

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Melbourne Research Fellowships (Career Interruptions) Program enables eligible researchers who are University of Melbourne staff, without a continuing research position, to enhance or re-establish their academic research careers following a substantial disruption.
- 1.2 Researchers applying to the Program must demonstrate that their research career has been significantly interrupted, delayed or otherwise constrained by circumstances such as acute or chronic illness (physical or mental), child bearing, child rearing or primary responsibility for the sustained care of a dependent family member.

2 OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 The Program aims to allow Fellows to have an intensive period to focus on their research.
- 2.2 The Program's intended outcomes are to support the needs of the Fellow and to enable the enhancement of their productivity in terms of research outputs.
- 2.3 For successful Teaching and Research applicants, the award is normally used to fund replacement of their teaching and administrative duties, either by full-time replacement of duties or part-time replacement over a longer period (i.e. normally full-time over one year or part-time over two years). These arrangements are to be negotiated with the host department.
- 2.4 For successful Research Only applicants, the funding may be used to give applicants research time they would not otherwise have. For example, Fellows may extend their employment for similar purposes, giving them time to work on research and writing in order to enhance their chances of success for a future fellowship or academic employment.

3 FUNDING AND BENEFITS

- 3.1 In 2019, up to eight Fellowships will be awarded, each to the value of \$60,000 (oncost inclusive). This funding may be used for the following purposes:
 - To extend the Fellow's existing research employment contract.
 - To increase the Fellow's time dedicated to research (i.e. by increasing their full-time equivalent level; FTE).
 - As relief for the Fellow's teaching and/or administrative duties.

- 3.2 Each successful applicant will receive an additional \$15,000 for travel or research support. This funding may be used for the following purposes:
- Travel to conferences, workshops, and seminars, or for field research.
 - Research support costs, e.g. consumables, short-term research assistants.
 - Small equipment purchases deemed essential to their research and not able to be provided by other sources.
- 3.3 The FTE of each Fellowship is to be taken up at the discretion of the awardee and relevant department.
- 3.4 In consultation with the awardee and the relevant Associate Dean (Research) a mentor will be arranged. Where no mentor has been established, the relevant Associate Dean (Research) will become the default mentor.

4 APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

- 4.1 At the time of application, applicants must:
- i. Have completed a PhD degree in their field three to ten years prior to the application closing date (for 2019 applicants: between 1 May 2008 and 1 May 2015). For the purpose of this Program, completion of the PhD is considered to be the date of the official notification letter from the institution at which the PhD was completed.
 - ii. Have recognised evidence (e.g. research outputs) of high research achievement and promise prior to the career interruption(s).
 - iii. Be able to clearly demonstrate in their application that their research career has been significantly interrupted by circumstances such as acute or chronic illness, child bearing or child rearing or other family responsibilities such as primary responsibility for the sustained care of a dependent family member (who may, for example, be elderly, sick or a person with disabilities). The applicant should make a compelling argument to demonstrate how a Melbourne Research Fellowship would make a genuine difference to their career.
 - iv. Be an Australian citizen or permanent resident.
 - v. Be currently employed at the University of Melbourne, but not have a continuing appointment. Casual academic staff would not normally be considered eligible (please see *Section 5* of this document for information on eligibility exemptions).
 - vi. Have been employed by the University of Melbourne for a minimum of 12 months at the time of application (this may include multiple 'back-to-back' contracts totalling 12 months).
 - vii. Be employed at the University of Melbourne at the time of application.
 - viii. Not have an Honorary appointment with the University of Melbourne.
- 4.2 Fellowships may be taken up in any of the University of Melbourne's Academic Divisions. Fellowships may not be held in the Department of Medical Biology (WEHI), the Florey Department of Neuroscience & Mental Health, the Medical Bionics Department, or the Sir Peter MacCallum Department of Oncology¹.
- 4.3 Prospective applicants must discuss their application with the prospective 'host' Head of

¹ These Fellowships are intended as equity awards within the University of Melbourne. Only those applicants who are salaried employees of the University of Melbourne are eligible to apply.

Department (HoD) or equivalent. Prospective applicants are encouraged to contact the relevant host department well before the closing date. HoDs are not required to provide a letter of support with the application, however it is expected that departmental support is demonstrated in Part F2 and Part I of the Application Form.

- 4.4 The Program is not intended to support researchers who have begun the process of enhancing or re-establishing their academic research career through a fellowship or similar mechanism. Researchers who have been awarded a fellowship or similar mechanism since their career interruption are not eligible for this Program.
- 4.5 The Career Interruption(s) must have occurred following completion of the applicant's PhD.

5 ELIGIBILITY EXEMPTION REQUESTS

- 5.1 Applicants may include an eligibility exemption request (EER) with their application if they believe that they should be considered exempt from a particular criterion and have a compelling justification, as detailed in *Part B2* of the application form.
- 5.2 Applicants submitting an EER must contact Research, Innovation and Commercialisation (RIC) prior to the submission date. They must provide evidence of the advice provided by RIC with their application (i.e. a copy of the email).
- 5.3 Applicants submitting an EER must have the support of their Head of Department and meet all other eligibility criteria.
- 5.4 Applicants submitting an EER are not guaranteed an exemption; this decision is at the discretion of the Committee.
- 5.5 EERs may only be included for the following circumstances:
- i. If the applicant was awarded their PhD prior to 1 May 2008 *but has experienced exceptional extenuating circumstances.*
 - ii. If the applicant is a casual staff member *but has been employed by the University of Melbourne for a minimum of 12 months at the time of application (this may include multiple 'back-to-back' contracts totalling 12 months).*
 - iii. If there are other exceptional circumstances *and the applicant has been advised by RIC to submit an EER.*

6 PROPOSAL COMPLETENESS

- 6.1 Applications consist of three parts:
- i. Application form.
 - ii. Curriculum vitae and publication history (see *Part G* of the application form).
 - iii. Academic referee report (see *Part H* of the application form).

6.2 All documents must be written in English and must comply strictly with the format and submission requirements. Formatting requirements are as follows:

- i. Typewritten in black type.
- ii. Single column.
- iii. Minimum 12 point highly legible font (e.g. Helvetica, Times New Roman or Arial). This includes reference lists, figure captions, table captions and table contents. Text within figures may be any font size, but should be legible for reviewers.
- iv. Must not include URLs except in reference lists (do not hyperlink URLs in reference lists).
- v. Colour may be used in figures, but any labelling must be in black type.

6.3 All sections of the application must be completed or marked as not applicable.

6.4 The application must contain all the information necessary for assessment of the project without the need for explanation or reference to further documentation or reference to the World Wide Web.

6.5 If using the term 'primary caregiver' in their application, applicants must provide a description that clearly defines the term, with reference to their specific circumstances.

7 EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT

7.1 Assessment Process

7.1.1 Applications will be assessed by a University selection committee comprising senior members of the University of Melbourne research community and chaired by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research Capability). The assessment process is confidential and decisions of the committee will be made based on the merits of each application, and at the discretion of the committee.

7.1.2 The Melbourne Research Fellowships (Career Interruptions) Committee reserves the right to discuss applications, on a confidential basis, with Deans, Associate Deans (Research), Heads of Department, Centre Directors, other senior colleagues and relevant faculty/school research administrators.

7.2 Assessment Criteria

Key Criteria

7.2.1 The demonstrated nature and extent of the career interruption or impedance, in the context of the objectives of this Program.

7.2.2 The track record of the applicant, relative to opportunity.

7.2.3 The likelihood that the Fellowship would enable the applicant to re-establish or enhance the applicant's career and improve their research track record substantially in order to compete more effectively for academic employment.

Additional Considerations

- 7.2.4 The appropriateness of the proposed use of the Fellowship to be successful in significantly enhancing the research career of the applicant.
- 7.2.5 The level of support for the application from the Head of Department including: the provisions that the department has made for the applicant; the overall workload the fellow would carry during the term of the Fellowship; and the capacity of the applicant to make a significant contribution to the academic life of the host department and faculty/school.
- 7.2.6 The resources currently available to the host department and the need for the allocation of funds (departments are encouraged to nominate additional support for the applicant).
- 7.2.7 The benefit of the Fellowship in terms of the applicant's specific circumstances.

8 APPLICATION PROCESS

- 8.1 Prospective applicants must contact their academic division's research office to ensure any specific requirements have been met. Details for academic division contacts can be found on the RIC webpage (<http://research.unimelb.edu.au/work-with-us/funding/internal/melbourne-research-fellowships>).
- 8.2 Applicants must save their application as a single PDF file with the file name: 'MRF-CI2019_Application_SURNAME OF APPLICANT'.
- 8.3 **Applicants must enter their application into Themis via the Grant Submissions Workbench.** The status of the Themis submission must be '*Submitted to Research Office*' by the closing date. For guidance, please see http://research.unimelb.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/1665871/themis_ECR_help.pdf.
- 8.4 This is an internal grant. Applications submitted will not be checked by RIC for completeness, or eligibility prior to final lodgement; this is the responsibility of the applicant. Ineligible or incomplete applications will be excluded and not considered by the Committee.
- 8.5 Applicants must ask their referee to complete the Fellowships Referee Report Form and request that their completed report is submitted as a single PDF file via email, no later than **11.59pm (AEST), Tuesday 1 May 2018** to:

Email: ric-internalgrants@unimelb.edu.au
Subject: MRF-CI 2019 – Referee Report – *SURNAME OF APPLICANT*

- 8.6 Applications close at **11.59pm (AEST), Tuesday 1 May 2018**.

9 TIMETABLE

Monday 19 March 2018

Applications open
Release of application documents on website

Tuesday 1 May 2018	Applications close
Late May - June 2018	Melbourne Research Fellowships (Career Interruptions) Committee meet to assess applications
By end June 2018	Notification of outcomes to all applicants
July 2018	Commencement dates and accounts confirmed
January 2019	Funds made available to host departments

10 PERIOD OF APPOINTMENT

- 10.1 The option for using the Fellowship full-time (i.e. one year) or part-time (i.e. two years, minimum 0.5 FTE including any existing appointment) should be discussed with your prospective 'host' HoD or equivalent, and advised to RIC once confirmed.
- 10.2 Fellowships will normally commence no earlier than 1 January 2019.
- 10.3 Fellows will normally take up appointment by 30 June 2019. The HoD must approve commencement dates. Deferral of the award past 30 June 2019 will not normally be approved. The offer shall lapse if the Fellow does not take up appointment by 1 December 2019.
- 10.4 Funding will be transferred to the host department in January 2019.

11 CONDITIONS OF THE FELLOWSHIP

- 11.1 Fellowship offers must be accepted in writing by the Fellow and their HoD or equivalent.
- 11.2 Fellows report to the HoD (or nominee).
- 11.3 Fellows are expected to participate fully in the academic life of the host department and academic division. Fellows are expected to conduct research diligently, and to the best of their ability, within the field proposed in their application, as approved by the Fellowships Committee.
- 11.4 Applicants who are awarded and accept an internal or external fellowship, or similar funding for salary costs, after submitting an application to this Program will no longer be eligible to hold the Melbourne Research Fellowship (Career Interruptions). Applicants who are awarded research projects costs are still eligible to hold the Melbourne Research Fellowship (Career Interruptions).

11.5 Successful Fellows may not undertake additional outside employment.

11.6 Fellowship funds may not be used to fund a legal entitlement to severance payments.

11.7 Final Report

In addition to participating in the University's Performance Development Framework and satisfying the host department's particular performance and reporting requirements, Fellows are required to provide, within 6 months of completion of the Fellowship, a Final Report on activities, research outcomes, benefits of mentoring and achievements to the Head of Department. A copy of this final report is to be submitted to RIC via ric-internalgrants@unimelb.edu.au. RIC will forward the report to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research Capability) for presentation to the Fellowships Committee. Summaries of activities funded and project final reports may be published. A template for the Final Report is available from the Internal Grants website (<http://research.unimelb.edu.au/work-with-us/funding/internal/manage-your-grant>).

11.8 Financial Report

Fellows are also required to provide a financial acquittal report. Any unspent funds remaining at the conclusion of the Fellowship period must be relinquished.

12 ADMINISTRATIVE CONTACT

All administrative enquiries should be directed to ric-internalgrants@unimelb.edu.au.