



RESEARCH FOR WELLNESS FUND FOR INTERVENTION 2025 CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Background and Purpose

The Honourable Minister of Health and Wellness, Dr. Christopher Tufton during his Sectoral presentation on May 7, 2019, announced the Ministry of Health and Wellness' Research for Wellness Fund.¹ An annual Fund of J\$50 Million which will be financed by the National Health Fund (NHF). The Fund will cover applied research based on competitive proposals, in line with identified challenges that are to be addressed.

Wellness is considered “the dynamic process by which persons become aware of and make choices toward a successful existence”.² Definitions of wellness include dimensions such as emotional, environmental, financial, intellectual, occupational, physical, social, and spiritual,^{2,3} nutritional and dental wellness.⁴ Although wellness for the most part is subjective, the World Health Organisation (WHO) linked this concept to the phenomenon of health, which is objectively measure; thus, objective measures of health and wellness would prove very beneficial in terms of wellness promotion and tailored interventions.⁵

In advancing the Wellness Agenda the Ministry of Health and Wellness (MOHW) recognizes the importance of working in key settings which: (1) are likely to reach the majority of the population and (2) involve important stakeholders within the community. This is referred to as a setting based approach to health promotion. This...”means addressing the contexts within which people live, work and play; and making these the object of inquiry and observation as well as the needs and capacities of different people to be found in different settings”.⁶

¹ Ministry of Health and Wellness. (2019) The Intervention. Sectoral Presentation. Dr. Christopher Tufton, MP. Kingston, Jamaica: Ministry of Health and Wellness

² National Wellness Institute. (2018). About Wellness. Accessed February 7, 2024. Retrieved from: <https://www.nationalwellness.org/page/AboutWellness>

³ Boston University. Eight Dimensions of Wellness. Accessed February 7, 2024. Retrieved from: <https://cpr.bu.edu/living-well/eight-dimensions-of-wellness/>

⁴ The Ohio State University - Student Wellness Center. (2019). Nine Dimensions of Wellness. Accessed February 7, 2024. Retrieved from: <https://swc.osu.edu/about-us/nine-dimensions-of-wellness/>

⁵ Oliver, M. (2018). Health to Wellness: A Review of Models and Transitioning Back to Health. Accessed February 7, 2024. Retrieved from: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/329258077_Health_to_Wellness_A_Review_of_Wellness_Models_andTransitioning_Back_to_Health/ink/5d1368ee299bf1547c8026bc/download

⁶ Poland, B., Krupa, G., & McCall D. (2009). Settings for Health Promotion: An Analytic Framework to Guide Intervention Design and Implementation. *Health Promotion Practice*, 505. doi:10.1177/1524839909341025

The wellness areas of focus for the Ministry are:

1. Wellness in the workplace
2. Wellness in schools
3. Wellness in homes
4. Wellness in communities
5. Wellness among persons living with non-communicable diseases and risk factors (tobacco use, physical inactivity, the harmful use of alcohol, unhealthy diets and air pollution)
6. Mental health
7. Maternal health

The MOHW is committed to using research evidence, to guide its policies in improving the wellness of persons within society.

Strategic Outcome 2.3 of the Ministry (extracted from the 10 year Strategic Plan 2019-2030) speaks to “evidence-based policy, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. The same source lists one of the strategic actions for this outcome as “develop and implement a funded Health Research Agenda to generate evidence to guide policy-making and monitoring and evaluation”.⁷ Research to be funded should take into consideration provisions of evidence, ranging from efficacy to effectiveness; with due consideration made to the contextual variation across communities. The above seven areas and settings will thus be used as the basis for which funding is provided, based on the proposed research to be conducted.

Eligibility for Consideration

The Research for Wellness Fund (RWF):

- Is open to research teams conducting research in Jamaica; multi-disciplinary teams are encouraged
- Must be led by a Principal Investigator, who is resident in Jamaica
- Must in the short-term, inform policy and practice for health and wellness, covering the following seven (7) priority areas listed above.

Proposal Review Criteria

The following will be the review criteria for all proposals.

An independent panel will provide evaluation for the proposals. The proposals will be assessed based on whether they demonstrate: an understanding of the existing literature and evidence base as relevant to the wellness area; appropriate research design and methodology; involvement of varied expertise in research and plans for actionable outputs for policymaking.

⁷ Ministry of Health and Wellness. Vision for Health 2030 – Ten Year Strategic Plan 2019-2030. pp. 21 Retrieved from: <https://www.moh.gov.jm/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/MOHV-Vision-for-Health-2030-Final.pdf>

An application does not need to be strong in all areas for the award to be granted. Further details are provided in Appendix 1.

*Significance*⁸

The project should address the following:

- Deal with a significant challenge or impediment to the attainment of health and wellness
- Specify how the planned research will promote scientific knowledge, policies and programmes, and/or practice
- Specify how the successful achievement of the aims will alter the concepts, methods, technologies, treatments, services or preventative interventions that foster health and wellness
- Specify whether a basis for ongoing and/or upcoming population health and comparative research will be provided

Investigators(s)

- All Programme Directors/Principal Investigators (PDs/PIs), collaborators and other researchers should be well suited to the project.
- If established, PDs/PIs should clearly demonstrate evidence of accomplishments that have advanced their respective fields.
- If the project has several investigators, it should have complementary and integrated expertise; and their leadership approach, governance and organisational structure should be suitable for the project.
- There should be suitable plans to ensure equitable partnership and shared decision-making across collaborators.
- There should be a detailed and satisfactory communication plan to ensure effective co-ordination among multiple investigators or collaborators.
- If the project is conducted in collaboration with researchers from another institution, a Letter of Support should be submitted.

Innovation

- The concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions should be synonymous with wellness.
- The fine-tuning, enhancement, or new application of theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions should be proposed.

⁸ Adapted from PAR-17-470 Clinical and Epidemiological Research on Chronic Disease in the Caribbean (R01). Accessed February 7, 2024. Retrieved from: <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/par-17-470.html>

Approach

- The general approach, methodology, and analyses should be well reasoned and suitable to achieve the definite aims of the project.
- Investigators must present strategies to ensure a robust and impartial approach as suitable for the work proposed.
- Possible problems, alternative strategies, and benchmarks for success should be presented.
- If the project is in the initial phase of development, the approach should establish feasibility and manage particularly risky aspects.
- Should the project involve human subjects, plans made should address: 1) the protection of these human subjects from research risks, and the 2) inclusion (or exclusion) of individuals on the basis of sex/gender, age, race, and ethnicity, in addition to the inclusion or exclusion of children, justified in terms of the intervention proposed.
- The data analysis plan should be sufficiently described and appropriate.
- The research proposal should be compliant with the necessary laws of Jamaica, including the Data Protection Act, 2020.

Environment

- The scientific environment in which the work will be done, should contribute to the probability of success.
- Where institutional support and physical resources are made available to investigators, these should be suitable for the project proposed.
- The project should benefit from distinctive features of the scientific environment, subject populations, or collaborative arrangements.
- Appropriate technical assistance should be available from collaborators, for investigators from non-research intensive institutions in the Caribbean.
- There should be sufficient capabilities for the confidential sharing of information and safe methods of transferring information and data.
- The financial management system should contribute to the probability of success.

Ethics Review and National Regulations

All research involving human subjects or animals will require ethical review. The disbursement of funds will be contingent on written documentation of ethical approval from the relevant ethics oversight bodies.

Proposals do not require ethical approval upon submission; however, PIs are urged to seek ethical approval while the proposal is under consideration for the grant, in order to facilitate efficient disbursement of funds.

The research proposal should be compliant with the necessary laws of Jamaica, including the Data Protection Act, 2020.

Applications

The application comprises four (4) parts and **all four (4) parts must be submitted** via the MOHW website at <https://www.moh.gov.jm/RFWF-submit/> to be considered a complete application:

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| Part 1 | The Research for Wellness Fund Application Form (fillable PDF) |
| Part 2 | The Workplan, Budget and Budget Justification (Microsoft Word document) |
| Part 3 | Declarations Form (Adobe PDF document) |
| Part 4 | Qualifications and Experience (Microsoft Word document) |

Submissions are to be made here: <https://www.moh.gov.jm/RFWF-submit/>

Proposals will be acknowledged within three (3) working days of submission. If there is no acknowledgement within this time, you may contact the Secretariat at RFFWFund@moh.gov.jm or telephone 876-633-8157.

Use of Funds

The proposal must represent a defined piece of research with complete deliverables; and it may form part of a larger project.

The RFWF grant will **NOT** provide:

- The cost of unspecified research
- Standard laboratory apparatus
- Long term technical support or training

Equipment

Any single item of equipment valued in excess of J\$500,000 will remain the property of the Ministry of Health and Wellness (MOHW). The MOHW at the termination of the project may request that such equipment be returned for use by other researchers. However, if grantees wish to use the equipment for other studies, they may apply to the Ministry for permission to do so.

Reporting Requirements

Awardees are required to submit progress reports biannually.

The **final report** of the project will consist of the following:

- Abstract Summary (1 page-maximum 500 words, size 12 font)
- Executive Summary (3 pages, size 12 font)
- Full Research Report (maximum 25 pages, size 12 font)
- Acknowledgments

- Introduction
- Methods
- Results
- Tables/Figures
- Discussion
- Implications for Practice (specify target audience)
- Implications for Policy (specify target audience)
- Directions for future research
- References
- Appendices (including Financial Report)

The Executive Summary or Abstract of the RFWF research project will be posted on the MOHW website.

Maximal Duration of the RFWF Project

The maximal duration of the RFWF project is three (3) years.

Applications for NO Funds Extension

The maximal duration of the RFWF project is three (3) years. If projects are not completed within a one (1) year timeline, a no funds extension of the project maybe considered.

Researchers should complete the Project Extension Application Form and submit to the RFWF Secretariat via email: RFWFund@moh.gov.jm. For further queries, please contact 876-633-8157.

Publications and Acknowledgments

All publications (journal articles, conferences, meetings, seminar materials etc.) arising from research conducted using funds from the Ministry of Health and Wellness, must bear an acknowledgement and disclaimer as appropriate.

For example:

This publication was supported by a Research Grant Award, funded by the Ministry of Health and Wellness, Jamaica. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Ministry of Health and Wellness, Jamaica.

Dissemination

Awardees are encouraged to present their findings at the National Health Research Conference; and will be expected to develop finding into full manuscripts for publication in peer-reviewed journals. They may also be asked to participate in other health discussion panels.

Value of Grants

Grants will be awarded for Tier 1 and Tier 2 studies.

- Tier 1 studies are those led by experienced or seasoned investigators with a research budget up to a maximum value of J\$20 million for the life of the project.
- Tier 2 studies are “proof of concept” research with a research budget of up to J\$ 5 million.

Proposal Assessment

The following outlines the scoring criteria that will be used in assessing the proposals.

An independent panel will evaluate the RFWF Proposals. The panel will assess the submissions based on whether they demonstrate: an understanding of the existing literature and evidence base as relevant to the wellness area; appropriate research design and methodology; involvement of varied expertise in research.

Round 1: Pre-Screening

All applications will be screened in the first round to determine if the applications:

- Align with any of the wellness areas-Pre-screening criteria 1 (PS1)
- Demonstrate researchers’ expertise, where the scope of the project will be examined in relation to the research team and combined skills-Pre-screening criteria 2 (PS2)

Note: Proposals that receive a fail in Round 1 will not be advanced to Round 2.

Round 2: Full Scoring

Applications that pass the first round will move on to Round 2 and then judged by an independent panel according to the adjudication criteria, outlined below. Applications with the highest scores will be sent on to the award committee for notification of awards.

Scoring Criteria Tier I & Tier II

Round 1 Review		
Pre-Screening Status (PS)	Review	Pre-Screening Criteria
1) Alignment to the Wellness Priority Areas	Pass or Fail	PS 1
2) The necessary qualifications and experience to conduct the proposed research and achieve its stated objectives	Pass or Fail	PS 2

Round 2 Adjudication		
Adjudication Criteria (AC)	Maximum Score	Adjudication Criteria
1) Scope of the project	10	AC 1
2) Research Environment & Research team composition (multi-disciplinary teams yes/no)	10	AC 2
3) Demonstrated rationale for pursuing research into indicated Topic	15	AC 3
4) Clear, realistic and measurable objectives, which can be achieved 5) within the approved timeframe, using the resources available	10	AC 4
6) A clearly defined plan for conducting the research	20	AC 5
7) A cogent review of the potential risks to the successful completion and feasible recommendations to minimize or eliminate these risks	5	AC 6
8) A pathway to impact on health policy development and/or implementation as well programmes or practices	20	AC 7
Total	100	ACF





RFFW Forms

Application Part	Form	Instructions
Part 1	Application Form	This is a fillable PDF. Please use Adobe or a PDF reader to complete this form.
Part 2	Workplan, Budget and Budget Justification	This is a Microsoft Word form.
Part 3	Declarations Form	This is an Adobe PDF form. This form is to be signed by the Principal Investigator and Business Official. This form should be scanned and uploaded in pdf format.
Part 4	Qualifications and Experience	Biographical Sketch template provided in Microsoft Word format

All four (4) forms must be submitted to be considered a complete application.

NB: Any proposal found to be in contravention of the listed instructions will not be considered for the adjudication process

RFFW Timeline

			
Call for Proposals	Close of Call for Proposals	Adjudication of Proposals	Identification of RFFW Awardees
December 1, 2025	March 31, 2026	May 2026	June 2026