

Research FAQs - for researchers

Why do I have to apply to conduct research?

The department has a duty of care to protect students and support schools to focus on learning and teaching, reducing additional burdens on teachers and departmental staff.

As per approval processes in all other states and jurisdictions, we ask researchers to provide information on their research, including copies of research instruments, consent forms and methodology so we can assess whether the value of the research outweighs any inconvenience or risk to staff and students.

Are there research projects that don't need to be appraised by central/regional office?

If your research includes the involvement of departmental staff, intellectual property (including data), schools or students – you will need the support of the Research Subcommittee.

If you are unsure if your research fits into this category, please contact ResearchApps.det@nt.gov.au to discuss.

Does the department provide ethics clearance?

No. The department provides its support to conduct research in schools. Most research projects will require ethics approval from an accredited Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC). This is usually through the supervising university or research institution.

It is recommended that researchers seek ethics approval from an NT-based HREC; this can be in parallel with the Research Subcommittee application process:

- [HREC of the NT Department of Health and Menzies School of Health Research](#)
- [Central Australian Human Research Ethics Committee \(CAHREC\)](#)
- [Charles Darwin University HREC](#) (for CDU researchers only)

I've been commissioned by the department to do a research project involving department staff and/or students, do I still need to apply for permission to conduct research?

Yes. All activity that meets the submission criteria in our guidelines must go through the application process. This includes independent evaluations commissioned by government agencies.

I'm evaluating a school program. Is this considered research and will I need to submit an application given that I already have permission to do the program?

Evaluations are generally considered research if they involve collecting new data and if the findings will be published. If the evaluation includes these activities, it requires a research application.

How do I apply to conduct research?

You will need to submit an application for consideration by the Research Subcommittee. The application form and information on the application process can be found on the [NTG About Research website](#).

If your research involves other jurisdictions, you may wish to use the National Application Form, available on the [Australian Association for Research in Education](#) website, which is accepted by all jurisdictions.

If you require any additional information, please contact ResearchApps.det@nt.gov.au.

How long does the application process take?

The application process usually takes 6 weeks from lodgement, including assessment, internal consultation and consideration at monthly Research Subcommittee meetings. A thorough appraisal process is important to ensure the department discharges its duty of care to students, and limits unnecessary additional work for teachers and other staff. The length of time required depends on:

- how complex the research is
- how many areas of the department are involved in the appraisal process
- the time it takes for researchers to respond to departmental requests
- the number of applications being assessed by the research team.

Do I need to have ethics approval before applying?

No. You may submit your ethics application concurrently with your application to the Research Subcommittee. If the Research Subcommittee supports your research and your ethics application is still pending, conditional support may be granted until confirmation of ethics approval is provided.

For more information please view our guideline document accessible through the [About Education Research webpage](#).

Do I need to contact the Research team prior to seeking interest from schools?

No. You may contact schools regarding your research to gauge their interest and discuss suitability. If interested, schools may provide a letter of support for your research, which can be submitted with your application. However, you must not begin your research project until you have received a letter of support from the Research Subcommittee.

Can my research application be expedited?

The department will do its best to process applications as quickly as possible. Expedited assessment is not available. However, if you do have tight timeframes for your research project, please make it clear in your submission. Timeframes will depend on the completeness and complexity of the application, and the volume of other applications currently being assessed.

If my supervisor or colleague is not available to sign the research application, can you start processing without their signature?

Yes. If you let us know that the signature is coming and submit all other required documents, we are happy to begin the review process. However, permission to approach will not be given until we've received all signatures.

How long is my letter of support from the Research Subcommittee valid for?

A research application is valid for a six-month period after the expected report completion date stated in the original research application. If you are expecting delays, please liaise with Researchapps.DET@nt.gov.au.