

Thoracic Society of Australia and New Zealand (TSANZ)

Letter of Support policy

1. Overview

Letters of support (LOS) and in-kind support are available for members submitting to major competitive grant schemes. To progress respiratory research as a whole, the Thoracic Society will support grant proposals which involve teams, thus fostering respiratory research of the Society's membership, and minimising competition between Thoracic Society members.

To protect the Thoracic Society's reputation and to support members, the Thoracic Society has developed criteria and operational procedures which will ensure that the support it provides is proportionate and appropriate.

In-kind support the Thoracic Society can provide includes:

- Review of progress and guidance in meeting the requirements of the grant.
- Marketing and communication through the society's online resources, such as promotion of research studies to our networks via the Thoracic Society website, newsletters and online portal.
- Information dissemination of research outputs.
- Utilisation of the specialist skills found within the membership.
- Translation of outcomes into professional development opportunities for the Thoracic Society members and other health professionals.
- At present the Thoracic Society does not provide monetary support.

Key objectives of this policy:

- Assist members to determine whether their activity or product is suitable to be considered for endorsement.
- Provide an operational framework for members requesting LOS and for TSANZ reviewers.

The Thoracic Society is committed to assist its members to attract funding for research proposals or major grants schemes that aligns with its strategic objectives.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all TSANZ letter of support activities.

3. Policy

- 3.1 The Thoracic Society will assess all requests for LOS in a fair, justifiable, and reasonable manner. Request for LOS must be aligned to the Thoracic Society's [strategic objectives](#). The Thoracic Society may provide LOS to multiple proposals competing for the same scheme, in the interest of supporting as much of the Thoracic Society's membership as possible and increasing the promotion of respiratory research in Australia.
- 3.2 The following conditions will apply for LOS application:
- Alignment with the society's mission and goals to prevent respiratory illness through research and health promotion and to improve health care for people with respiratory illness. Applicants will need to identify which goals the proposal supports.
 - At least one Principal investigator is an active TSANZ member.
 - Proposal must be approved by the host institution department/ faculty chair.
 - Must be free of any direct, or indirect or perceived link to tobacco or vaping organisation, company, or outlet. It is acceptable if the project requires purchase of tobacco or vaping products for research purposes.
 - If applicable, a full declaration of all other funding sources for the planned project must be provided.
 - Must demonstrate diversity and inclusion within the research team (including discipline, gender, geography, and involvement of early and mid-career respiratory health and research professionals, unless limited by the grant scheme requirements).
 - Proposal must be multi-centred and involve multi-disciplinary teams. Proposed sites must be listed.

Letter of Support requests will be treated as strictly confidential, and conflicts of interest will be considered when arranging review by formal delegate.

4. Process

- 4.1 To request a LOS, the applicant should:
- a. Send the completed application form to: TSANZawards@thoracic.org.au
 - b. Include the following information in your request:
 - Name of all chief and associate investigators, their organisations, and partners of the project
 - Contact details of the applicant
 - Title of proposal
 - Funding body
 - Scheme
 - Synopsis of the proposal (max two pages)
 - Any instructions and guidelines for the LOS requested by the funder.

- c. Address all required criteria listed in item 3.2.
- 4.2 Once the request is received, the Thoracic Society will:
- Assess the application against the above conditions.
 - Conduct a formal review, which will include a delegate from the Research Subcommittee and/or the Registries and Clinical Trial Subcommittee.
 - Determine the level of support it is able to offer, considering the request, and based on recommendations from the delegate.
- 4.3 A minimum of 20 working days is required for the requests to be processed. Applications submitted with less than 20 working days' notice will be considered, allowing for grant rounds that open with short submission periods, however a letter of support may not be able to be provided depending on staff capacity.
- 4.4 For successful applications, the Thoracic Society will provide the LOS with the requested information. The LOS will be on the society's official letterhead and will be co-signed by the Chief Executive Officer. The Thoracic Society will aim to provide a draft of this letter for review a minimum of one-week before the internal deadline, when a minimum 20 working days' notice is provided for the request.
- 4.5 Unsuccessful applicants will be notified by email.

5. Reporting of outcomes

- 5.1 As a recipient of a letter of support from the Thoracic Society, the applicants should notify the society about the grant outcome within 10 working days of receipt of grant outcome. This will remain confidential until embargos are lifted.
- 5.2 If your application is successful, the applicant must:
- Adhere to the Thoracic Society's [Code of Conduct](#).
 - Provide a summary of the study which may be disseminated through the Thoracic Society communications and forums.
- 5.3 The Thoracic Society invites regular and ongoing engagement in research development to enable enhanced in-kind support tailored for your project needs for future proposals.
- 5.4 The Thoracic Society may use the outcomes of supported proposals to exhibit the value and impact of our TSANZ members.
- 5.5 LOS are restricted to the research application they are provided for, and the Thoracic Society must be notified of any significant changes to the project.
- 5.6 Publications/ conference presentations arising from the project should state support from the Thoracic Society and include the Thoracic Society's logo.

6. Privacy

- 6.1 TSANZ privacy policy may apply.

- 6.2 The successful applicant agrees to the publication of their name, institution and a brief description of the research being undertaken on the TSANZ website and in member communications.

7. Related documents

- [TSANZ Strategic Objectives](#)
- [TSANZ Code of Conduct](#)
- [TSANZ Privacy Policy](#)
- [Letter of support request form](#)

8. Document History

This policy shall be reviewed at least every four years or more frequently if necessary.

Revised on	Version	Description	Approved by
17/03/23	1.0	Initial document created	TSANZ CEO