Please note: additional Co-Investigators who are not mentors and Associate Investigators can be named in the grant application.

6.3 Research Project

The LINC grant scheme is designed to foster new collaborations between clinicians and researchers and the development of a new research project. For this reason, the LINC grant application requires applicants to include only an outline of a potential collaborative research project. The project outline will be assessed against the criteria outlined in *Section 9* of these Funding Guidelines.

7. LINC GRANT APPLICATION PROCESS

7.1 Application Timeframe

LINC Scheme

Opens:	5:00pm AEST, Friday 17 September 2021
Closes:	5:00pm AEST, Monday 1 November 2021
Application review:	Mid-November- Early December 2021
Grants announced:	17 December 2021

7.2 Application Form

The LINC scheme grant application must be prepared using SmartyGrants at:

https://metrosouth.smartygrants.com.au/2021_TRI_LINC_grant.

Applicants must be a registered SmartyGrants user (the PI can nominate someone to submit the application on SmartyGrants).

7.2.1 Certification Page

The certification page, page 13 of these Funding Guidelines, must be uploaded as part of the SmartyGrants application:

- The Head of Department (HoD) at MSH or Mater and the TRI Partner Group Leader/Program Leader is required to sign the certification page. Allow sufficient time to gain these signatures, or escalation of the signature if the HoD/Leader is involved in the research
- The Mentors are required to sign the certification page.

7.2.2 Submission of Application

Applications must be submitted online via the MSH SmartyGrants site (<https://metrosouth.smartygrants.com.au/>):

- no later than 5:00pm Monday 1st November 2021
- late submissions will not be accepted
- hand delivered applications will not be accepted
- email applications will not be accepted.

7.3 General Instructions

- 7.3.1 Applicants seeking to participate in the LINC grant scheme must comply with these Funding Guidelines, instructions on the Application Forms, and with MSH or Mater Research policies and procedures located at:
- <http://metrosouth.health.qld.gov.au/rss> and <https://metrosouth.health.qld.gov.au/research/about-us/policies-and-procedures>
 - <https://www.materresearch.org.au/Researchers/For-researchers/Ethics-and-Governance/Mater-Policies-and-Fees>.
- 7.3.2 The applicant listed in the SmartyGrants application must be the PI A, however, PI A may wish to delegate the completion of the application to PI B or other members of the research team.
- 7.3.3 A PI may submit multiple applications, but a maximum of one (1) grant will be awarded to any individual PI A or PI B.
- 7.3.4 TRI, MSH and Mater actively discourage the practice of experienced researchers making multiple applications in the names of dependent researchers.
- 7.3.5 There is no limit on the number of Co-Investigators or Associate Investigators applicants can name.
- 7.3.6 When preparing the research proposal, Applicants must adhere to the formatting requirements specified in the application form. This includes font size/type, line spacing and page margins. Research proposals that do not comply with formatting requirements may be withdrawn from assessment.
- 7.3.7 All details in the application must be current and accurate at the time of submission.
- 7.3.8 All applications will be assessed for completeness and eligibility prior to review. TRI, MSH and Mater may remove at their discretion applications, which are incomplete, ineligible, not consistent with the guidelines, or non-competitive.
- 7.3.9 Once submitted, the application will be considered final and no changes will be permitted.

- 7.3.10 Metro South Health, Mater and TRI will not duplicate funding. You will not be eligible for the LINC Scheme if your project has been funded by any other funding body or is subsequently awarded funding prior to the announcement of the LINC Scheme recipients.

8. EVALUATION PANEL

TRI, MSH and Mater will assemble a peer-review panel to assess LINC scheme applications, for recommending fundable grant applications. The Review Panel will be comprised of representatives appointed by MSH, TRI, and Mater as well as independent members.

All members will be assigned to applications in which they have declared that they are without conflict of interest. Conflict of Interest is managed in consultation with an independent Probity Advisor and according to the Metro South *Research Management - Research Integrity Procedure* and *Research Management – MSH Research Support Scheme Procedure*. The Panel will have a designated Panel Lead, who will act as Spokesperson on behalf of the panel at the Grants Recommendation Meeting.

8.1 Initial Assessment for Eligibility

A nominated MSH Research, Mater Research and TRI representative will undertake an initial administrative assessment of eligibility.

8.2 Confidentiality

All details of a funding application and associated materials will remain confidential upon receipt by TRI, MSH and Mater. The review panel members agree to keep all details of applications confidential. Outcomes of applications may only be discussed with named investigators. Proposed funding outcomes will remain confidential until approved. Membership of the review panel will not be disclosed to applicants.

9. EVALUATION CRITERIA AND WEIGHTING

9.1 Scoring

Each of the Evaluation Criteria will be scored on a scale of 1 to 7, where:

1 = No evidence

2 = Unsatisfactory

3 = Fair

4 = Good

5 = Very Good

6 = Excellent

7 = Outstanding by national standards.

9.2 Evaluation Criteria

The LINC grant applications will be assessed against six (6) Evaluation Criteria:

1 35%	2 25%	3 15%	5 15%	6 10%
Collaborative potential (Score 1 to 7)	Clinical/Public health significance (Score 1 to 7)	Project feasibility (Score 1 to 7)	Translation potential (Score 1 to 7)	Justification of budget (Score 1 to 7)
It is a new collaboration	Does the project have clinical or public health relevance?	Clearly articulated outline for a scientifically sound project?	Does this project have the potential to change clinical practice, healthcare policy or service delivery?	To what extent is the budget justified, appropriate and able to be managed?
Each PI can appropriately contribute to their field of research relevant to the proposed research	Will it address the burden of disease or clinical issue of importance or consumer identified need?	Acknowledgement of potential risks and barriers to the project being developed	Is there a concept for a 'product'* which will address an unmet or poorly met healthcare issue?	
Nominated mentors have ability and capacity to support EMCRs	Does it have the potential to progress clinical or public health outcomes through new ideas/diagnosis/ procedures/ technologies/ programs/health policy? Will it progress clinical knowledge (originality)?	Thought put into potential design and methodology to achieve preliminary proof-of-principle data Is it likely the project design can be completed in Year 1? Is it likely that the ethics approval & governance authorisation plus the pilot study can be completed within the second year?	Is the 'product' novel or are there competitors? Is there a point of market difference? Is there any understanding of the market for the 'product'? Has there been consumer consultation/ clear articulation of the end consumer and how they will benefit?	

* Product can refer to a diagnostic test, device, therapeutic, new clinical procedure, new treatment regimen/drug combination, policy

10. RANKING AND RECOMMENDATION

Applications are scored according to the Evaluation Criteria and ranked in order of merit. Scores will reflect the relative strength of the application in terms of how well it addresses and meets the criteria. All applications will be determined to be fundable or otherwise. At any time, an application may be considered not for funding if alignment with the TRI, MSH and Mater objectives has not been demonstrated.

The merit of applications will be discussed by the Review Panel at a Grants Recommendation Meeting in November 2021.

In the event that multiple applications obtain equal scores, the Review Panel will determine a ranking and order of merit, based on assessment by members present.

10.1 Awarding of Grants

Recommendations for funding will be considered by the authorised delegates of MSH, TRI and Mater, who will make the final decision on the award of grants. The decision of the authorised delegates is final.

Award of grants will be via a letter of offer, accompanied by grant conditions.

Prospective grant recipients will be required to accept the offer and conditions in writing by the date identified in the grant award letter. Failure to provide written acceptance of the grant by the due date may result in forfeiture of the grant offer.

In the event that a grant cannot be awarded to, or accepted by the initial recommended applicant, the grant may be awarded to the next ranked application eligible for a particular grant on the order of merit, at the sole discretion of the authorised delegates of MSH, TRI and Mater. None of MSH, TRI or Mater are obliged to award the maximum number of grants available.

10.2 Feedback & Issues/Disputes

Feedback on the LINC scheme processes or outcomes should be directed to the TRI Communication and Stakeholder Engagement Manager (funding@tri.edu.au) in the first instance. Issues and concerns will be managed in consultation with an independent Probity Advisor.

10.3 Milestone reporting

Two milestone reports are required:

Milestone 1: A research plan must be submitted for a scientifically sound, collaborative research project, which has ethics approval and governance authorisation at the end of the first year of funding as designated in the grant Terms and Conditions.

Milestone 2: A final report is required within three (3) months of the end of the grant period. A final report template will be provided by TRI.

A delegated TRI representative will review both Milestone reports. Failure to submit either report and adequately meet the reporting requirements may result in the rescinding of the grant.

11. DISBURSEMENT OF GRANT FUNDING

The LINC Scheme funding will be awarded in its entirety at the start of the grant period following receipt of a fully signed copy of the terms and conditions.

Please note the following stipulations around the awarding of funding for the LINC scheme:

- All LINC grant Funding will be administered by either MSH (with MSH invoicing TRI for its contribution on the approval of each Milestone) or Mater Research Ltd. Non-MSH PIs will need to invoice MSH or Mater Research for their component of the funding for work undertaken at TRI.
- For auditing purposes and to determine compliance with the grant, the Grant Recipient and the Recipient's Institute agree to provide TRI, MSH and Mater with information as requested, including financial statements detailing the final costs (income and expenditure) for each financial year the Project has been active and also at the completion of the Project.

- If the Grant Recipient and the Recipient's Institute are for any reason unable to undertake the Project, or meet a Milestone, the Recipient's Institute must notify TRI immediately and cease to undertake any Project activities until a new Project plan is agreed in writing. If the Project is terminated, the Grant Recipient and the Recipient's Institute must immediately repay reimburse MSH or Mater (and subsequently TRI) the balance of Funding that is unspent or uncommitted at the date of notification.
- The Grant Recipient and the Recipient's institutions will be required to agree that the Funding must be completely expended on the Project within 24 months from the start date and any unexpended Funding must be paid back to MSH or Mater (and subsequently TRI) at the end of the 24 months unless otherwise agreed by TRI in writing.
- Any failure to use the Funding for the Project as outlined in the Application will lead to immediate termination of the Funding and the Grant Recipient and the Recipient's Institute agree to reimburse MSH or Mater and TRI all unspent or uncommitted Funding within 60 days of the date of termination.

12. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

With regards to intellectual property rights and commercialisation arising from the Project:

- a. management of IP will be as negotiated and agreed between the parties and will be in accordance with relevant institutional policies and procedures
- b. the Grant Recipient and the Recipient's Institute may publish and otherwise disclose the results of the Project in accordance with the all relevant institutions' procedures having regard to confidentiality and protection of intellectual property, provided:
 - i. TRI and MSH or Mater funding is acknowledged; and
 - ii. authorship and contributions are addressed and acknowledged in all publications based on academic and scientific merit as determined in accordance with the relevant policies and procedures of the institutions contributing to the Project IP.

13. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

TRI and Metro South Health or Mater must be acknowledged on all publications, presentations, social media posts and media releases pertaining to research funded through the LINC Scheme.

For example: *This research was funded through a LINC grant awarded by TRI and Metro South Health/Mater.*

TRI and MSH or Mater communication/media teams are to be advised of any publications, under embargo, before they are made public to allow TRI and MSH/Mater the opportunity to work with the PI's institution with regard to any publicity opportunities.

Certification Page

CERTIFICATION BY THE INVESTIGATIVE TEAM

We accept and agree to adhere to the Conditions of Award for a 2021 LINC Scheme Grant funded by the Translational Research Institute and MSH SERTA or Mater Research for the research study entitled "XXXX".

Signatures:

Metro South Health or Mater Research

Principal Investigator A

Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Line manager or Head of Department (MSH/Mater)

Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Translational Research Institute

Principal Investigator B

Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Group Leader/Program Leader

Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

CI1: _____ Date: _____

CI2: _____ Date: _____

CI3: _____ Date: _____

CI4: _____ Date: _____

CI: Co-Investigator

CERTIFICATION BY THE HEAD OF DEPARTMENT/DIVISION

(IF THE PI IS HEAD OF DEPARTMENT, THIS SECTION MUST BE SIGNED BY THE LINE MANAGER, OR SUITABLE AUTHORITY WITHOUT CONFLICT OF INTEREST)

For Principal Investigator A:

I certify that I have read the research proposal and I am prepared to have the research study *entitled "XXXX"* carried out in my Department/Division by Dr XXX.

Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Official Title: _____

For Principal Investigator B:

I certify that I have read the research proposal and I am prepared to have the research study *entitled "XXXX"* carried out in my Department/Division by Dr XXX.

Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Official Title: _____