

DRAFT POSITION DESCRIPTION

Employer: Blood Cancer NZ

Position: Research Strategy Lead

Term 12-month fixed term

FTE: 0.5 FTE (or full-time over 6 months by agreement)

Reporting to: Chief Executive Officer

Background and Role purpose

Blood Cancer NZ is the national charity supporting New Zealanders affected by blood cancer. We provide practical and emotional support to patients and whānau, advocate for better access to medicines, treatment and care, and invest in research to improve outcomes.

Research is a core pillar of our 2025–2029 Strategic Plan. We invest approximately \$700,000 annually in blood cancer research, with expert oversight from our Medical and Scientific Committee and strong national relationships with clinicians and researchers.

As we prepare to significantly increase research investment, we want a more proactive, nationally coordinated and impact-led approach. The Research Strategy Lead will build on our existing research impact to develop a clear, forward-looking research roadmap.

This is an opportunity to:

- Consolidate and articulate the impact we are already achieving
- Develop a disciplined strategy ahead of planned increased investment
- Strengthen national alignment across the research ecosystem
- Position Blood Cancer NZ as a strategic leader and convenor

This role is designed to ensure that as our research funding grows, it does so with clarity, direction and measurable impact.

Key responsibilities

Showcase and strengthen existing research impact

Blood Cancer NZ has a strong history of supporting meaningful research. This role will:

- Complete a formal impact review of our research portfolio
- Consolidate outcomes and lessons from past investment
- Identify strengths and areas of strategic opportunity
- Develop governance-ready and donor-ready impact material

This work will highlight the difference our funding is already making and ensure future decisions build on proven success.

Develop a forward-looking research funding strategy

As we prepare to increase investment, we are seeking to define how we will prioritise and allocate funding over the next three to five years.

The Research Strategy Lead will:

- Develop a clear Research Funding Strategy aligned to our Strategic Plan

- Define priority areas based on patient need and system gaps
- Clarify the balance between contestable grants and strategic investments
- Ensure our approach reflects best practice internationally
- Establish a disciplined and transparent framework for future funding

This strategy will provide confidence to the Board, donors and research partners as investment scales.

Lead development of a national blood cancer research roadmap

Blood Cancer NZ is uniquely positioned to support stronger coordination across New Zealand's blood cancer research ecosystem.

This role will:

- Engage clinicians, researchers and institutions nationally
- Identify areas of unmet need and opportunity
- Align research priorities with patient impact
- Develop a practical national research roadmap
- Position Blood Cancer NZ as a convenor and strategic partner

The goal is to enhance coordination, clarity and collaboration across the sector.

Strengthen collaborative and co-investment opportunities

As investment grows, collaboration becomes increasingly important.

The Research Strategy Lead will:

- Identify opportunities for co-funding and partnership
- Explore collaboration with public funders and other charities and grant makers
- Assess mechanisms to leverage our investment for greater impact
- Develop partnership-ready frameworks where appropriate

Strengthen governance and strategic oversight

Blood Cancer NZ already has strong governance structures, including a Medical and Scientific Committee.

This role will:

- Work closely with the Committee to align processes to the new strategy
- Ensure research decision-making remains robust and transparent
- Provide structured updates to the Senior Management Team and Board
- Embed best-practice governance frameworks

Support research storytelling and donor engagement

A clear strategy strengthens donor confidence.

The Research Strategy Lead will:

- Translate research strategy into compelling narrative
- Support major donor conversations
- Contribute to case-for-support material

- Ensure research messaging is aligned with impact

This will enable Blood Cancer NZ to confidently invite greater philanthropic participation in research.

Deliver a practical implementation roadmap

At the conclusion of the 12-month term, the role will deliver:

- A completed Research Impact Review
- A Board-approved Research Funding Strategy
- A National Blood Cancer Research Roadmap
- Clear recommendations for collaborative investment
- An implementation roadmap for the next phase of growth

What we're looking for

We are seeking an experienced research development leader with:

- Experience in health, medical research or research funding
- Strong strategic planning capability
- Credibility with clinical and academic stakeholders
- Experience producing governance-level documentation
- Ability to operate independently in a time-bound mandate
- Excellent stakeholder engagement and facilitation skills

An understanding of the New Zealand research ecosystem is highly desirable.

Why this role matters

This role represents the next stage in our research impact evolution. It ensures we move proactively, strategically and collaboratively as investment increases.

It is an opportunity to shape the future of blood cancer research in New Zealand and strengthen outcomes for patients and whānau across Aotearoa.