

RESEARCH COLLABORATION OPPORTUNITY

“Transforming Pet Ownership Behaviour: A Strategic Approach to Cat Licensing and Sterilisation”

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)

Please note that the FAQs will be updated periodically. Please refer to the AVS Cat Management Framework webpage for the latest version of the FAQs.

1. GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

- 1.1 Should the project proposal address all the research objectives and deliverables stated in the Research Collaboration Opportunity, or can the proposal address part of them? Can the proposal include other research objectives besides those mentioned in the Research Collaboration Opportunity, if the project teams assess these to be relevant?**

Proposals should address all the research objectives and deliverables stated in the Research Collaboration Opportunity, and may also include additional scope as deemed relevant, keeping in mind the maximum funding support for the Research Collaboration Opportunity. Proposals that only address the research objectives partially may not be considered favourably and additional objectives may potentially be deemed out of scope. NParks’ decision on project and funding support will be final.

We strongly encourage researchers in project teams to collaborate with other researchers to develop a comprehensive proposal that addresses all the stated research objectives and deliverables.

- 1.2 Will NParks share the data required to carry out the research for the project?**

Applicants should clearly identify the source of any essential data required for the proposed project during proposal submission, such as under the “Methodology and Work Plan” section of the project proposal. Applicants may also indicate whether they already know that the required data exists.

NParks may help to facilitate data sharing, including from other stakeholders (e.g.agencies) where appropriate and relevant. Please note that access to data is ultimately subject to permission from the respective data owners.

- 1.3 Will NParks facilitate the application for permits and provide support for research to be undertaken at NParks-managed sites?**

NParks will facilitate discussion with the respective site managers of the NParks-managed sites. Research teams are ultimately responsible for applying for and ensuring

the validity of the necessary permits, and the final decision for the granting of permits lies with the site managers responsible for each respective site, at their own discretion.

NParks, at its own discretion, may also provide on-site support to facilitate the project activities at its own managed sites.

1.4 Can NParks staff be listed as Co-PIs or Collaborators in a submitted proposal?

The Research Collaboration Opportunity has already been conceptualised in consultation with NParks' staff, who will be involved in evaluating and refining submitted proposals and driving and participating in the awarded research project.

As such, NParks' staff should not be listed as Co-PIs or Collaborators in the initial submitted proposal, nor directly involved in the preparation of any proposal.

Please direct all enquiries on the Research Collaboration Opportunity, including technical details of the research topic, to ALICIA _TAY@nparks.gov.sg or LIN_HUI_LING@nparks.gov.sg.

1.5 Is an applicant allowed to participate in multiple proposals for the Research Collaboration Opportunity, as per the following scenarios?

(1) The applicant is a Lead PI in one proposal and a Co-PI/Collaborator in other proposal(s).

(2) The applicant is a Co-PI/Collaborator in more than one proposal.

Applicants are allowed to participate in multiple proposals for the Research Collaboration Opportunity, such as in the aforementioned scenarios. Nevertheless, applicants should ensure that they are able to fulfil the roles and responsibilities that they have committed to take on across multiple proposals.

1.6 What is the mechanism for fund disbursement?

Fund disbursement will be via reimbursement, and in accordance with identified payment milestones as described in the payment schedule agreed upon between NParks and the institution of the Lead PI. This is provided that there is compliance with NParks' requirements for reimbursement.

1.7 Does the stipulated funding support for the Research Collaboration Opportunity correspond to the cost of a project before, or after the tiered funding support levels have been applied (for projects with private sector entities)?

The stipulated support for the Research Collaboration Opportunity corresponds to the total supportable costs of a project. For projects involving private sector entities, this corresponds to the cost of a project after the relevant tiered funding support levels have been applied.

1.8 How many projects will be awarded under the Research Collaboration Opportunity?

NParks intends to award a single project under the Research Collaboration Opportunity.

1.9 When will successful applicants for the Research Collaboration Opportunity be informed?

All applicants will be informed on the outcome of their grant applications from Q2 2026 onwards.

1.10 Regarding data security certification, our institution holds the Cyber Trust Mark (CTM) certification. Would this be sufficient?

The Cyber Trust Mark (CTM) certification your institution holds may be relevant, but its sufficiency will depend on the specific project requirements. The cybersecurity and data protection certifications needed are determined on a case-by-case basis following project evaluation, as different projects have varying security requirements.

1.11 What kind of agreement is required between institutions and NParks?

For successful projects, a Project Agreement (also referred to as a Research Collaboration Agreement or RCA) will be signed between the institution and NParks. This agreement will contain the relevant terms and conditions governing the research collaboration.

1.12 Are we allowed to request technical feedback from NParks during the proposal writing process?

No, technical feedback cannot be provided before proposals are evaluated to ensure fairness to all applicants. However, if you have any general questions about the study, you can send them to ALICIA_TAY@nparks.gov.sg. Answers to all received queries will be reflected in the Grant Call FAQs document, which will be updated periodically to ensure all applicants have equal access to additional information.

2. RESEARCH TOPIC

2.1 Are there specific areas of responsible pet ownership that NParks prioritises?

While working with a diverse range of people within the population, you may identify other areas requiring attention. Although ideas to manage these additional areas may be considered, the primary focus should remain on improving compliance in licensing and increasing sterilisation rates of pet cats.

2.2 When should interventions be implemented?

Interventions should be implemented from 1 Sep 2026, after the transition period for cat licensing ends.

2.3 What licensing-related data is available?

The grantee will have access to current licensing and related demographic data (e.g. age, housing type), after award. Targeted surveys could be conducted to supplement existing data.

2.4 Does NParks have a preference for specific methodologies or approaches for conducting the study?

Applicants are expected to propose methodologies that best suit the research objectives and demonstrate why their chosen approach is the most appropriate for achieving the study goals. Acceptable methodologies include: (i) Randomised Control Trial (RCT); (ii) Implementation and Process Evaluation; or (iii) an alternative methodology proposed by the research team, provided it is clearly explained and justified in the proposal for AVS' consideration

2.5 Are there any particular populations or regions that NParks is more interested in focusing on (e.g., lower-income communities, demographic groups)?

The study should examine the whole population as the primary focus. However, if the research team wishes to focus on specific populations or regions within this broader scope, applicants are expected to propose which populations or regions should be the focus of the study and provide justification for their selection.

2.6 Are there any key performance indicators (KPIs) that NParks expects the researchers to track throughout the study (e.g., behaviour change, knowledge increase, community involvement)?

Yes, NParks expects researchers to track several key performance indicators throughout the study, including how well the intervention is reaching the community, whether it is achieving its intended purpose, signs of improved compliance, and the sustainability of any changes observed. Applicants should propose appropriate metrics and measurement methods to assess these areas effectively.

2.7 Are there specific data or outcomes that NParks is particularly interested in, such as measuring long-term behavioural change or the impact of a particular intervention?

Applicants should propose appropriate metrics and evaluation methods to assess intervention effectiveness and demonstrate potential scalability to other areas of responsible pet ownership.

2.8 Is NParks open to partnerships with other institutions or organisations to help execute and implement strategies for achieving the study objectives? (e.g., animal groups, veterinary clinics, universities)?

Yes, partnerships with relevant institutions and organisations are welcomed. AVS currently collaborates with our Lead Partner for the Trap-Neuter-Release/Rehome-Manage (TNRM) programme for community cats, the Cat Welfare Society (CWS), to implement the Pet Cat Sterilisation Support (PCSS) programme. Applicants are encouraged to propose partnerships with other institutions or organisations that can effectively contribute to achieving the study objectives.

2.9 How does NParks measure and monitor the effectiveness of its Cat Management Framework (CMF) programmes for sterilisation, microchipping, and licensing, and are there mechanisms in place to identify gaps or areas of fall-out?

NParks tracks cat sterilisation, microchipping, and licensing rates through monthly licensing data; however, these figures cannot currently be attributed to any specific policy, programme or outreach effort. The current estimate of the cat population in Singapore (94,900 cats in 2025) is derived from a Euromonitor report, based on pet food sales analysis.

2.10 What is the intended scale of this study? Is the intention for it to be nationwide? Is NParks open to conducting localised pilot studies that use tailored outreach approaches to reach specific demographics?

Researchers are encouraged to propose the most impactful approach achievable within the time and funding constraints. Localised interventions should be scalable for nationwide implementation. Evidence based approaches targeting specific demographics are encouraged.

2.11 Will current interventions be paused or stopped during the study period in order to isolate the effects of the intervention and minimise confounding factors?

NParks' ongoing and planned initiatives under the Cat Management Framework including publicity, outreach and programmes will continue; these cannot be paused or halted for the study. Researchers should account for these in designing their methodology.

2.12 Are we permitted to engage external industry partners for collaboration, or is prior approval required?

Researchers may propose collaboration with relevant stakeholders (e.g. animal groups, veterinary clinics), not limited to AVS' network. Researchers may conduct preliminary sensing to gauge interest, but this should not be communicated as a confirmed or AVS-endorsed collaboration. Formal engagement with potential collaborators should not take place prior to the award, to avoid confusion or misrepresentation. Potential collaborators may be named in the proposal, but formal partnerships should only be established upon award.

Where the collaborator is an overseas entity, the following funding arrangements apply:

- If the overseas entity is formally named as a Co-Investigator or Collaborator in the proposal, they are not eligible to receive any funding under the funding guidelines. The main PI is also not permitted to reimburse them, as this would be considered an indirect transfer of funding.
- If the overseas entity is not formally part of the project team, the main PI may engage them as a consultant or contractor for specific aspects of the research and compensate them for their services using project funding.

Where a private institution collaborates with a local IHL, the private institution will be eligible for 30% to 50% (depending on type/size of private entity) of direct costs for their component, while the local IHL will be eligible for 100% of direct costs and 30% of indirect costs for their component. Both parties are required to submit a detailed budget breakdown as part of their proposal

2.13 Given that the proposed intervention may evolve based on findings from the initial research/fact-finding phase, is NParks open to amending or adjusting the intervention scope upon new discoveries before proceeding to implementation?

NParks is open to refining the intervention scope based on findings from the initial research or fact-finding phase, subject to approval, provided the primary objectives of the study remain unchanged. Adjustments to the intervention approach are acceptable as long as the overall goals, timeline, and budget are not materially affected. To facilitate this flexibility, researchers are encouraged to anticipate potential variables during the proposal drafting stage and outline how these may influence the intervention design. Where possible, proposals should present multiple intervention options with the corresponding conditions under which each would be pursued. This approach demonstrates that the team has considered a range of scenarios and reduces the need to commit to a single intervention at the outset. Any proposed changes to the intervention scope during the study will be subject to NParks' approval.

2.14 Is NParks interested in academic publications arising from this study, and to what extent is this expected?

NParks welcomes academic publications arising from this study, though it is not a mandatory requirement. Any publications/ presentations arising from the project must be discussed with and approved by NParks.