Occupational Therapy Australia

Judith Marsham Farrell Research Grant Guidelines



Purpose

The purpose of the Judith Marsham Farrell Research Grant is to support "research in occupational therapy by occupational therapists and in particular studies in which the study subjects themselves to perform occupation embedded activity to determine its influence on a stated human health condition."

- This is an annual Grant made possible due to the generous bequest from Judith Marsham Farrell's Estate.
- The value of the Grant will vary each year. In 2025/26 the total amount available is $38,000.
- Multiple recipients of the available Grant funds may be selected.

Timelines

The research project funded by this Grant must be of no more than 12 months' duration.

Applicant Attributes

Priority will be given to applicants who:

- have an emergent rather than established research and publication track record;
- have not obtained large, national or international competitive research grant funding to date;
- may have experienced interruptions to research track record due to personal circumstances, factors relating to illness or injury, or family/carer responsibilities; and
- will benefit from research team interaction and mentoring.

Research higher degree students are eligible to apply.

Priority will be given to research projects 'in which the study subjects themselves perform occupation embedded activity to determine its influence on a stated human health condition.'.

Eligibility Criteria

- The lead applicant must be an AHPRA-registered occupational therapist.
- Individuals or teams may apply; teams may include people who do not have an occupational therapy background or who are not Australian citizens or permanent residents.
- If an individual applicant applies, rather than a team application, and the applicant does not hold a PhD, he or she must identify, and provide a signed letter of support, from an AHPRA-registered occupational therapist who is an experienced researcher (doctorate or equivalent with evidence of scholarly publications in the past 5 years) who agrees to mentor the applicant for the project and monitor compliance with Human Research Ethics Committee approvals and requirements.
- Lead applicants must have been a member of Occupational Therapy Australia Limited for at least 24 continuous months prior to the grant application's due date (this can include student membership) and must retain membership for the duration of the grant agreement.
- Applicants must be an Australian citizen or have permanent residency status.
- Applicants must reside in Australia for the duration of the grant.

- Applicants should be aware that before any grant monies will be paid to successful applicants, the lead applicant must provide written evidence that the research project has received approval from a Human Research Ethics Committee in Australia. This application must list the lead applicant and the names and affiliations of all associate investigators. Where appropriate to the project, site-specific approvals or equivalents are also required. As the eligible period for funding receipt and use is limited to 12 months, projects must be able to receive ethical and other approvals (if approvals have not already been obtained) and be conducted within the 12 months. There may be certain types of research projects (such as systematic reviews or other methodological research) that will not require ethical approval.

Application Process

Interested members must submit a completed application form addressing the essential criteria and demonstrate how the research study is aligned with the core Grant requirements as stated in the purpose of the Award.

Attached to your completed application form should be:

- A high-resolution headshot;
- a short professional biography; and
- any supporting documentation (i.e. publications, PhD Award or Letter of Support, Passport photo page or evidence of permanent residency, a copy of ethics approval letter, etc.).

Applications will close 5:00pm (AEDT) on Friday, 13 February 2026. Applications and all queries must be sent to awards@otaus.com.au.

Selection of Recipients

A panel of at least three members of the Research Academy will be convened to consider the applications against the criteria. In the case that there is no suitable candidate/ project the funds will be used for the following years award.

Considerations for the Application

Applicants when presenting their budget should note that in the case the project is part of their work in undertaking a training degree it is expected that the training component is not eligible for funding through this grant, but can be noted in the budget as being funded from other sources.

Applicants should consider the aims of the funding when articulating the aims of the study. Applicants may like to consider structuring their application around the three levels of human functions as classified by the ICF (body or body part; whole person; whole person in a social context), to assist in relating back to the aims of the funding.

About Dr Judith Marsham Farrell

Dr Judith Marsham Farrell was a pioneer and leader in occupational therapy. Her work supported the development of research and practice, especially in relation to rehabilitation of injured workers. Her 50-year career included leadership roles in the profession at state, national, and international levels, with leadership roles in Australia, the United Kingdom and South Africa. Judith was actively involved in Australian Occupational Therapy associations and representation. She held roles including President of the Victorian Association and the National Association, she was the Australian delegate to the World Federation of Occupational Therapists (WFOT) and Vice President of WFOT.



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5 / 340 Gore St. Fitzroy VIC 3065 1300 682 878 OTAUS.COM.AU