

ASA Grant/Award Reviewer's Guideline, revised June 2022
Adapted from NHMRC Project Grant Category Descriptors 2018.

Applications for Australian Society of Anaesthetists (ASA) Science, Prizes, Awards and Research Committee (SPARC) Grants/Awards will be considered by a panel of 2-3 reviewers, appointed by the Chair of the SPARC, who may be a member of the panel. Reviewers and adjudicators will be ASA members or other suitably qualified individuals who are able to advise the Chair in relation to each grant or award.

Where an award, grant or prize relies on funding from the Healthcare Industry (HCI) a medical representative from that company may also be invited to adjudicate, as determined by the Chair of the SPARC.

The membership of each adjudicating panel will remain anonymous, unless consent is specifically sought by the Chair of the SPARC from each reviewer/adjudicator in that panel for the purpose of deliberating on the outcome of a specific grant(s). Reviewers and adjudicators will be acknowledged appropriately each year. All recommendations by the members of each adjudicating panel will be conveyed to the Chair of the SPARC, who shall advise applicants and the ASA Board in relation to successful and unsuccessful applications.

Assessors will rate the application against a set of criteria: Project Design & Methods, Originality, Scientific Merit, Clinical Relevance, Feasibility & Budget. Alignment with ASA research priorities, and/or opportunity for higher degree research completion, will be favourably viewed.

There will be no right of reply ("rebuttal") round.

The SPARC Committee will review the assessors reports and make recommendations to the Board. Awards will be announced prior to the NSC each year. Funds will be transferred after confirmation of ethics approval. All successful Grant/Award winners as condition of accepting funding will be expected to present their project at a future ASA public forum (State meeting or annual National Scientific Congress, journal publication, Australian Anaesthetist, or ASA podcast). All successful Grant winners as a condition of accepting funding will be expected to participate in future Grants as reviewers. All publications and presentations arising from the project are to acknowledge the ASA as the supporting organisation.

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Rating Descriptors	Project Design & Methods	Originality	Scientific Merit	Clinical Relevance	Feasibility & Budget
7. Outstanding	Well-defined, highly coherent and strongly developed project design AND/OR Has a near flawless study design/methods AND/OR Highly appropriate with all required expertise, research tools, and techniques well established	Would be highly competitive with the best, similar research proposals internationally and nationally. AND/OR Is highly innovative and introduces advances in concept(s)	Will almost certainly be the subject of invited plenary presentations at national/international meetings. AND/OR Will almost certainly result in highly influential publications.	Will result in a highly significant advance in knowledge in this field, or to address an issue of great importance to our specialty. AND/OR Will result in strong outcomes in the science underpinning issues related to our field AND/OR Will translate rapidly into fundamental or commercialisable outcomes that will transform the practice of anaesthesia, pain medicine, or intensive care.	Has expertise that specifically targets the proposed research both in terms of its depth and/or breadth. AND/OR Team has senior members with ability to strongly mentor junior investigators. AND/OR Has over the last 5 years, a combined record of research achievement that is outstanding by international and national standards. AND A budget that is realistic, justifiable, and

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					commensurate with the project
6. Excellent	Clearly defined, coherent and well developed design AND/OR Has a strong study design/methods AND/OR Is appropriate with all required tools, techniques and expertise established	Is likely to be competitive with strong, similar research proposals internationally and nationally AND/OR Highly innovative in concept	Will likely be the subject of invited plenary presentations at national and international meetings AND/OR Will likely result in influential publications	Will result in a significant advance in knowledge in this field, or to address an issue of importance to our specialty AND/OR Is likely to result in fundamental outcomes in the science underpinning issues related to our field AND/OR Is likely to translate into fundamental or commercialisable outcomes that will transform the practice of anaesthesia, pain medicine, or intensive care	Has expertise that is highly relevant to the proposed research both in terms of its depth and/or breadth. AND/OR Team has senior members with ability to mentor junior investigators. AND/OR Has over the last 5 years, a combined record of research achievement that is excellent by international and national standards. AND A budget that is realistic,

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					justifiable, and commensurate with the project
5. Very Good	A generally clear study design AND/OR Raises only a few minor concerns with respect to the study design/methods AND/OR Is appropriate in all, or nearly all, required tools, techniques and expertise either established or nearly established	May not be highly competitive with similar research proposals internationally and nationally AND/OR Is innovative in concept	Could be the subject of invited plenary presentations at national and international meetings AND/OR Likely to result in very strong publications	Will advance knowledge in this field, or to address an issue of importance to our specialty AND/OR May result in fundamental outcomes in the science underpinning issues related to our field AND/OR Very few concerns regarding likelihood to translate into fundamental or commercialisable outcomes that will transform the practice of anaesthesia, pain medicine, or intensive care	Raises only minor concerns regarding expertise relevant to the proposed research both in terms of its depth and/or breadth. AND/OR Team has members with very good/growing reputation to mentor junior investigators. AND/OR Has over the last 5 years, a combined record of research achievement that is well above average by international and

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					<p>national standards.</p> <p>AND With minor concerns, a budget that is realistic, justifiable, and commensurate with the project</p>
4. Good	<p>A generally solid study design, but not always clear in intent or lacks focus AND/OR Raises several minor concerns with respect to the study design/methods AND/OR Raises doubts in the appropriateness of the required tools, techniques and expertise</p>	<p>Is not likely to be competitive with similar research proposals internationally and nationally AND/OR Will in the main not introduce any innovative concepts</p>	<p>Is unlikely to be the subject of invited plenary presentations at national and international meetings AND/OR May result in some good but not excellent publications</p>	<p>Will incrementally advance knowledge in this field, or addresses an issue of some importance to our specialty AND/OR Unlikely to result in fundamental outcomes in the science underpinning issues related to our field AND/OR Raises some concerns regarding likelihood to translate into</p>	<p>Raises some significant concerns regarding expertise relevant to the proposed research both in terms of its depth and/or breadth. AND/OR Team has members with good/growing reputation to mentor junior investigators. AND/OR</p>

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				<p>fundamental or commercialisable outcomes that will transform the practice of anaesthesia, pain medicine, or intensive care</p>	<p>Has over the last 5 years, a combined record of research achievement that is average by international and national standards.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Due to some concerns, the budget may not be realistic, justifiable, or commensurate with the project</p>
3. Fair	<p>A somewhat unclear study design AND/OR Contains major flaws with respect to the study design/methods AND/OR Raises major concerns about the</p>	<p>Is not competitive with similar research proposals internationally and nationally AND/OR May have some innovative aspects while others underpin or extend existing concepts</p>	<p>May result in some publications</p>	<p>Addresses an issue of some importance to the practice of anaesthesia, pain medicine, or intensive care</p>	<p>Contributed to the field of research but there are some significant concerns regarding depth and breadth of expertise. AND/OR</p>

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	appropriateness of the tools, techniques and expertise				<p>Has over the last 5 years, a combined record of research achievement that is average for their peers/cohort.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Due to major concerns, budget is likely not to be realistic, justifiable, or commensurate with the project</p>
2. Marginal	<p>An unclear study design</p> <p>AND/OR</p> <p>Contains several major flaws with respect to the study design/methods</p> <p>AND/OR</p> <p>Raises several major concerns about the appropriateness of</p>	Very little with regards to innovative aspects	Unlikely to produce publications	Will not significantly address issues of importance to the practice of anaesthesia, pain medicine, or intensive care	<p>Significant concerns regarding depth and breadth of expertise.</p> <p>AND/OR</p> <p>Published only a few works in relevant and other fields of research</p>

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	the tools, techniques and expertise				AND Due to major concerns, budget is not realistic, justifiable, or commensurate with the project
1. Poor	Study design will not achieve outcomes and unlikely to be successful	Only follows previously well documented and studied concepts	Will not lead to publications	Will only address issues of more than marginal importance to the practice of anaesthesia, pain medicine, or intensive care	Research team is underpowered in terms of relevant expertise required to successfully complete project AND/OR Not productive to any significant extent in any field AND Due to major concerns, budget is not realistic, justifiable, or commensurate with the project