

**BIOSURVEILLANCE RESEARCH PROGRAMME
GRANT CALL 1
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)**

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

Please note that the FAQs will be updated periodically. Please refer to the [Biosurveillance Research Programme 1st Grant Call website](#) and [IGMS website](#) for the latest version of the FAQs.

1. GENERAL

1.1 Will there be subsequent grant calls launched under the Biosurveillance Research Programme programme? When will they be launched?

There are no plans for additional grant calls to be launched under the Biosurveillance Research Programme at the moment.

1.2 Will the Biosurveillance Research Programme Office organise networking meetings to foster collaboration among the Biosurveillance research community?

There will be a physical grant call briefing held on 14 January 2025, which will be attended by interested grant call applicants across the research community.

1.3 Will the proposal submission be considered for potential funding support if member(s) of the project team is not registered in the IGMS system by their Institution(s) within the proposal submission deadline?

While the proposal may still be considered, the team member who was not successfully registered under IGMS may not be considered as part of the project team in the evaluation process.

Applicants are strongly advised to avoid submitting their application at the last minute in case of technical issues with the IGMS website.

1.4 How focused must our research be? Should the proposal address all the research objectives and deliverables articulated in the Call Topic, or can the proposal address part of them? Can the proposal include other research objectives besides those mentioned in the Call Topic, if the project teams assess these to be relevant?

Proposals should address all the research objectives and deliverables articulated in the Call Topic, and may also include additional scope as deemed relevant, keeping in mind the budget ceiling of the Call Topic. Proposals that address only part of the research objectives and deliverables articulated in the Call Topic may still be considered, but will be evaluated accordingly and may potentially be deemed out of scope. The Biosurveillance Research Programme Office's decision during proposal evaluation will be final.

We strongly encourage researchers in project teams to collaborate with other researchers of different fields/expertise to address all the research objectives and deliverables articulated, particularly for Call Topics that are multi-disciplinary in nature.

Please refer to Annex B of the Grant Call Information Sheet for detailed information on the Call Topic.

1.5 What is the definition of “novelty” in the Biosurveillance Research grant call?

Novel research avoids duplication of past research.

Novelty is not a criterion for eligibility but will be assessed as part of the proposal evaluation process.

1.6 Will government agencies and other institutions share the data required to carry out the research for Biosurveillance Research projects?

As part of the "Data Requirements" section of the Full Proposal Template (Form A), applicants should clearly identify the source of essential data required for the proposed project during proposal submission. Applicants may also indicate whether they already know that the required data exists.

Applicants may also request for access to the USS metadata catalogue, which provides a central reference for datasets available within agencies that may be of potential relevance to the proposed project. Please refer to Section 7. Data Management of the Grant Call Information Sheet for more details on the metadata catalogue.

While the Biosurveillance Research Programme Office may help to facilitate data sharing between agencies and other institutions where appropriate and relevant, please note that access to data is ultimately subject to permission from the respective data owners.

1.7 If a proposal spans two different Call Topics, how should applicants design and submit the proposals, including designing the budget?

Proposals should be crafted in response to what is asked for in each relevant Call Topic. Should applicants wish to submit a proposal that spans two different Call Topics, please submit two different applications (including budgets) for each of the relevant Call Topics.

1.8 Will the recording or slides of the research community briefing be shared?

Slides from the grant call briefing session will be made available on the [Biosurveillance Research 1st Grant Call website](#), as well as on [IGMS](#) under the “Related Documents” section of the various Biosurveillance Research Grant Call Topics. Additional Q&As arising from the briefing session will also be updated as part of the Grant Call FAQs on the Biosurveillance Research 1st Grant Call website and on IGMS. Recordings from the briefing session will not be provided.

1.9 Do Call Topics under Biosurveillance Research Grant Calls seek only natural science-based proposals, or will social science-based proposals be also considered?

Each Call Topic is problem-specific and open to relevant approaches.

1.10 Will previous research projects (e.g., from the Climate Impact Science Research Programme, Programme for Research in Epidemic Preparedness and Response, and other government agency-funded projects) with positive research outcomes be given priority to develop further under the Biosurveillance Research Programme?

Proposals that leverage good outcomes of past research will often be more compelling than proposals that start from scratch. However, each proposal will be assessed accordingly through the evaluation criteria, including those that are completely novel.

1.11 Will NParks facilitate the application for permits and provide support for projects to be undertaken at agency-managed sites?

NParks will facilitate the process, for example, by providing the relevant contact points of the owner agencies of the particular sites, so that research teams can initiate the process of obtaining the necessary permissions and permits to proceed with the project. However, research teams are ultimately responsible for applying for and ensuring the validity of permits, and the final decision for the granting of permits lies with the agency responsible for each respective site, at its own discretion.

Agencies at their discretion, may also provide on-site support to facilitate the project activities at their agency-managed sites.

Any sites that are critical for project success should be identified specifically in the proposal submission stage.

1.12 Can the project team propose a research topic outside of the six Call Topics for the Biosurveillance Research 1st Grant Call?

No, as the six Call Topics have been conceptualised by participating government agencies to address priority knowledge gaps and R&D needs under the Programme.

Nonetheless, project teams are welcome to propose additional novel ideas (i.e., additional project objectives and deliverables), which are deemed by the project team as relevant and important to addressing the Call Topics, as part of their proposals.

1.13 Will Biosurveillance Research suggest for the collaboration of teams who have submitted proposals for different Call Topics, after reviewing the proposals when the grant call closes?

The Biosurveillance Research Programme Office will look to mediate and facilitate discussions during the project evaluation and scrubbing stage, to maximise synergies across projects and minimise duplicative works. This is also subject to the agreement of the various project teams involved.

1.14 When will the results from the Biosurveillance Research 1st Grant Call be concluded?

We hope to commence awarding project(s) under the Biosurveillance Research 1st Grant Call from Q4 2025 onwards. Applicants will be individually informed on the outcome of their respective applications, once assessed and decided upon.

1.15 Is a multi-institution project team preferable over a single institution team under the Biosurveillance Research Programme?

Researchers may form multi-institution or single institution project teams. Each proposal will be assessed accordingly through the evaluation criteria, which considers the execution strength and technical competency of the project team.

The funding support period specified for each Call Topic in the Grant Call Information Sheet varies from the maximum project duration of 60 months indicated in IGMS. Should applicants develop proposals based on the funding support period specified in the Grant Call Information Sheet or in IGMS?

Applicants should develop proposals in line with the funding support period specified for the particular Call Topic in the Grant Call Information Sheet.

There may be exceptional situations where applicants deem it necessary to propose a longer funding support period, in accordance with the nature of their specific research proposal. The default 60-month project duration setting in IGMS caters for such exceptional situations. Nonetheless, applicants are expected to provide strong justifications for proposing a longer funding support period. Proposals will be evaluated accordingly during the proposal evaluation process.

Please refer to Annex B of the Grant Call Information Sheet for detailed information on the Call Topics.

1.16 How should proposals address the impact outcomes stipulated for the Call Topic?

Proposals are expected to generate deliverables that will lead up to the stipulated impact outcomes for the Call Topic, which represent the long-term outcomes of the research that are desired by agencies. Proposals that clearly articulate the relevance of the proposed research to agencies, together with the project team's plans to engage and support agencies in the application/deployment of the anticipated research findings and deliverables, will be considered favourably.

1.17 How many projects will be awarded under each Call Topic, and how will the budget for each Call Topic be distributed between the awarded projects? (12 February 2025)

Multiple projects may be awarded under a Call Topic if the projects complement one another in addressing the Call Topic through different angles/components.

The stipulated budget for each Call Topic is a budget ceiling, and will encompass the collective budget of all awarded projects under the Call Topic.

The Biosurveillance Research Programme Office may look to mediate and facilitate discussions during the project evaluation and scrubbing stage, to maximise synergies across proposals and minimise duplicative works. This is also subject to the agreement of the various project teams involved.

1.18 Is there any specific contact person whom we can reach out to for discussion on how well our proposed work will align with the objectives of the grant call in general, as well as the specific objectives of respective call topics? (12 February 2025)

Researchers are strongly encouraged to refer to the research objectives and deliverables articulated in the Call Topics when crafting their proposals. Any enquiries should be directed to the Biosurveillance Research Programme Office at biosurveillance_research@nparks.gov.sg.

1.19 Are cybersecurity and data security standards certifications obtained for the entire organisation or for individual devices? (12 February 2025)

Cybersecurity and data security standards certifications are typically obtained at the organisation-wide level.

Applicants may also check in with their respective IT departments for existing certifications.

1.20 What will be the ownership arrangements of the Intellectual Property (IP) developed from the research? (12 February 2025)

At the first instance, Research IP will be the property of the research performers. Nonetheless, as may be required by agencies, the research performers and agencies may enter into an agreement on IP ownership and management, including commercialisation.

Please note that the Government and public sector agencies shall reserve a non-exclusive, non-transferable, perpetual, irrevocable, worldwide, royalty-free right and license to use, modify, reproduce and distribute the Research IP for non-commercial, R&D and/or educational purposes, unless waived by the grantor.

Please refer to the Grant Call Information Sheet, as well as the Terms and Conditions for Research Grants and Addendum to Terms and Conditions, for the IP management guidelines.

1.21 How does the Biosurveillance Research Programme differ from the Programme for Research in Epidemic Preparedness and Response (PREPARE)? (12 February 2025)

The Biosurveillance Research Programme covers zoonoses in animal hosts and environmental reservoirs with a focus on zoonotic disease transmission in animals or at the animal-human interface. It complements PREPARE's scientific research on preparing for future human infectious disease outbreaks.

1.22 How should researchers plan and optimise sample collection for their proposals, particularly where a large sample size may be required for certain epidemiological studies? Are researchers able to tap on NParks' existing biosurveillance programmes and operations or is NParks able to facilitate the sampling? (12 February 2025)

Researchers should plan their sampling approach, with the required resources, materials and methods, to achieve the research objectives and deliverables in the Call Topic based on sound scientific principles.

Researchers should not tap on NParks' resources for sample collection for their proposals. They should perform sample collection independently through a scientifically designed survey, preferably with innovative sampling approaches. The sampling plans and involved parties should be outlined in detail within the proposals.

1.23 Can proposals incorporate studies on human subjects (e.g., human sampling) to address the research objectives? (12 February 2025)

While proposals should focus on zoonoses in animal hosts, they may incorporate related studies on human subjects if they help to address the research objectives and deliverables articulated in the Call Topic.

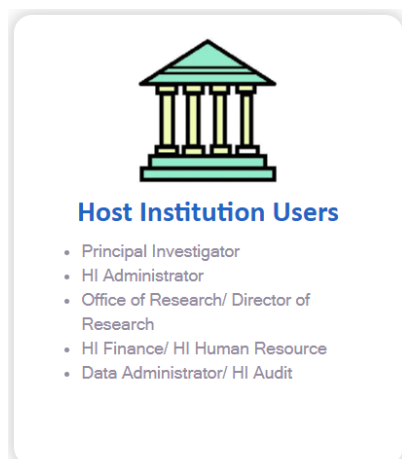
Researchers will be responsible for applying and ensuring the necessary approvals for all aspects of their proposals, including any potential studies on human subjects.

2. USING IGMS

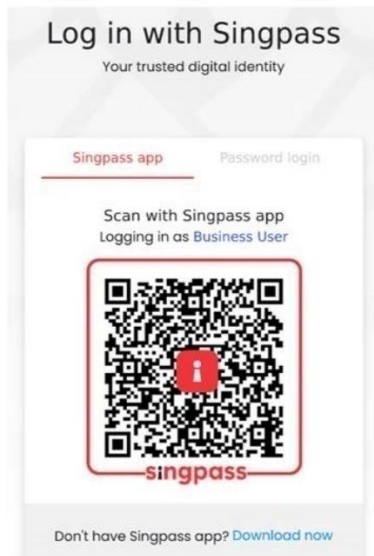
2.1 I am a local PI with access to CorpPass. How do I register an account on IGMS?

(1) Go to the URL: <https://www.researchgrant.gov.sg/eservices/account/login>

(2) Choose the 'Host Institution Users' option.



(3) Sign in using your Singpass. This will lead you to your corporate account on IGMS.



(4) For first time login, user will be directed to IGMS registration page.

(5) Fill in all necessary details.

(6) Click on “**Retrieve**” button to receive an activation code (the code is valid for 10 minutes and will be sent to the e-mail registered)

(7) Key in the activation code and click on “**Next**” to complete the registration

2.2 Does a Co-I need to register for an IGMS account?

The Lead PI will submit the online application in IGMS but he/she will need to add the relevant Co-I(s) as research team member in IGMS. All Co-I(s) must be registered in IGMS before they can be added as a research team member.

2.3 Are the proposal and budget templates available on IGMS for download? Is there any specific format for CVs to be submitted?

To download the Full Proposal and Budget templates, applicants will need to click “Apply” and login to IGMS, under the “Research Details” tab, look for “Research proposal” section to download the templates from “Please click here”.

The instructions to prepare CVs can be found under the “Research Team, Collaborators, Referees” tab, at the “Research team” section, click “Add” to download the document from “Please click here” under “Attach CV”. The instructions can also be found in Annex A (last page) of the Full Proposal Template (Form A).

2.4 Must the Lead PI in the Host Institution submit the grant application? Can any other member of the project team submit the grant application?

No, the grant application is to be completed and submitted in IGMS by the Lead PI and endorsed (also in IGMS) by the Director of Research (or equivalent) from the Lead PI's Host Institution.

2.5 The direct cost is fixed at 100% and the indirect cost (IRC) is fixed at 30% on IGMS. In the IGMS system, these funding support percentages are applied to all budgets by default, even the budgets of private sector Lead PI/Co-I who are (i) not eligible for 100% support for direct costs and are (ii) not eligible for support for IRC.

Due to these default settings, the private sector Lead PI's/Co-I's budget indicated in IGMS will be higher than that in the Budget Template (Form B). Will this disqualify our application?

We are aware of this current constraint in the IGMS system, and applications will not be penalised for this. However, applicants should reflect the correct figures in the Budget Template (Form B) that is submitted in IGMS. The information in the Budget Template (Form B) shall be the one taken into consideration.

2.6 Are applicants required to submit quotations of the proposed budget line items as part of the proposal application in IGMS?

Applicants are not required to submit quotations of the proposed budget line items in the proposal application in IGMS.

However, applicants must strictly comply with their own Institution's procurement practices, and must ensure that all cost items are reasonable and are incurred under formally established, consistently applied policies and prevailing practices of their Institution, when budgeting for the proposed cost items. Applicants will be notified should further substantiation of their cost estimates be required (e.g., with quotations of proposed equipment/OOE items).

2.7 Are applicants required to submit letters of intent from collaborators as part of the proposal application in IGMS?

While applicants are welcome to submit letters of intent from collaborators in the proposal application in IGMS, it is not a requirement.

3. ELIGIBILITY

3.1 What are the eligibility requirements for the Lead PI?

The eligibility requirements for the Lead PI are as follows:

- (1) Maintain a minimum of 1 year employment with the Host Institution, starting from the closing date of the Grant Call;
- (2) Must be based in Singapore; and
- (3) Not be debarred from submitting new grant applications for national grants.

Please also refer to Section 4. Eligibility of the Grant Call Information Sheet for the general eligibility requirements, as well as the additional requirements for Lead PIs from private sector entities.

3.2 Are Research Fellows (in IHLs) allowed to apply as Lead PIs/Co-Is/Collaborators, or are only tenure track faculty members allowed to apply?

Yes, Research Fellows are allowed to apply as Lead PIs/Co-Is/ Collaborators, as long as endorsed by their institutions.

Please also refer to Question 3.1. for a related query on the eligibility requirements to be a Lead PI.

3.3 Are researchers from industry companies and overseas organisations (i.e., international researchers) eligible to apply as Co-Is?

Researchers from both Singapore-based and overseas IHLs/public RIs and private sector entities, including industry companies, are eligible to apply as Co-Is. This will be at the discretion of the Lead PI, who is responsible for coordinating and organising the project team.

Please note Co-Is (and Collaborators) from overseas organisations (i.e., entities that are not Singapore-based) are not permitted to receive, directly or indirectly, any part of the funding, whether in cash or in the form of assets acquired using the funding or otherwise unless expressly approved by the grantor. The exception is for travel expenses for the overseas-based Co-Is (and Collaborators) to come over to Singapore, which should be identified and budgeted for upfront in the Other Operating Expenses vote to be incurred by the Host Institution.

Please also refer to Question 4.7. for a related query on the eligibility of overseas organisations to receive funding support from the grant.

3.4 Can government agency staff be listed as Co-Is or Collaborators in a submitted proposal?

The Call Topics under the Biosurveillance Research Programme has already been conceptualised in consultation with various participating government agencies, to address their priority knowledge gaps and R&D needs. These agencies have been listed

as Lead/Member Agency under the Call Topic, and will be involved in evaluating submitted proposals, and driving and participating in awarded projects.

As such, government agencies should not be listed as Co-Is or Collaborators in submitted proposals (unless expressly stated otherwise during the launch of the grant call), nor directly involved in the preparation of any proposal.

Please direct all enquiries on the Grant Call, including technical details of the Call Topic, to the Biosurveillance Research Programme Office at biosurveillance_research@nparks.gov.sg. Should the project team wish to involve an agency that is not already listed as Lead/Member Agency, please state your intention in your proposal submission. If your proposal is shortlisted, Biosurveillance Research Programme Office will facilitate the process to check if the agency is agreeable to be involved and to onboard them accordingly.

3.5 Are A*STAR research institutes eligible to apply for the grant call?

Yes, A*STAR research institutes are public research institutes and hence, eligible to apply for the grant call.

Please also refer to Section 5. Funding Support of the Grant Call Information Sheet for the funding support eligibility for various entity types.

3.6 Are subsidiaries of non-Singaporean universities that are based in Singapore (including those with partnerships with local IHLs) eligible to participate in the grant call as a Lead PI, Co-I or Collaborator?

Subsidiaries of non-Singaporean universities that are based in Singapore (including those with partnerships with local IHLs) are eligible to participate in the grant call as Lead PI, Co-I or Collaborator. These subsidiaries would be considered as non-Singaporean entities based in Singapore. In accordance with the relevant prevailing NR Fund guidelines:

- PIs and Co-Is from non-Singaporean entities based in Singapore will qualify for funding support of 30% of the approved qualifying direct costs of a project.
- Collaborators from non-Singaporean entities based in Singapore are not permitted to receive, directly or indirectly, any part of the funding, whether in cash or in the form of assets acquired using the funding or otherwise unless expressly approved by the grantor.

Please also refer to para 6.5 of the Grant Call Information Sheet on the additional requirement for a Singapore Technology Licensing Office to be appointed in projects funding non-Singaporean entities.

3.7 Where can the criteria to qualify for Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and Large Local Enterprises (LLEs) be found?

The criteria for SMEs and LLEs qualification can be found in Annex D of the Grant Call info sheet.

3.8 Can a Lead PI submit proposals for more than one Call Topic?

Yes, a Lead PI may submit proposals for more than one Call Topic in the grant call.

3.9 Is an applicant allowed to participate in multiple proposals for the Call Topic, as per the following scenarios?

- (1) The applicant is a Lead PI in one proposal and a Co-I/Collaborator in other proposal(s).**
- (2) The applicant is a Co-I/Collaborator in more than one proposal.**

Applicants are allowed to participate in multiple proposals for the Call Topic, such as in the aforementioned scenarios. Nevertheless, applicants should ensure that they are able to fulfil the roles and responsibilities that they have committed to take on across the multiple proposals.

3.10 Can there be more than one Lead PI for each proposal? (12 February 2025)

Each proposal shall only have one Lead PI.

4. FUNDING SUPPORT

4.1 Will proposals need to adhere to the Research Grant Terms and Conditions?

Yes. An awarded project will be bound to the Terms and Conditions.

Please note that the Terms and Conditions may be subject to revisions, in accordance with the latest NRF guidelines.

4.2 What is the mechanism for fund disbursement?

Fund disbursement will be via reimbursement, on a quarterly basis.

4.3 Will Manpower Management Framework (MMF) headcount be allocated for polytechnics under a project?

No, the Biosurveillance Research Programme does not support additional MMF headcount allocation for polytechnics under funded projects.

4.4 What is the funding support criteria for polytechnics?

Polytechnics are considered Institutes of Higher Learning and will qualify for funding support for:

- (1) 100% of the approved qualifying direct costs of a project, including expenditure on manpower (EOM)
- (2) Indirect costs at 30% of the total qualifying approved direct costs of a project

Please note that the above-stated EOM funding support is separate from Manpower Management Framework (MMF) headcount allocation for polytechnics. The Ministry of

Finance's existing MMF control rules on public agencies, including polytechnics, will continue to apply.

Funding of EOM is also subject to the overall Research Grant Terms and Conditions for non-fundable direct costs of research. Please refer to Annex C of the Grant Call Information Sheet for more details.

4.5 What is the funding support criteria for Singapore-based private sector entities?

In accordance with the relevant prevailing NR Fund guidelines, Singapore-based private sector entities will qualify for tiered funding support of up to 50% of the approved qualifying direct costs of a project. Specifically,

- (1) 30% for all non-Singapore entities based in Singapore (including non-Singapore not-for-profits) and Singapore Large Local Enterprises; and
- (2) 50% for Singapore Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and start-ups.

Singapore not-for-profits will be treated based on their size (i.e., will qualify for up to 50% of the approved qualifying direct costs of a project, if they meet the SME definition)

Please refer to Annex D of the Grant Call Information Sheet for the definitions of the different private sector entity types.

4.6 Does the stipulated budget for the Call Topic correspond to the cost of a project before, or after the tiered funding support levels have been applied (for projects with Singapore-based private sector entities)?

The stipulated budget for the Call Topic corresponds to the total supportable costs of a project. For projects with Singapore-based private sector entities, this corresponds to the cost of a project after the relevant tiered funding support levels has been applied.

4.7 Are overseas organisations eligible for any funding from the grant?

Overseas organisations are not permitted to receive, directly or indirectly, any part of the funding, whether in cash or in the form of assets acquired using the funding or otherwise unless expressly approved by the grantor.

The exception is for travel expenses of the Visiting Professors/Experts (e.g., overseas-based Co-Is and Collaborators) to come over to Singapore for the research work, which should be identified and budgeted for upfront in the Other Operating Expenses (OOE) vote to be incurred by the Host Institution.

4.8 Can the Host Institution that receives the funding for an awarded project subsequently disburse the funding to local Collaborators, and/or Co-Is and Collaborators from overseas organisations, for the project?

In accordance with the relevant prevailing NR Fund guidelines:

- (1) Collaborators are not permitted to receive, directly or indirectly, any part of the funding, whether in cash or in the form of assets acquired using the funding or otherwise unless expressly approved by the grantor.
- (2) Overseas organisations (in the capacity of Co-Is and Collaborators) are also not permitted to receive, directly or indirectly, any part of the funding, whether in cash or in the form of assets acquired using the funding or otherwise unless expressly approved by the grantor. The exception is for travel expenses for Visiting Professors/Experts (e.g., overseas-based Co-Is and Collaborators) to come over to Singapore, which should be identified and budgeted for upfront in the Other Operating Expenses vote to be incurred by the Host Institution.

4.9 How will funding be allocated in the following scenario?

A project team with (1) a Lead PI from a Singapore-based IHL/public RI, (2) a Co-I from a non-Singapore private sector entity based in Singapore, and (3) another Co-I from a non-Singapore private sector entity not based in Singapore (i.e., overseas organisation).

Funding for this project scenario will be allocated as follows:

For (1), i.e., Lead PI from a Singapore-based IHL/public RI –

- 100% of the approved qualifying direct costs from the Lead PI's respective component of the project.

For (2), i.e., Co-I from a non-Singapore private sector entity based in Singapore –

- 30% of the approved qualifying direct costs from the Co-I's respective component of the project.

For (3), i.e., Co-I from a non-Singapore private sector entity not based in Singapore –

- A non-Singapore private sector entity not based in Singapore (i.e., overseas organisation) will not receive any funding support unless expressly approved by the grantor.

All of the funding will be awarded through the Host Institution of the Lead PI.

4.10 Can subcontracting services (e.g., outsourced manpower/research services) be budgeted for under a proposal? If yes, do tiered funding support levels (%) apply to the subcontractors?

Subcontracting out the whole or substantial part of the research work is not permitted. In general, most of the funding should go to work done by the researchers explicitly listed in the proposal.

Where allowed with appropriate justifications, the full cost of subcontracting services are to be budgeted under Other Operating Expenditure (OOE). For the avoidance of doubt, subcontractors are not considered part of the project team and hence, are to be paid 100% (i.e., the tiered funding support levels do not apply to them).

Work to be done under subcontracting services and the costs required should be clearly indicated in the proposal submission (i.e., in the Full Proposal and Budget Templates). The proposal will be evaluated accordingly during the proposal evaluation process.

4.11 Can the funding be used for transporting samples collected in Singapore to an overseas Co-I for conducting lab analysis?

Overseas Co-Is are not permitted to receive, directly or indirectly, any part of the funding, whether in cash or in the form of assets acquired using the funding or otherwise unless expressly approved by the grantor.

In general, funding should also not be used to purchase any services from overseas organisations. Should the required services only be available overseas, the appropriate justifications must be provided, subject to the Biosurveillance Research Programme Office's approval.

4.12 Can the salaries of Lead PI/Co-Is/Collaborators be funded under a project?

No, the salaries of Lead PI/Co-Is/Collaborators are considered as non-fundable direct costs, and should not be included under EOM budget.

Please also refer to the List of Non-Fundable Direct Costs from the "Guidelines for the Management of Research Grants" for other types of staff not supported by the funding.

4.13 Under the "Overseas Travel" budget category, who can overseas travel be budgeted for?

Travel may be budgeted for the Lead PI, Co-I(s), and research personnel (e.g., Research Assistants, Research Associates and Research Fellows).

4.14 What are the items that can be budgeted for under the travel expenses for Visiting Professors/Experts (e.g., overseas-based Co-Is and Collaborators) to come over to Singapore?

Subject to approval, short-term travel expenses for Visiting Professors/Experts (e.g., overseas-based Co-Is and Collaborators to come over to Singapore can be budgeted for. Any such requirements should also be in line with the travel policy of the Lead PI's Host Institution.

4.15 Can the funding be used to purchase equipment for the project?

Yes, the funding can be used to purchase Equipment, which are supportable direct costs. However, in accordance with the prevailing NR Fund guidelines, please note that:

- (1) The purchase of Equipment should be justified (e.g., Equipment is currently unavailable in the Host Institution).
- (2) There is a requirement to share Equipment purchased using NR Funds with other researchers in Singapore.

Please refer to the Grant Call Information Sheet, as well as "Guidelines for Management of Research Grants", for further guidelines on Equipment.

4.16 Can PhD research scholarships be funded under a project?

No, PhD research scholarships are not fundable under the Biosurveillance Research Programme, and should not be included under the proposed project budget.

4.17 Can project managers, with the following roles and responsibilities, be funded under a project? (12 February 2025)

- Working with the PI on project risk management, resource allocation, project variations, progress monitoring and reporting, and other related matters.
- Ensuring project compliance with procedures, policies, and grant terms and conditions.
- Acting as liaison with internal and external stakeholders on project progress, reviews, audits, and other related matters.

No. Project managers with the aforementioned roles and responsibilities fall under general administrative support staff, which are considered as non-fundable direct costs. They should not be included under EOM budget.

Please also refer to the List of Non-Fundable Direct Costs from the "Guidelines for the Management of Research Grants" for other types of staff not supported by the funding.

4.18 It was noted that private sector entities qualify for tiered funding support levels. In a project involving Singapore-based IHLs/public RIs and private entities, can the private entities' project expenses be included under the IHLs'/public RIs' budget? (24 February 2025)

No, each organisation should budget for its own project expenses according to its respective funding support levels.

5. APPLICATION DOCUMENTS

- 5.1 The Grant Call Information Sheet mentions that a copy of the application should also be sent by email to the Biosurveillance Research Programme Office. Is this a required step to be done after the application in IGMS has been successfully endorsed by the Director of Research (also in IGMS)? If yes, must this step be done by 28 March 2025, before 2pm, or can this step be done after the deadline?**

Please note that the application will only be considered valid if the submission is completed in IGMS, including endorsement by the Director of Research (also in IGMS) by the submission deadline (28 March 2025, 2pm, Singapore time).

A copy of the application should be sent via email to the Biosurveillance Research Programme Office after this.

- 5.2 What should be indicated as the Topic Code, as part of the required naming convention for softcopy attachments?**

The Topic Codes refer to e.g., BioRP_GC2025_01, BioRP_GC2025_02. These can be found in Annex B of the Grant Call Info Sheet, which provides the detailed information on each Call Topic.

- 5.3 Should the endorsement signatory required in the Full Proposal Template (Form A) and Budget Template (Form B) be from the same individual?**

Yes, both the Full Proposal Template (Form A) and Budget Template (Form B) requires endorsement signatory of the Director of Research (i.e., DOR/research director) from the Host Institution.

- 5.4 For A*STAR research institutes (RIs), can the proposals be signed and endorsed by the respective RI's equivalents of the Head of Department and Director of Research, or should it be done at the whole of A*STAR-level?**

The proposals from A*STAR RIs can be signed and endorsed by the equivalents of the Head of Department and Director of Research in the respective RI's management.

- 5.5 Must the Full Proposal Template (Form A) and Budget Template (Form B) be submitted in Microsoft Word and Excel format respectively?**

Yes, the Full Proposal Template (Form A) and Budget Template (Form B) should be submitted in Microsoft Word and Excel format respectively. This should be done via IGMS. Please refer [here](#) for assistance in adding signatures into the documents.

- 5.6 Can an Institution's Research Office submit the consolidated copies of the applications for all of the Institution's Lead PIs via email to the Biosurveillance Research Programme Office, or should the Lead PIs submit their respective copy of the application via email to the Biosurveillance Research Programme Office individually?**

The Institution's Research Office can submit the copies of the individual applications for all of the Institution's Lead PIs via email to the Biosurveillance Programme Office. Please send a zipped folder with each copy of the application in a separate sub-folder.

5.7 Is endorsement signatory on the Full Proposal Template (Form A) and Budget Template (Form B) necessary before submitting it on IGMS?

Yes. It is necessary for the Full Proposal Template (Form A) and Budget Template (Form B) to be endorsed before submission on IGMS. E-signature is acceptable.

- 5.8 In some grant applications, members of the research team can be designated roles other than Lead PI, Co-I or Collaborators – e.g., Team PIs (who are led by the Lead PI, and in turn, lead individual teams to independently achieve certain specific research objectives). Can we do such categorization in Biosurveillance Research grant applications by defining Team PIs in the application file, in addition to Lead PI and Co-Is?**

For Biosurveillance Research grant calls, applicants would be required to list their project team members in the application documents using the nomenclature provided i.e., as Lead PI, Co-Is or Collaborators.

If the project team wishes to assign certain researchers involved as Team PI, we suggest that they are listed as Co-I (Team PI) in the application documents.

5A. FULL PROPOSAL TEMPLATE (FORM A)

- 5A.1 For Form A, does the “% of time committed on the project” refer to the individual’s time spent on the proposed project relative to i) the individual’s total work time, or; ii) the other team members’ time commitment on the project (where it should add up to a total of 100% for all the team members)?**

The “% of time committed on the project” in the Full Proposal Template (Form A) refers to the individual’s time that would be spent on the proposed project relative to the individual’s total work time.

- 5A.2 For the Full Proposal Template (Form A) under Section 6, are declarations required only from the Lead PI, HOD and DOR of the Host Institution and not required from Co-Is and their institutions?**

Yes, declarations are only required from Lead PI, HOD and DOR of the Host Institution under Section 6 of the Full Proposal Template (Form A). Funds are given only to the Host Institution of the Lead PI, where they will be managed and subsequently redistributed to Co-Is where appropriate.

- 5A.3 The grant call info sheet and “Full Proposal Template (Form A)” mentions that the proposed reviewer list should not include recent collaborators. What is the definition of “recent” here?**

Proposed reviewers should not have collaborated with the applicant within the last two years.

- 5A.4 Is there a limit to the number of Co-Is or Collaborators for a proposal?**

No, there is no limit. Additional lines may be added to Section 1 of the Full Proposal Template (Form A), where necessary.

5A.5 Where can the instructions for CVs be found?

The instructions for CVs are in Annex A (i.e., last page) of the Full Proposal Template (Form A).

5A.6 In Form A, what do the "start" and "end" Technology Readiness Level (TRL) refer to? (12 February 2025)

The "start TRL" refers to the current state of technology, and the "end TRL" refers to the expected state of technology that the project team plans to achieve by the end of their project.

5A.7 For projects involving different technologies at varying Technology Readiness Levels (TRLs), how should the TRL information be presented in the proposal? (12 February 2025)

Applicants should indicate an overall TRL that best represents the state of the entire project. They may also provide a breakdown of the TRL for each technology as additional information within the proposal.

5B. BUDGET TEMPLATE (FORM B)

5B.1 Is signatory on the Budget Template (Form B) necessary before submitting it on IGMS?

Yes. It is necessary for Budget Template (Form B) to be endorsed before submission on IGMS. E-signature is acceptable.

5B.2 For Budget Template (Form B), are signatories only required from the Lead PI and DOR from Host Institution only? Can additional endorsement signatories be added in the Budget Template (Form B), if endorsement from other parties (e.g., Lead PI's Head of Department) are required based on the Host Institutions' internal processes?

Yes, signatories are only required from the Lead PI and DOR of the Host Institution.

The requirement for endorsement by the DOR of the Host Institution is consistent with other similar grants, and additional endorsements should not be inserted into the submitted form.

5B.3 For the "Detailed Budget Breakdown" in Form B (Section 3), should private sector Lead PIs/Co-Is with tiered funding support levels state the full (100%) project cost, or the reduced amount they are eligible for (e.g., 30%/50%)?

Private sector Lead PIs/Co-Is should state the full cost for each line item in the "Detailed Budget Breakdown" section.

Based on this, the funding amount that they are eligible for will be automatically calculated under the “Total Supportable Costs” column of the “Breakdown of Project Costing” section.

5B.4 If the Lead PI and Co-Is are from the same institution, should the Co-I’s budget be parked under the Lead PI in the Budget Template (Form B)?

Yes, the budget should be indicated by institution in the Budget Template (Form B). The Co-I’s budget for their respective component of the project should be indicated under the Lead PI if they are from the same institution.

6. EVALUATION & AWARD

6.1 How will technical peer reviewers be identified? Can applicants recommend names for suitable technical peer reviewers?

Technical peer reviewers will be identified, based on their domain expertise in the field(s) covered by the Call Topic. Applicants are invited to recommend potential suitable peer reviewers for the Biosurveillance Research Programme Office’s consideration, in the “Suggested Names of Technical Peer Reviewers” section of the Full Proposal Template (Form A), and in the IGMS application. The final decision on the peer reviewers will be decided by the Biosurveillance Research Programme Office.

Please also refer to Section 13. Submission Instructions of the Grant Call Information Sheet for further details on recommending suitable peer reviewers.

6.2 Will applicants have the opportunity to respond to comments or queries from the technical peer reviewers and/or Project Evaluation Panel?

Applicants will have the opportunity to provide clarifications on their proposals during the Project Evaluation Panel stage. During this stage, shortlisted applicants will present their proposals to the Project Evaluation Panel, who will also seek clarifications from applicants on various aspects of their proposals where required.

6.3 Will a subcontractor's involvement be taken into consideration as part of the proposal evaluation process?

A subcontractor's involvement will be taken into consideration as part of the overall proposal evaluation process in relation to the context of the overall proposal and based on the subcontractor’s merits.

6.4 It was mentioned that projects will be awarded under the Biosurveillance Research Grant Call from Q4 2025 onwards. Are there any requirements for the project start date to be within a certain period from the issuance of the Letter of Award?

In general, projects are expected to commence promptly following the issuance of the Letter of Award. While there are no fixed requirements for the project start date, this

should be discussed and agreed between the project team and the agencies involved, during the project award stage.

6.5 Is a research collaboration agreement (RCA) with NParks compulsory for awarded projects? (12 February 2025)

Projects will be awarded through the issuance of a Letter of Award (LOA). An RCA may be required, depending on the specific needs of the project.

6.6 Can projects be extended after award, and if so, will additional funding be available for extensions? (12 February 2025)

Applicants should develop proposals in line with the funding support period and budget specified for the particular Call Topic in the Grant Call Information Sheet.

All requests for project extension are subject to approval. Requests for supplementary budget are generally not allowed and may only be considered in exceptional cases.