



Australian Type 1 Diabetes  
Clinical Research Network

## Rebecca Davies Clinician Researcher Fellowship 2022

### Request for Applications

<b>Applications Open</b>	1 February 2022
<b>Application Deadline* †</b>	17 March 2022
<b>Earliest Start^</b>	June 2022

\* Research Office of each Administering Institution is required to certify applications submitted to JDRF in RMS360 and may have an internal closing time which precedes this deadline.

†Deadlines are at 11:59 pm AEST/AEDT.

^Subject to change.

[Click Here to Apply](#)

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## 1. Introduction and Purpose

The JDRF Australian [Type 1 Diabetes Clinical Research Network \(T1DCRN\)](#) provides a national framework to support the most promising type 1 diabetes (T1D) research and clinical trials in Australia. The T1DCRN was initiated with the goal of positively impacting the lives of people with T1D through the support and translation of research. The T1DCRN has a strong track record of accelerating and expanding Australia's excellence in T1D research translation and driving strong clinical outcomes aligned with [JDRF's research goals](#).

Fostering the development of the best and the brightest researchers who can bridge the gap between the bench and bedside and accelerate world-class T1D research is a core aim of the T1DCRN.

The purpose of the Request for Applications (RFA): *Rebecca Davies Clinician Researcher Fellowship* is to create dedicated research time for active clinicians who are pursuing a research career in the field of T1D. This Fellowship aims to support emerging clinician researchers with strong potential to make significant progress towards preventing, treating or curing T1D.

This Fellowship is named in recognition of the invaluable contribution of Rebecca Davies, AO FAICD, for tirelessly representing the voice of the T1D community. Her professional background as a highly successful corporate lawyer, experienced director, chair, and committee member is matched by Rebecca's passion towards mentoring and fostering leadership skills. As a volunteer leader, Rebecca played an instrumental role in transforming JDRF's strategy and governance to accelerate progress for the T1D community thus driving the success of JDRF and the T1DCRN. She has served on Research Committees and Boards of JDRF in Australia and the USA. She is continuously championing medical research through her appointments on several committees and Boards medical research institutes such as the Heart Research Institute.

## 2. Goals and Objectives

The main goal of the *Rebecca Davies Clinician Researcher Fellowship* is to provide an opportunity for qualified clinicians to increase their research capacity in areas relevant to T1D. This will be achieved by enabling research training and career development in high quality and supportive environments.

*The objectives of this Fellowship are to:*

- i. Support excellence in basic and applied T1D research conducted by promising clinician researchers who are practicing within the Australian health care system.
- ii. Provide opportunities to diversify career pathways by attracting and retaining the brightest and most promising clinician researchers.
- iii. Foster collaboration and support career development for clinician researchers.
- iv. Increase clinician-led research capacity in a supportive and appropriately supervised research environment.
- v. Enable capacity building and clinician researcher mentoring, leadership and supervision capabilities.

This is a part-time research Fellowship designed to enable flexibility around the Fellow's clinical and research commitments. Applications are invited from clinicians, including allied health and nursing health care professionals.

Applicants must propose to be engaged in an existing clinical research project throughout their Fellowship and supported by a Mentor who is an established leader in a field of clinical research relevant to T1D (see Section 8).

This Fellowship provides support for salary and project costs, as well as the opportunity for career development by enabling active clinicians to take time away from their clinics to dedicate to research. It is aimed at early-mid career clinicians who are committed to developing their career in T1D research. A clinician who has previously received independent research funding, a Career Development Award or equivalent will not be considered for this Fellowship.

At the heart of this Fellowship is the mentor-mentee collaboration. This Fellowship aims to facilitate high-quality mentorship to the Fellow to enhance their research training, professional development and most importantly, to become a future leader in T1D research and clinical care. Fellows will also become a part of the T1DCRN which will provide future career development programs to continue to foster the next generation of T1D research leaders.

It is expected that proposed research will align with [JDRF's strategic goals](#) and should have a strong potential for translation and integration with medical care with the aim of reducing the burden of T1D. It is expected that applications submitted in response to this RFA will strongly articulate this vision.

*Applicants are encouraged to consult with JDRF Scientific Staff to discuss the alignment of their proposal to this RFA.*

### 3. Eligibility

Applicants must fulfil the following criteria to be eligible for this Fellowship:

**3.1** Hold a degree (see below) that allows them to undertake research into clinical or/and non-clinical areas.

- i. To have completed their MBBS or MD, or
- ii. If an allied health care professional, have completed professional training and hold a Masters degree by research or have equivalent postgraduate research qualifications or experience.

**3.2** Demonstrate strong commitment to research as per the following criteria:

- i. Be a clinician who has recently (<5 years, relative to opportunity) completed a higher degree research (HDR; e.g., PhD) and intends to expand research commitments in the field of T1D; or,
- ii. Be a clinician who has recently completed their professional training and intends to pursue a career in T1D research. It is expected that the Applicant will enrol in a PhD program prior to the completion of this Fellowship; or,

- iii. Be a clinician currently enrolled in a PhD who intends to expand their research commitment outside of the work supported by their PhD. This Fellowship will not support research activity or salary/stipend for the PhD, however, additional research outside the scope of their PhD can be supported via this Fellowship.
- 3.3** Applicants must concurrently engage in research and clinical activity throughout the duration of this Fellowship. As such, Applicants must hold a clinical appointment and be actively engaged in patient care.
- 3.4** Applicants do not need to have held a formal research position, e.g., research assistant, research associate or post-doctoral.
- 3.5** This is a part-time research Fellowship designed to enable flexibility around the Fellow's clinical and research commitments. It is expected that the Fellow will dedicate between 0.2 and 0.4 FTE towards research supported by this Fellowship. An FTE lower than 0.2 will not be considered.
- 3.6** Applicants must be the named Principal Investigator.
- 3.7** Applicants must be supported by a nominated Mentor who is an established leader in a field of clinical research relevant to T1D.
- 3.8** Applications must be submitted by an Australian institution (e.g., an Australian university, college, hospital, laboratory, unit of state or local government, or an eligible Commonwealth government agency) affiliated with the Applicant or their Mentor.
- 3.9** The Institution submitting the application must provide a Research Office and a Finance Office contact.
- 3.10** Only one application may be submitted by an Applicant.
- 3.11** Although there are no citizenship requirements for this Fellowship, awardees must be eligible to work in Australia for the length of the proposed project. To assure continued excellence and diversity among applicants and awardees, JDRF encourages applications from individuals with disabilities, and members of minority groups underrepresented in the Australian T1D research landscape.

## 4. Exclusion Criteria

- 4.1** A clinician who has previously received a Career Development Award or equivalent or have received a research grant where they were the named Principal Investigator will not be considered for this Fellowship.
- 4.2** Applications requesting support for less than 0.2 FTE towards research activities will not be considered.
- 4.3** Applicants who are currently enrolled in a HDR (e.g., PhD), will not be able to use this Fellowship to supplement their salary or support research activities related to

the projects submitted in the course of the HDR. However, additional research outside of a current HDR can be supported via this Fellowship.

- 4.4** It is a requirement of this Award that the proposed research activity does not duplicate previous work carried out by the Mentors research group or elsewhere. However, the use of preliminary data obtained through previous research led by the Mentor is allowed only if it supports and strengthens the hypotheses of the proposed research.
- 4.5** If at any time during the assessment process JDRF or the review panel deems the research plan to either duplicate or significantly overlap with a previous, current, or planned project (in Australia or overseas) the proposal will be excluded from further consideration.
- 4.6** If at any time during the review process JDRF decides that an application falls within one of the following exclusion criteria the application will be deemed ineligible and will be excluded from further consideration:
- i. Applications that lack a clearly articulated research and mentoring plan.
  - ii. Applications that describe exploratory research purely for the acquisition of data.
  - iii. Applications that contain harmful or high-risk elements that would be inadequately managed or are unlikely to become viable approaches to treating, preventing, or curing T1D due to the harm-benefit ratio, e.g., complete immune ablation.

## 5. Funding

The *Rebecca Davies Clinician Researcher Fellowship* will provide **funding for up to \$150,000 in total for a period of up to three years**, subject to sufficient funding being available and continued satisfactory progress of the study. JDRF reserves the right to recommend levels, duration and scope of funding which may differ from those requested in the application.

Up to \$135,000 in total can be contributed to the salary component of the budget (including all on-costs). Fellows are expected to commit to up to 0.4 FTE dedicated research time. A minimum of 0.2 FTE is required. Fellows cannot use this time to engage in clinical, financial, administrative, or managerial activity beyond activities directly related to the research to which the funding applies. Fellowships are not designed to subsidise, substitute, or supplement a HDR such as a PhD.

Up to 15,000 in total can be used to support the Fellow's Mentoring Plan and is to be allocated at the Mentor's discretion. Funds may be used to support the Fellow's career development (e.g., skills advancement training, international lab visits etc.) or for other project related costs.

JDRF will not pay for indirect costs associated with the funded research such as basic facilities and equipment, organisational overheads and/or infrastructure costs. Hence, indirect costs must not be included in the budget.

Institutions receiving grants awarded by JDRF Australia through the T1DCRN are however eligible for recovering indirect costs via the Research Block Grants (RBG) self-assessment system. Income from the T1DCRN has been previously listed in the Australian Competitive

Grants Register (ACGR, 2018-2022). The T1DCRN is also compliant with the current Category 1 criteria outlined by the new RBG process introduced in 2019.

More information about the self-assessment system for institutions, which helps determine R&D income category, can be found [here](#).

## 6. Overview of the Application Process

Applicants must register/login to JDRF's online grants management portal RMS360 (<http://jdrf.smartsimple.us>) to access the RFA, supporting documents and templates.

JDRF will check applications for compliance with eligibility (Sections 3 and 4). A review panel of national and international experts will assess the scientific merit and quality of the proposed research, mentoring plan, the potential of the research to advance knowledge and translate into outcomes for patients and its alignment with JDRF's research goals and eventually reduce burden of T1D.

A scoring system based on the Selection Criteria outlined in Section 8 will be used to rate each application by each individual expert. Reviewers with a declared conflict of interest for any application will be excluded from scoring.

Based on the Selection Criteria the review panel will prepare a ranking and provide to the board of JDRF a recommendation if applications are suitable for funding. The JDRF Australia Board is responsible for final approval of funding, including budget allocation. Please note that JDRF or the reviewers may suggest changes to the research plan and budget at any stage during the review process.

Applicants will be notified in writing about the outcome of their application by June 2022. JDRF will work with the successful candidate(s) to develop performance-based milestones which will be monitored by JDRF to ensure satisfactory progress of the Project. A Funding Agreement will be forwarded for review and execution to the grantee's administrating institution.

**1. Call for proposals launched (1 February 2022)**

- a. JDRFA releases RFA
- b. Applicants register for an RMS360 account or log in to an existing account to obtain RFA and supporting documents



**2. Applications submitted (17 March 2022)**

- a. PI submits application via RMS360
- b. Internal review by JDRFA for eligibility
- c. External experts peer review of application
- d. Final assesment of projects by the expert panel



**4. JDRF Australia Board approves applications for funding**



**5. Grants executed (June 2022)**

- a. Final Project workplan, milestones and budget negotiated with successful applicants
- b. Funding agreements executed with administrating institutions
- c. Grants start

## 7. Application Requirements

All applications must be submitted via JDRF's grant management portal RMS360 (<http://jdrf.smartsimple.us>). All templates are provided in RMS360. All required fields in RMS360 must be completed. In addition, the following materials must be included in the application. A user guide for submitting application using RMS360 is available [here](#).

**7.1 Proposal Synopsis** (*1 page maximum, use template*) Summary of project details and disclosure.

**7.2 Research Plan** (*7 pages maximum excluding references, use template*) that provides the following information:

- Significance and rationale of proposed research
- Research aims
- Description of study design and methods
- Potential pitfalls and mitigation strategies
- Potential translational impact
- Advantages over alternative approaches (if applicable)

**7.3 Bio-sketches** (*4 pages maximum, use template*) of the Applicant as the Principal Investigator (PI) and the Mentor (as the Co-PI) must be provided as a minimum. Bio-sketches for any additional named Co-PIs and Key Personnel should also be provided. Applicants must outline the relevance of their experience related the proposed research and describe their ability to lead the investigation and conduct the proposed research activities.

**7.4 Mentoring Plan** (*2 pages maximum, use template*) including details of how the Mentor will support the Applicant in the course of the proposed research, and provide opportunities for training and development into an independent research leader in the field.

**7.5 Applicant Statement** (*2 pages maximum, use template*). Applicants must include a statement of career goals and indicate the relevance of these goals to T1D research. The statement should demonstrate commitment to the field of T1D, and include how the proposed research will contribute to the Applicant's career development in T1D research; how this Fellowship will contribute to the Applicant's future career plans; and any other planned formal or informal activities that will aid the Applicant in establishing a career as a leader in T1D research.

**7.6 Proposal Budget and Justification** (*Use templates*). A budget for each grant year with justification for the use of funds must be provided. Please consult your Mentor and Institution's Research Officer to prepare the budget.

**7.7 Letters of Reference.** Applicants must submit *two* letters of reference- one in support of their application from the Mentor and the other from the head of the department where the Applicant is currently performing his/her clinical duties. The letter from the head of department must confirm the Applicant's clinical appointment and support the proposed research responsibility vs clinical loading. Letters must be printed on official institutional letterheads and signed.

**7.8 Confirmation of Institutional Support.** Applications must include letter(s) of support confirming:

- i. Access and use of data, biosamples and other relevant resources.
- ii. Institutional support for the proposed research and researcher participation in the study.

## 8. Selection Criteria

The following selection criteria and respective weighting percentages will be taken into consideration by the review panel to determine alignment of eligible applications with the T1DCRN operating principles:

### **The Applicant/Principal Investigator (40%)**

- i. Capacity to undertake the proposed research.
- ii. Potential to sustain an independent research career.
- iii. The expected impact of the Award on the research career trajectory of the Applicant.
- iv. Evidence of commitment to the objectives of this Fellowship and to the field of T1D.

### **The Mentor (20%)**

- i. Research performance in a field of clinical research relevant to type 1 diabetes.
- ii. Track-record of successful training and mentoring.
- iii. Quality of the Mentoring Plan including details of how the Mentor will support the capacity of the Applicant to undertake the proposed research.
- iv. Ability of the Mentoring Plan to provide the recipient with the capacity and opportunity to develop an independent portfolio of innovative, high quality research.

### **Project Quality and Impact (30%)**

- i. Scientific merit of the Applicant's proposed research including the appropriateness of the design, methods and analyses to adequately address the aims and objectives.
- ii. Potential for the existing clinical research project to produce innovative benefit to the T1DCRN and the Australian and international community.
- iii. Potential for the Applicant's proposed research project to develop the Applicant's expertise in collaborative clinical research on a larger scale.

### **Research Environment (10%)**

- i. Evidence of a nurturing and collaborative research environment.
- ii. Availability of the necessary resources and facilities to complete the proposed research.

- iii. Access to resources to support the Investigator during and after the end this Fellowship.

## 9. Submission Instructions and Checklist

### 9.1 Instructions

Applications must be submitted online using JDRF’s online grants management system RMS360 (<http://jdrf.smartsimple.us>). Submission instructions are available [here](#). Please contact JDRF Administrative Staff if you require assistance.

Information submitted as part of the application is collected and stored in accordance with the JDRF Australia’s [Privacy Policy](#). All parties involved in or associated with an application must declare at the date of submission any Conflict of Interest that exists or is likely to arise in relation to any aspect of the application.

JDRF will only consider complete applications that meet Application formatting requirements. Information must be typed single-spaced and in black typeface no smaller than size 11 points Times New Roman font or an equivalent size, including text within images and figures, before converting to PDF format. Scanned documents are not acceptable.

A submission is complete if:

- It includes all the documents listed in the submission checklist below.
- All mandatory fields in RMS360 are complete.

### 9.2 Submission Checklist

Item	Template Provided	Instructions for RMS360
<input type="checkbox"/> Proposal Synopsis	Yes	Upload in “Additional Attachments” tab.
<input type="checkbox"/> Research Plan	Yes	Upload in “Proposal Research Plan” tab.
<input type="checkbox"/> Bio-sketches	Yes	PI/Co-PIs bio sketches should be uploaded to investigator’s profile. Bio-sketches will append to the application.  Key Personnel bio sketches upload in “Additional Attachments” tab.
<input type="checkbox"/> Mentoring Plan	Yes	Upload in “Additional Attachments” tab.
<input type="checkbox"/> Applicant Statement	Yes	Upload in “Additional Attachments” tab.
<input type="checkbox"/> Budget	Yes	Upload in “Additional Attachments” tab + Complete “Budget” tab.
<input type="checkbox"/> Budget Justification	Yes	Upload in “Additional Attachments” tab + Complete “Budget” tab.
<input type="checkbox"/> Letters of Reference (2)	No	Upload in “Additional Attachments” tab.

<input type="checkbox"/> Confirmation Institutional Support	of	No	Upload in "Additional Attachments" tab.
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## 10. Contractual Requirements

### 10.1 Funding Agreement

Funding will be provided by JDRF to the Administering Institution of successful Applicants. Award recipients will be required to sign a Funding Agreement with JDRF Australia. An [Agreement template](#) is available from JDRF website. A condition of application to this RFA is provision of certification of the PI, Co-PI(s), Mentors and their institutions to have read and agree to abide by the terms of the Agreement.

JDRF has no obligation in respect of this RFA including any funding, unless and until JDRF and the successful Applicant(s) have executed the formal Agreement. The Agreement template will include, but is not limited to, the following:

- i. A payment schedule dependent upon the achievement of performance milestones. JDRF will determine such milestones to be included in the Agreement in consultation with the relevant Investigators.
- ii. An obligation to comply with all relevant JDRF Policies as further detailed in the Agreement.

JDRF reserves the right to require changes to the [Agreement template](#) to address specific needs and circumstances of an application.

### 10.2 Consent to Co-funding

JDRF actively seeks co-funding opportunities with other funding bodies and partner institutions. In applying in response to this RFA, Applicants consent to information about their application being shared with other funding bodies that are specifically interested in supporting the research and related activities generated through the T1DCRN.

### 10.3 Data and Resource Sharing

Successful Applicants will be required to submit a Data Sharing Plan prior to execution of the Grant. For more information, please refer to the T1DCRN [Data and Biosample Sharing Policy](#).

JDRF acknowledges that resource sharing plans will differ according to the type of data and biosamples collected and does not prescribe the exact content or format. JDRF requests that at a minimum the core elements outlined in the Data Sharing Plan template in Appendix A of the JDRF Australian T1DCRN Data and Biosample Sharing Policy are considered.

### 10.4 Publications and Open Access

The T1DCRN is committed to the timely publication and dissemination of all information and materials developed under T1DCRN funding and must also comply with the [Australian Research Council Open Access Policy](#). Recipients of this Award must also comply with this policy and must take steps to make available all generated project materials for publication and wider dissemination. The sharing of data will be supported by clear policies and guidelines, as well as mechanisms to satisfy this requirement.

## 11. Background on JDRF and the T1DCRN

Type 1 diabetes (T1D) is a serious, chronic autoimmune condition that affects over 120,000 Australians<sup>1</sup>. T1D is classically characterised by a sudden and pronounced onset in children, adolescents, and young adults, requiring immediate and life-long dependence on exogenous insulin due to autoimmune destruction of pancreatic beta cells. It is now recognised that T1D initially progresses through a silent asymptomatic phase characterised by the persistence of circulating islet autoantibodies. This asymptomatic phase can last for months or years until diagnosis of clinical T1D<sup>2</sup>.

JDRF is the world's biggest non-profit funder of T1D research with the goals of finding cures for T1D and improving the lives of people with the disease. The key to treating, preventing, and ultimately curing T1D is the swift translation of Australian and global basic science and applied research outcomes into treatments and technologies that work effectively in people. Australian T1D research ranks highly on a global scale<sup>3</sup>, but adoption into clinical care remains a challenge<sup>4</sup>. Overcoming this challenge requires an important step out of the laboratory and the translation of research into human trials.

The Australian Type 1 Diabetes Research Clinical Research Network (T1DCRN), a JDRF initiative, is a national framework that supports the most promising T1D research and clinical trials. The network was informed by The Australian Type 1 Diabetes Research Agenda, developed through a broad consultation process with researchers, clinicians and patient representatives.

The T1DCRN was launched in June 2010, initially through a \$5 million, four-year grant from the Australian Government through the Department of Health and Ageing. In 2014, a further \$35 million over five years was provided by the Australian Government via the Australian Research Council.

The T1DCRN has established a highly successful research network bringing together world-class researchers, patients, industry and international partners to answer critical T1D clinical research questions, with a strong focus on patient benefit. In addition to fostering the most outstanding T1D research talent, the T1DCRN attracts exceptional scientists from other disciplines to broaden the scope of T1D research in Australia.

To date, the T1DCRN has invested \$95M in Australian research and attracted over US \$10M of direct financial leverage from international partners. T1DCRN initiatives have supported more than 250 researchers across 70 institutes, connecting approximately 2,500 Australians with the latest research, treatments and technologies. The sharp focus on patient benefit is a unique dimension of the T1DCRN and the patient-centric approach provides a platform to accelerate therapies and amplify research impact.

In 2019, the Australian Government committed a further \$25M to extend the T1DCRN for an additional five years to 2024. This new investment aims to build on prior achievements and

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<sup>1</sup> [jdrf.org.au](http://jdrf.org.au)

<sup>2</sup> Diabetes Care Oct 2015, 38 (10) 1964-1974.

<sup>3</sup> [The Australian Research Impact Analysis](#)

<sup>4</sup> [The Australian Type 1 Diabetes Research Resource Map](#)

increase the impact of T1DCRN via expansion of its scientific priorities. The new phase of the T1DCRN aims to:

- Increase the volume and impact of Australian T1D clinical research, while investing in large-scale prevention and screening initiatives
- Support “bench to bedside” research and ensure researchers have the required supporting tools and policy environment, and
- Nurture current and future research leaders in T1D while attracting bright new talent.

## 12. Program Contacts

*If you would like to discuss the alignment of your proposal to this RFA, please consult:*

**Dorota Pawlak, PhD**  
Chief Scientific Officer  
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*If you have enquires relating to using RMS360, please consult:*

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