

## FAQs for WDARF

### **1. What is the Workforce Development Applied Research Fund (WDARF)?**

The WDARF is a national-level research fund which aims to foster high quality and rigorous applied research in skills and workforce development and lifelong learning to support SkillsFuture Singapore's key thrusts and national-level policies. It encourages inter-disciplinary research and seeks to strengthen research capabilities, through leveraging both local and international expertise.

### **2. What is SSG's role in the WDARF?**

SkillsFuture Singapore (SSG) drives and coordinates the implementation of the national SkillsFuture movement, promotes a culture of lifelong learning and a quality ecosystem of adult education and training in Singapore. To support SkillsFuture Singapore's key thrusts and national level policies, SSG sets the research agenda, initiates and funds the WDARF grant.

### **3. What is IAL's role in the WDARF?**

IAL administers the WDARF grant on behalf of SSG.

### **4. What research does the WDARF support?**

WDARF supports cutting-edge, key applied research in the following three research themes:

- Developing Effective Adult Learning Pedagogies & Skills Development Strategies
- Facilitating Learning & Career Choices among Adult Learners
- Enhancing Employment Outcomes through Adult Learning & Skills Development

The details of the research themes are in the attached [WDARF Research Focus](#), pages 6 to 13.

## **5. Who is eligible for the WDARF?**

Researchers from Institutes of Higher Learning (IHLs) such as the Universities, Polytechnics and ITE who have their campuses in Singapore; and local organisations with research units, such as:

- Research institutes;
- Social/industry groups;
- Continuing Education and Training (CET) Providers; and
- Government organisations

are eligible to apply for the WDARF grant.

## **6. Are foreign institutions (outside of Singapore) allowed to apply for the WDARF?**

Foreign institutions and researchers may partner a local Host Institution to submit a joint research proposal. Foreign researchers may participate as Principal Investigator, Co- Principal Investigator or Collaborator or be a member of the research team. Research teams may comprise international researchers but must include at least one Singaporean or Singapore Permanent Resident.

## **7. What components are funded by the WDARF?**

Fundable components include:

- manpower expenses for personnel engaged directly for the research report;
- survey administration and logistic costs;
- printing of final reports and other deliverables as stipulated in the proposal; and
- other direct expenses required for the project.

The details of the fundable components are in [WDARF Administration Guidelines](#), pages 15 to 18.

## **8. How is collected data managed within the WDARF?**

All anonymised data generated from the Research will be made available to user communities which includes other researchers, analysts and policy makers at the earliest feasible opportunity, which shall be no later than twelve (12) months after the end of the Term or official date of publication, whichever is earlier. More details are available in [WDARF Administration Guidelines](#), page 12.

## **9. How are Intellectual Property (IP) rights allocated within the WDARF?**

The ownership of IP created as a result of the research funded by WDARF is subject to the prevailing Intellectual Property policies and guidelines of the Host Institution. The Host Institution shall pay all costs and legal fees in connection with IP registration and management, where applicable.

The Host Institution is to grant to the Singapore Government and public sector agencies, free of any additional charge, a worldwide, perpetual, irrevocable and non-exclusive licence to use, modify, adapt, publish and reproduce for any purpose whatsoever all IP created from the WDARF for non-commercial, R&D and/or educational purposes.

The Singapore Government and public sector agencies shall be entitled to grant its contractors sub-licenses out of any of its rights.

The Host Institution may publish at any symposia; national, regional, international professional meetings; or in any journals, dissertation, newspaper or otherwise. All publications shall acknowledge the funding support by SSG by citing the Grant name 'SkillsFuture Singapore's Workforce Development Applied Research Fund' and SSG's official grant number for the project. It is the Principal Investigator's and Host Institution's responsibility to ensure that the protection of any IP is not compromised as a result of the research publication of the research project. More details regarding Intellectual Property rights are available in [WDARF Administration Guidelines](#), pages 11 to 13.

## **10. What is the allowed duration for completion of WDARF projects?**

Project duration is capped at 24 months, and will adhere to the approved timeline committed in the proposal. Projects longer than 24 months may be funded on a case-by-case basis and are subject to approval.

## **11. How do interested parties apply for the WDARF?**

Interested parties seeking to apply for the WDRAF may access the relevant forms and information at <https://www.ial.edu.sg/access-research/grants-and-schemes/wdarf-grant-call.html>

## **12. What other conditions need to be observed during the application process?**

Applicants are strongly encouraged to collaborate closely with potential users of the research to foster the effective translation of research into policy or practice. Details of the stakeholders, including SSG, and the nature of their involvement/collaboration should be provided in the submitted proposals.

If applicants require assistance in identifying the appropriate stakeholders in SSG, the respective PIs may engage with SSG's Research Office (RO) through the WDARF Secretariat to clarify the relevance of potential ideas to SSG, and on the relevant stakeholder division. PIs should have well-developed and considered proposals with several ideas on possible translation and implementation.

Applicants are also reminded that proposals are subject to independent evaluation by external experts, and that any preliminary stance/response to proposals or ideas by WDARF Secretariat or SSG Research Office is not indicative of the likelihood of a successful grant award.

## **13. How are WDARF applications evaluated?**

The proposals will be evaluated by an expert panel appointed by SSG based on relevance and impact; technical merits and project team and execution. The panel may be informed and supplemented by peer reviews by experts in the specific fields, to make informed evaluation.

The proposals and input from the expert panel, as well as inputs from potential users of the research (including SSG), will be submitted to SSG Research Committee (RC) for selection and approval. The Research Committee will also consider factors such as the applicability of research to policy, programme and intervention design and implementation.

Principal Investigators will be notified of the results through their Office of Research. The SSG Research Committee reserves the right to reject any or all proposals submitted without being obliged to give any reason thereof. Appeals will not be entertained.

## **14. When are applications open?**

Applications are open from 26 July 2021 to 8 October 2021. All applications and accompanying documents have to be submitted through the Host Institutions' Office of Research (or equivalent) to SSG through IAL. Host Institutions shall send all finalised documents (in both word and pdf version) to [research@ial.edu.sg](mailto:research@ial.edu.sg) by 6pm (GMT+8) on 8 October 2021.

**15. When can I expect to sign my WDARF Grant Agreement and start my project if approved?**

Typically, it will take 3 months after SSG RC approves the projects in January 2022.

**16. What are some factors that could delay the signing of my WDARF Grant Agreement?**

Host institutions may have clarifications on the grant agreement clauses, it is strongly recommended for host institutions to review the clauses in detail upon confirmation of the grant call results. You may request for/refer to a copy of the grant agreement online. Also, delays could occur if PIs are slow to address any need for amendment or re-consideration of proposal elements as raised by RC.

**17. How much funding is allocated for WDARF? Are there caps or funding limits for individual proposals or institutions that can be used as a guide when scoping proposals?**

A total of \$10 million has currently been allocated as competitive grant under WDARF for the next five years till 2025. There are no funding limits/caps imposed on proposals and institutions.

**18. Can grantees/awardees be expected to be granted access to the data collected by SSG from programme implementation, to support proposed research?**

SSG has in place rigorous data privacy and protection guidelines to safeguard data collected as part of its work and programme implementation. All requirements for SSG data should be stated clearly and adequately justified in the submitted proposal, and would be subject to SSG's approval on a case-by-case basis. To improve the feasibility of the proposal, applicants are recommended to identify alternative data sources to support their research, in the event that SSG is unable to provide the requested data.