



Roche Translational Cancer Research Fellowship

Background:

- Translational research is most effective when clinicians and scientists work together.
- Collaboration is a strength of research in New Zealand, but currently there is a lack of clinicians who are truly integrated into cancer research teams.
- A key role of the New Zealand Society for Oncology (NZSO) is to encourage cancer clinicians and scientists to collaborate.
- Local expertise and cutting-edge ideas can draw people together to conduct research.

Vision:

Creating an opportunity for our community to collaborate to bring the greatest benefit to New Zealanders impacted by cancer.

Purpose of award:

Roche and NZSO have proposed the Roche Translational Cancer Research Fellowship for the purposes of wanting to create a unique opportunity for NZ cancer research teams to enable an integral team member (**Roche Fellow**) and carry out novel, cutting-edge translational research, or access platforms and technology not available in NZ.

Value:

\$40,000. One award is made annually.

Awarding body:

Recipient selection and award administration will be conducted by the NZSO. Applications will be assessed by at least one international scientist and one international clinician, with the selection process administered *ex officio* by the NZSO President.

Status of Award:

Current NZSO awards recognise excellence in early and late career, but not in-between. The two PHARMAC awards are given to the best presentation by a trainee scientist, and the best presentation by a trainee clinician. The Bridget Robinson Award, formally known as NZSO Translational Research Award, is given to a late-career scientist or

clinician who has made a significant contribution to translational research in New Zealand.

The 'Roche Translational Cancer Research Fellowship' complements the current NZSO awards by recognising excellence at the intermediate but critical point between these two career stages – specifically early-career and up-and-coming.

Criteria upon receiving Award:

The Fellowship funding must be used in the calendar year following the announcement of the Fellowship recipient. It is possible to request an extension of up to one additional calendar year. The request needs to be made in writing to the NSZO Executive, providing a rationale for extension.

The proposed use of the funds should be immediately actionable rather than hypothetical. The proposal should outline how the funds will enable the proposed activity and the proposal should describe efforts made to ensure it is

executable in the period required (such as prior contact and agreement for a proposed lab visit or use of another lab's equipment).

The aim of this Award is to enhance translational research; therefore, the Award is not to be used for routine business expenditure (e.g. institutional overheads, administrative costs).

The use of the Fellowship funds should not be dependent on other grant funding, conducting a clinical trial or another research team's activities, funding or future capability.

Recipient works in NZ (or intends to work in NZ). Should the recipient (Roche Fellow) leave their role, their research team or leave NZ during the term of the Fellowship, any remaining Award funds unspent at the time of departure will be returned to NZSO and used to support subsequent Fellowships.

Eligibility:

Translational research teams that include BOTH clinicians and scientists will be eligible. The award will be given to the team and the team nominates the individual recipient in their proposal. Therefore, the quality of the team, the quality of the proposed recipient, and the quality of the proposal will all be considered by the selection panel.

Favoured recipients:

- A research team who can show that they can work together to share their scientific and clinical expertise to conduct research that could improve cancer outcomes.
- Research teams where a clinician is a leader of the research team.

- Newer research teams will be favoured to help develop new talent, balanced by evidence of a track record that would be indicative of future success.
- Recipient should be earlier in their professional career (e.g., new oncologist, new research fellow/lecturer). This is not a student or trainee award.
- Teams with potential to make significant contributions to translational cancer research.
- The individual recipient should be a 'rising star,' or the 'best and brightest' with the most potential, or an integral link in a highly regarded up-and-coming team.
- Each member of the team identified in the application must be NZSO members.
- Potential applicants are encouraged to engage with Roche to discuss available resources and expertise.
- The proposal should generally be in keeping with the strategic objectives of NZSO as described in the

NZSO website and must be submitted on the RTCRF application template.

Favoured activities:

This Award is aimed at improving researcher capability and their connections with other researchers. The proposed use of the award must be highly likely to increase the output of the research team. Proposals should be novel and imaginative. Proposals should excite the selection panel. The proposal should state how the proposed activity would improve the output of the team and contribute to impact in translational cancer research.

The award could be used for career development, development of clinical research practice expertise, international connection, and creative process - but is not limited to these examples. The award could be used to enable the researcher to spend time in an overseas laboratory, treatment or clinical trial centre, spend time with a mentor, spend time with an international thought leader, regional thought leader, learn a skill that is missing in the research team, pursue an innovative lead - but is not limited to any of these examples.

The proposed use of the funds should be immediately actionable rather than hypothetical. The proposal should outline how the funds will enable the proposed activity and the proposal should describe efforts made to ensure it is executable in the period required (such as prior contact and agreement for a proposed lab visit or use of another lab's equipment).

The use of the Fellowship funds should not be dependent on obtaining additional grant funding, conducting a clinical trial, another research team's activities, or future funding or capability.

There is no restriction on the category of cancer research. *Instead, the driving requirement is that the proposal must come from a team that includes clinicians and scientists as integral members.*

The same research team is not eligible to win this Award on more than one occasion. Previous recipients can be a member of a new team but not the named fellow.

Prohibited activities:

The aim of the Award is to enhance translational research, therefore the Award is not to be used for routine business expenditure (e.g. institutional overheads, administrative costs). The Award project may be part of a larger research initiative or programme, but the Award project must stand alone on its own merits, and the success of the Award project must not be reliant on obtaining other funding.

Requirements of recipients:

The recipient is required to give an oral presentation at a subsequent NZSO annual scientific meeting (i.e., at the meeting following the use of the Award) that describes the use of the support provided by the Award and learning gained and how this has impacted on the research team. This presentation must explain how the activity supported by the award assisted the team to work together more effectively.

How to apply:

To apply for the award please send the CV in RS&T format of the team recipients, along with a completed one page RTCRF Application Summary of Project Proposal that includes details on the team, how the team proposes to use the funds and how the proposed activity would improve the output of the team to charlotte@conference.nz. All applications must be received by Friday 14th August 2026.