



## **Applying for NSW-ACT HGSA Branch Committee quarterly Grants ("Branch Grants")**

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### **Summary:**

The NSW/ACT Branch of the HGSA has announced a pilot program of quarterly Branch Grants. The intention of these Branch Grants is to support innovative proposals that expand the range of activities available to NSW/ACT Branch members of HGSA.

### **General principles for use of the Branch Grants**

The Branch Committee has developed the following draft principles:

1. Branch Grants must always be used for the benefit of HGSA members, in line with the Mission, Vision and Strategic Plan of the HGSA.
  - Arising from this, activities funded by the Branch must be open to all Branch members (and ideally open to all HGSA members)
2. Within this, anything that has the potential to attract additional, new members and to grow the membership base should be viewed particularly favourably.
3. SIGs already charge an annual fee to cover planned activities for their members. We assume that this fee is set at a level to cover the cost of these planned activities.
4. Branch Grants are useful to explore "new" activities, or "experimental" activities, which the SIGs might not have included in their planning or annual funding.
5. Branch Grants are also useful for activities that cross between or cut across several different SIGs.
6. Branch Grants are not intended for recurrent activities that are primarily of interest to only one SIG. Those activities should be factored into the SIG annual membership fees.
7. Although not the primary purpose of Branch Grants, proposals of a purely social nature can be supported from time to time, if the Branch Committee feels these contribute to the professional activities, advancement, networking or cohesion of the broader membership.
8. The Branch is currently considering how best to represent groups and constituencies that are not historically or currently well represented. These include:

- Student members, early- and mid-career members (especially noting the challenges to genomic workforce capacity). For this reason, funded activities should ideally offer free or discounted participation by student and early-career members.
  - Regional, rural and remote members, who may be disadvantaged by inability to attend Branch activities (but noting this is being ameliorated, at least in part, by videoconferencing)
9. Announcement of Branch Grants will indicate the maximum funding available per application. These funds can be used to support partial/co-funded applications.
  10. All supported Branch Grants require a post-event feedback/report to assess which events were successful, and any lessons learned from the experience.

### **Guidelines for funding support:**

1. The Branch Committee will invite submissions notionally on a quarterly basis.
  - a. The Call for Proposals will indicate an amount of funds available per application.
  - b. The Branch Committee reserves the right not to fully allocate available funds
2. A web-based application form will be offered to simplify and standardise the application process. This form will seek certain standardised information to help the Committee understand and assess the merits of each application.
3. Applications for Branch Grants will be viewed particularly favourably if they demonstrate any or all of the following:
  - a. Of likely interest to a broad spread of membership (i.e. more than one SIG)
    - i. If the proposal is focussed into just one SIG area, then applicants are expected to also approach that SIG for funding.
  - b. Include access to those in regional or remote locations, or who have difficulty accessing standard venues (videoconferencing can be arranged, and will be funded if requested)
    - i. Funding can be sought to “add” virtual attendance to a “physical” function.
  - c. Of particular interest to student, early- and mid-career members, or which focus on professional development and educational opportunities
4. Where Branch Grant funding is provided, then HGSA members must be able to attend either free-of-charge, or at a concessional rate compared to non-HGSA members.
5. Branch Grants can be sought for an entire event, or for only partial support of an event (with supplementary or additional funding sought from elsewhere)
6. On completion of a Branch Grant funded activity, the applicant must provide a report to the Branch Committee, summarising the use to which the funds had been applied, and the outcome of the activity. Optionally, the applicant may offer suggestions for improvement to assist future applications and applicants.

### **Code of Conduct**

1. Branch committee members should declare any potential Conflicts of Interest (CoI), and these must be resolved before they can participate in consideration of any submissions.
  - a. Potential CoIs could be resolved by:

- i. Noting that the potential Col is not an actual Col, in which case the committee member can participate fully,
  - ii. Or by the member absenting themselves from the funding allocation process, either throughout the entire consideration of the proposal, or only abstaining from the final vote for allocation of funding.
  - iii. The Branch President is responsible for assessing the degree of potential Col and the adequacy of the proposed resolution plan
  - iv. Where the Branch President declares a potential Col, then the Branch Secretary (or Vice-President/President-Elect, or Past-President, where these roles are filled) will perform the role of assessing the resolution plan for the President's potential Col
2. Applicants for Branch Grants should refrain from any unsolicited contact with Committee members regarding an application during the fund allocation process.