



# NHMRC National Scientific Committees

hosted by Bellberry Limited

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## National Scientific Committees

### Standard Operating Procedure: Review of Research Proposals

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Australian Government

National Health and Medical Research Council



Bellberry Limited  
supporting research and ethics

## PURPOSE

To outline the procedure for review of research proposals in the National Scientific Committee Pilot (the Pilot).

## PROCEDURES

- 1.1 The Operations Manager, Bellberry, or their delegate will review all submitted research proposals to determine:
  - (a) whether a submitted proposal is eligible for review by a Committee established under the Pilot
  - (b) whether the project submission is complete or, alternatively, whether further information is required prior to scheduling the review of the proposal
  - (c) how many research proposals will be included on the agenda for the next scheduled meeting.
- 1.2 Proposals scheduled for review will be provided to Committee members for review and comment on eProtocol in accordance with Bellberry processes and forms.
- 1.3 Bellberry may assign a member the responsibility to introduce a proposal at a Committee meeting.
- 1.4 Committee members will discuss proposals on the agenda and determine whether:
  - (a) the proposal has established sufficient scientific merit and integrity
  - (b) the proposal requires modification or additional information in order to establish its scientific merit and integrity.
- 1.5 For each proposal reviewed, a checklist will be completed which captures the opinion of the Committee on the scientific merit and integrity of the application.
- 1.6 Any additional information required by members in order to comment on, assess or provide advice regarding a submitted proposal will be sought from the applicant by Bellberry and provided to Committee members so as to enable the finalisation of the checklist.
- 1.7 The checklist will provide the framework for capturing the opinion of the Committee on the scientific merit of the application. It will include:
  - (a) an assessment of the scientific merit and integrity of the proposal
  - (b) a description of any outstanding questions or issues that the Committee believes the researcher and/or research sponsor should address or pursue further
  - (c) an indication as to whether the Committee relied on the opinion of a non-Committee member (i.e. another Panel member or other relevant expert) in forming its opinion and advice

- (d) a description of any issues that the Committee believes a Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) should address or pursue further.
- 1.8 The final checklist will be notified to the applicant via eProtocol.
- 1.9 Any report on proposals submitted for review constitutes expert scientific advice and does not constitute ethical approval for the project.
- 1.10 Post-review questions and concerns submitted by applicants or reviewing HRECs will be managed by Bellberry staff in accordance with Bellberry policies and procedures.