2024 Research Impetus Grants (RIG) Scheme Pilot

Information Webinar

6 May 2024
The University of Melbourne acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the unceded land on which we work, learn and live: the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and Bunurong peoples (Burnley, Fishermans Bend, Parkville, Southbank and Werribee campuses), the Yorta Yorta Nation (Dookie and Shepparton campuses), and the Dja Dja Wurrung people (Creswick campus).

The University also acknowledges and is grateful to the Traditional Owners, Elders and Knowledge Holders of all Indigenous nations and clans who have been instrumental in our reconciliation journey.

We recognise the unique place held by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the original owners and custodians of the lands and waterways across the Australian continent, with histories of continuous connection dating back more than 60,000 years. We also acknowledge their enduring cultural practices of caring for Country.

We pay respect to Elders past, present and future, and acknowledge the importance of Indigenous knowledge in the Academy. As a community of researchers, teachers, professional staff and students we are privileged to work and learn every day with Indigenous colleagues and partners.
Welcome and Introduction

Prof Kate Smith-Miles
Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research Capability)
Research Impetus Grants (RIG) Scheme Pilot

Setting the institutional and scheme context
This scheme aims to:

- Improve the overall equity of research opportunity at the University through financial support to alleviate well documented career interruptions;

- Assist promising early-career and mid-career researchers to regain their research career trajectory;

- Support grant recipients’ ability to progress research programs, build partnerships and networks, and produce research outputs & outcomes of high quality and impact that benefit the researcher’s program and the calibre of research conducted at the University;

- Applying for funding is an opportunity for researchers to articulate their plan and, with Faculties, consider the supports necessary. Even if unsuccessful this round, it is hopefully the beginning of a conversation with faculty/school/supervisor about how to ensure researchers are supported to implement their plan.
Guiding Principles:

- **Equity**: Building increasingly inclusive and equitable support for researchers
- **Flexibility**: Responding to researchers’ specific needs to re-establish career trajectory
- **Accessibility**: Streamlined/more localised process, given the personal nature of common career disruptions
- **Impact**: Providing funding for modest but targeted research support that has a strong likelihood of supporting academic staff to thrive (return to their potential prior research trajectory) by alleviating the negative impacts of disruption/s
- **Scale**: Collaborating with Faculties to expand the resources available to researchers to regain their research productivity and momentum, in alignment (concurrently) with Faculty-led support initiatives
- **Strategic development**: Institution-wide access to this scheme will provide an evidence base for greater insight into the needs and gaps in support across eligible researchers.
Advancing Melbourne (2020-2030)

Five intersecting themes will represent our key focus areas over the next decade

PLACE
Embrace our place in Australia and the world, partnering in the future of Melbourne as a thriving and sustainable global city

COMMUNITY
A vibrant, diverse and inclusive community, and a destination of choice for talented students and staff

EDUCATION
Students at the heart of the University, renowned for their outstanding knowledge, skills and societal influence

DISCOVERY
At the leading edge of discovery, understanding and impact through research

GLOBAL
Lead, convene and collaborate through strategic partnerships on a global scale
Advancing Melbourne Discovery
Ensuring Research Excellence and Impact

**Principles of Research at Melbourne**

- Research excellence and impact are our primary indicators of success
- Academic freedom is paramount. Academics determine their own research path and are supported by opportunities from faculty and institutional strategy
- Basic research is a critical foundation for discovery and understanding
- We work with collaborators and partners to amplify the global impact of our research
- Research is conducted to the highest ethical standards with integrity and openness. This value is embedded in every aspect of our work, including in our choices of research partners and collaborators
- Research is integrated with the education of all our students, fostering of a spirit of enquiry and ongoing renewal of research ideas
Advancing Melbourne Discovery
Ensuring Research Excellence and Impact
Researcher Development

• Research Capability
  — Early Career Researcher Grants
  — Postdoctoral Fellowships (McKenzie, Puzey, Mary Lugton, etc.)
  — Research Impetus Grants
  — ARC/NHMRC Fellowship salary gap supports
  — Researcher Development Unit (RDU)

• Research Quality
  — Mock ARC-style panel reviews from ExpERT panel
  — National Interest Test (NIT) statement workshops
  — Strategic targeted support (e.g. grant writing assistance)
Advancing Melbourne Discovery
Ensuring Research Excellence and Impact

- Research Capability
- Research Infrastructure
- Research Collaboration
- Research Quality
- Interdisciplinary Research
- Research Translation and Impact
Our platforms enable access to cutting-edge infrastructure and technical expertise, which drives innovation, promotes multi-disciplinary approaches and fosters collaboration with industry and other partners.
Research Precincts

Fisherman’s Bend - Engineering and design innovation
Melbourne Arts Precinct - Cultural and creative partnerships
Melbourne City Council - Sustainable Cities Partnership
Melbourne Biomedical Precinct - AIID, ACMD, Burnet move, CSL bioincubator, BioCurate
Melbourne Connect - digital innovation, industry links and Cremorne digital hub
Dookie - NorVic Food and drought hub
Melbourne Interdisciplinary Research Institutes
Ambitious ideas. Collaboration. Local and global expertise. Solving the big challenges together.

Melbourne Disability Institute
Melbourne Energy Institute
Melbourne Social Equity Institute
Melbourne Climate Futures Institute
Indigenous Knowledge Institute
Peter McMullin Centre on Statelessness

Affordable Housing
Anti-Racism
Bioinspiration
Creativity and Wellbeing
Future Food
Indonesia Democracy
Wildfire Futures
Work Futures

Ageing
Children’s Lives
Computational Biology
Disability
Economic and Social Participation
Indigenous Materials
Statelessness

Many other affiliated Research Institutes (e.g. Doherty, Bio21, WEHI, Peter Mac, St Vincents, etc.)
Advancing Melbourne Discovery
Ensuring Research Excellence and Impact
Research Impact at Melbourne

“The University defines research impact as the effect on, change or benefit to scholarly knowledge and the economy, society, culture, public policy or services, health, the environment or quality of life.”

- Our *Research Impact Framework (2021)* builds and supports a culture of research impact
  - The framework was designed to be broad and inclusive, and to address the needs of diverse disciplines and approaches.
  - It considers all career stages and encompasses different pathways to impact.
Our Research Impact "fan" diagram

- **Scholarly & Creative**: The fundamental purpose of research is to generate new scholarly knowledge that underpins further research, innovation, and impact.

- **Policy, politics and law**: Research can play a crucial role in influencing and changing public policy and laws, by providing policymakers with evidence-based information and analysis on various issues.

- **Media and culture**: Research plays a pivotal role in shaping public debate and driving transformative shifts in societal perceptions and culture.

- **Processes and practices**: Research can inform, advance or improve processes and practices across various sectors and industries.

- **Products & enterprises**: Research plays a pivotal role in driving innovation and fostering the creation of new products, technologies and enterprises or ventures (both commercial and social).
## Facets of research impact

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facet</th>
<th>Aim</th>
<th>What is valued?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scholarly and Creative</td>
<td>Advance knowledge and ways of knowing</td>
<td>Peer judgement, prestige, rigour, expertise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy, Politics and Law</td>
<td>Improve politics, policy and governance</td>
<td>Policy attention, recommendations, improved policy outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media and Culture</td>
<td>Facilitate public debate, perceptions and culture</td>
<td>Accessibility, broad reach, visibility, creativity and performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Processes and Practice</td>
<td>Improve processes and practice</td>
<td>Recommendations and guidance, improved practices, processes, implementation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Products and Enterprises</td>
<td>Facilitate economic resource generation</td>
<td>Contribution to economic system</td>
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Research Impetus Grants (RIG) Scheme Pilot

Scheme guidelines, forms, and application process
Eligibility

Applicants must be academic staff of the University who:

- Have held, for a minimum of six months, a salaried fixed-term or continuing appointment with the University of 0.5 FTE or more, at Level A, B, or C, and will continue to hold an appointment for a requisite period to achieve the proposed outcomes of the grant; and

- Have a minimum research allocation of 40% of their employment fraction (i.e. Education & Research, Academic Specialist, or Research Focused) during the proposed duration of the grant; and

- Have experienced a significant disruption/s that demonstrably impeded their research or career trajectory and occurred (or was continuing) between 24 May 2019 and 24 May 2024 (i.e., within the prior five years to the closing date for applications under this scheme).

- These grants are only available to salaried staff of the University of Melbourne who meet the above criteria and are based in any of the University of Melbourne’s academic divisions or the Melbourne Business School.
To be significant, the disruption/s must be of a duration of three consecutive months (90 days) at the minimum and can be shown by the applicant to have negatively impacted the applicant’s research program and trajectory. Including:

- Disability (temporary/permanent)
- Health conditions (including mental health)
- Caring responsibilities (with reduced research opportunity)
- Disaster management and recovery
- Parental leave or equivalent
- Unemployment or employment that offered no provision for research
- Limited or no access to facilities and resources—such as through workplace interruptions or lack of access to facilities
- Community obligations under Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander cultural practices and protocols
- Gender affirmation
- Other extraordinary/unanticipated life events
The application process has two key forms: the **Faculty Confirmation form**, and the **Application Form** (SmartyGrants form).

- The Faculty Confirmation form should be completed through a discussion between the applicant and the nominated ‘Faculty delegate’ for this scheme (the Associate Dean (Diversity and Inclusion), Associate Dean Research, or a Head of Department/School), with mutual understanding, agreement and verification of the information provided therein, including the outline of disruption/s experienced by the applicant. Faculties should advise scheme administrators of their Faculty delegate under this scheme and contact details of the delegates will be posted on the scheme website.
The Faculty Confirmation form contains:

• A table summarising disruption/s, their duration, and the total time of the claimed disruption.

• Confirmation by the nominated Faculty delegate that the claimed disruptions were discussed with the applicant, verified to the delegate’s satisfaction, and where necessary, the delegate has viewed appropriate evidence.

• Confirmation by the nominated Faculty delegate that the total disruption is a significant disruption under the terms of the scheme that has impeded the applicant’s research productivity and career trajectory.

• Confirmation by the Head of Department/School that employment conditions and reasonable workload adjustments will be put in place to enable the applicant to make full use of the grant, if successful.

• The Faculty Confirmation form should be signed by the applicant, the nominated Faculty delegate, and the Head of Department/School, and uploaded to the application by the Applicant.
The Application Form consists of:

- **Part A: Administrative Summary**

- **Part B: Education and Appointment Details** - including appointment history, current appointment conditions, and workload allocation.

- **Part C: Researcher Profile and Case for Support** - including academic CV of 4 pages maximum, PDF only; and outline of ALL grants, or supports that have been already awarded to the applicant (from any source).

- **Part D: Outline of Research Trajectory** - applicant’s academic record and achievements (relative to opportunity) before the disruption and after the disruption/s, including an explanation of how the disruption/s impeded their research outputs and career trajectory.

- **Part E: Proposed Budget** - outline of grant package requested, approximate costings, and intended usage, including applicant’s research plan outlining the activities proposed with the grants; how the grant/s will positively impact and reestablish the applicant’s research profile and trajectory post-disruption/s; and how the proposed activities will strengthen the ability of the applicant to deliver high-quality research and impact in their discipline.
2024 ROUND
KEY DATES

**Scheme Opens**
Release of Scheme Guidelines and application portal.

**Scheme Closes**
Applications due 3pm via SmartyGrants. Attach application to Themis Grants Submission Workbench.

**Selection**
Eligibility & compliance checks. Eligible applications are ranked by faculty committees. The central committee makes awards.

**Outcomes**
Outcomes Announced. Applicants must provide all requested acceptance details to ensure projects begin on time.

15 April 2024
24 May 2024
August 2024
September 2024
Selection Criteria

• The applicant’s track record and achievements (relative to opportunity) and anticipated research trajectory (before the disruption/s).

• The feasibility of how the requested grant will assist applicants to re-establish their research trajectory.

• The critical and transformative potential impact of the requested funds, considering previous supports provided in relation to the disruption, to establish the relative need for funding.

• The reasonableness and appropriateness of the grant request given the length and severity of the applicant’s disruption/s.

• The presence of support from the Faculty/School/Department in enabling the conditions for the grant of funding to be fully utilised and effective.
This scheme is not intended for:

• applicants who experienced disruption/s but have already demonstrably recovered their strong career trajectory; or

• applicants who had not yet demonstrated a promising research trajectory (relative to opportunity) before or during the disruption/s.

• Honorary staff of the University of Melbourne.
Eligibility and Compliance

Applications will be **ineligible** if:

- They fall outside the eligibility window or criteria
- Fail to meet page limits or formatting specifications outlined in the guidelines and/or application form
- Are missing Faculty Confirmation Forms
- Are missing HoD Certifications or Themis Submissions
For more information contact:
Researcher Development Schemes team in RIC
res-devschemes@unimelb.edu.au