

GUIDELINES TO APPLYING FOR A GRANT

1. OVERVIEW

Neuromuscular WA is committed to empowering the lives of our community by providing you with the practical help you need now. One of the ways in which we aim to facilitate this is through the Empower Fund.

Through an application process, funds can be applied for by community members in support of being able to deliver on our mission of:

Understanding, inspiring and enriching the lives of all Western Australians living with neuromuscular conditions. We aim to be a leader in the support of those people and we want to be part of a national voice in achieving and maximising quality of life for the entire Australian neuromuscular community.

Being a member of the Neuromuscular WA community means access to services and support beyond medicine – Support for Life.

We want to be the first choice of support and to deliver a service model linking our community with appropriate personalised services.

2. OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the Empower Fund is to provide funding to our community, whereby you apply for a grant for money towards an item that cannot ordinarily be fully funded or supplied via other agencies (including the NDIS). It would also allow members of our community to enjoy life experiences that you wouldn't have otherwise been able to.

Given some of the significant challenges faced by many of our community, we believe it is important for you to have the opportunity to lead a life as fulfilling as those without a neuromuscular condition.

It is the aim that Empower Fund will have a long-term impact beyond immediate key outcomes. To apply for assistance, you must be able to demonstrate a genuine need and explain how the assistance requested will meet this need.

Once you have sent through your application, our Empower Grants team will ensure that other sources of funding have already been applied for by you as we are unable to grant money to you if you are able to obtain it from another organisation.

3. PARAMETERS

There are two types of funding that can be applied for:

1. An Empower Grant, where the outcomes are of a life-enriching or empowering nature.
2. An Empower Hardship Grant, where the applicant requires assistance in funding for an essential item that they, due to financial hardship, cannot pay for themselves.

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The Empower Fund Grants Committee meets after the close off date for each Grants round (except in circumstances where an application requires immediate consideration eg. Hardship Grant, where a circular resolution will be held instead).

Applications are considered against set eligibility guidelines, including a personal assessment, the eligibility matrix and is subject but not limited to the following conditions:

- Grants are capped at \$2,500 and precedent is not set by amounts granted in previous applications
- Quotes should be obtained by the applicant and a minimum of two quotes are required where items are greater than \$500 in value (except in circumstances where only one quote is possible and this will be approved at the discretion of the Grants Committee)
- Grants must be used/redeemed within 3 months of the initial approval notification (except for travel related grants which must be redeemed within 6 months).
- If you are requesting partial funding and the rest is to be funded by another party, you must be able to provide proof of your application through other means at the time of submitting your application with us. If you are provisionally approved, based on the remaining funds being provided by another party, we will require you to provide evidence of approval from the other party within 3 months of your application being provisionally approved by us or the funds will be allocated elsewhere.
- Aside from providing information necessary for grant assessment purposes, Neuromuscular WA will not disclose your information to a third party without your written permission. When a partial grant application is requested and a third-party grant agent is involved, this may be an occasion when we may be required to disclose your information included in the grant application. We may disclose your name, the item you have applied for, and the amount you have requested from Neuromuscular WA. We may also disclose to the third-party grant agent the amount that was successfully allocated to you.
- Where applications are medical in nature, supporting documentation is required from a medical professional (eg. Physiotherapist, Occupational Therapist etc) to show that the equipment or service is recommended and appropriate for use
- Applications may only be made by those residing in WA, who are Australian Residents, Citizens or granted Refugee status or hold a visa deemed appropriate by the Grants Committee and have muscular dystrophy or a neuromuscular condition
- To apply you must become a member of Neuromuscular WA and remain a member for at least 12 months (you can apply online at www.neuromuscularwa.org.au/referrals)
- Applications can be submitted by informal primary carers or directly by individuals with an NMC, however the grant must directly benefit or impact on the person living with an NMC
- The Empower Fund does not grant money towards research
- Each applicant must fully complete the Empower Fund Grant Application form and provide the relevant documentation
- As a general rule, there is a limit of one grant per recipient per 24 month period, except in special circumstances at the discretion of the Grants Committee
- Only one item will be funded per application, unless there are multiple items that are related to each other and required to be purchased together for the entire grant to meet the desired outcome

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- The Grants Committee will assess each grant thoroughly; if more information is required, a committee member may follow up via telephone or email
- The deliberation process may take up to two weeks post committee meeting for an outcome to be advised (every effort will be made to expedite Empower Hardship applications due to their timely nature)
- Please ensure that all questions are answered thoroughly on the application forms
- Please ensure that additional paperwork requested (eg. Quotes, support documentation etc) have been included when submitting the application so as not to delay the process of consideration. Should we need to contact a third party in relation to any quotes, or support documentation, we may be required to disclose certain information about your grant application. We may disclose your name, the item you have applied for, and the amount you have requested from Neuromuscular WA.
- If the grant application is successful, we require a business invoice from the company, organisation for the item/s requested
- If the grant application is successful and for where a reimbursement is required (eg. flights, accommodation), we will require a taxation/ itemised receipt to be able to process the reimbursement
- If you are applying for a grant and are under the age of 16 then you need to have a guardian sign the application form

4. EXCLUSIONS:

Neuromuscular WA aims to 'fill the gaps' and prioritise requests for which there are no alternate sources of support. If the Grants Committee believes that funding is already available through another agency, the applicant may be referred elsewhere, unless they can explain why they cannot access their support. Sometimes, Neuromuscular WA will provide 'top up' funding where another agency cannot fund the entire cost of equipment or a project. An example would be part contribution towards a mobility aid or car modifications.

The following exclusions apply:

- Retrospective funding – items which have been purchased prior to the opening date of the current Empower Fund round are not eligible for consideration. Applicants who purchase items before the outcome of the committee meeting do so at their own risk and are not guaranteed grant approval
- Funding for research
- Applications from organisations
- Cash donations
- Items where alternative funding sources are available. This includes NDIS eligible items. Proof of any unsuccessful alternate funding should be included in your application
- We do not fund vehicles for individuals/families but may fund maintenance/upkeep or modification items

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5. THE APPLICATION PROCESS

Fill in the application form and return to Neuromuscular WA prior to the cut-off date or, for Hardship applications, send through as soon as you have completed the application. Please read and answer all questions carefully – attach separate sheets if you require more space. Please feel free to request assistance from our team in filling out your application, we are more than happy to help!

Applications can be made at any time of year but will be presented and assessed at one of our Grants Committee meetings. The Grants Committee oversees all applications to ensure that requests are considered in a fair and equitable way and given priority in relation to urgency of need. If a request is deemed an emergency, the Committee will be contacted to consider the request outside of its two annual meetings via circular resolution.

Participants will be notified in writing once a decision is made. We respect the personal nature of the details you submit and will provide complete confidentiality. Please note, as part of our accountability procedures, Neuromuscular WA provides the Neuromuscular WA board with a list of successful grants each financial year, including the suburb/disadvantage of individual recipients. If you have any concerns regarding this procedure, please contact the Neuromuscular WA office.

Document Control - GUIDELINE AMENDMENTS:

March 2022 - proposed to Empower Committee

- Addition of Clause numbers to document.
- Addition to Clause 3. successful applicants have 12 months to use travel related grants
- Amendment to Clause 3. where grants are medical in nature only one piece of supporting documentation from a medical professional is required instead of two
- Addition to Clause 3. additional paperwork requirements are described for payments and reimbursements
- Amendment to Clause 4. reimbursement statement removed
- Amendment to Clause 4. CAEP changed to NDIS
- Amendment to Clause 4. prior to the date of "Committee Meeting" changed to "the current Empower Fund round"
- Addition to Clause 4. "Applicants who purchase items before the outcome of the committee meeting do so at their own risk and are not guaranteed grant approval."
- Amendment to Clause 5. the words applications 'for assistance' removed
- Amendment to Clause 5. phrase 'meetings aimed to be held every 6 months' removed, replaced with word 'meetings'

April 2023

Clause 3 Parameters: Add Clause:

- Aside from providing information necessary for grant assessment purposes, Muscular Dystrophy WA will not disclose your information to a third party without your written permission. When a partial grant application is requested and a third-party grant agent is involved, this may be an occasion when we may be required to disclose your information included in the grant application. We may disclose your name, the item you have applied for, and the amount you have requested from MDWA. We may also disclose to the third-party grant agent the amount that was successfully allocated to you.

Clause 3 Parameters:

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- Remove clause: Please ensure that additional paperwork requested (eg. Quotes, etc) have been included when submitting the application so as not to delay the process of consideration.
- Replace with: Please ensure that additional paperwork requested (eg. Quotes, support documentation etc) have been included when submitting the application so as not to delay the process of consideration. Should we need to contact a third party in relation to any quotes, or support documentation, we may be required to disclose certain information about your grant application. We may disclose your name, the item you have applied for, and the amount you have requested from MDWA.

July 2023

- Rebrand of document to align with new name Neuromuscular WA and brand
- Addition of footer:
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