THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE
2022 Early Career Researcher Grant
Instructions to Applicants

1 CRITICAL DATES AND LODGMENT INSTRUCTIONS

1.1	10 May 2021	Release of Funding Guidelines
	Monday 7 June 2021, 3pm	Eligibility Exemption Requests (EERs) due to RIC
	End of June 2021	Outcomes of EERs provided
	Monday 26 July 2021, 3pm	Final applications due to RIC
	6 August 2021 (on or before)	RIC provides eligible applications to Academic Divisions
	3 September 2021 (on or before)	Academic Divisions provide rankings and funding amounts to RIC
	October 2021	ECR Grant Scheme central committee meeting to decide on final allocations based on Academic Division recommendations
	End of October 2021	Outcomes announced

1.2 Academic Divisions may have internal submission requirements prior to the final RIC submission date. Please see the RIC ECR webpage for details.

1.3 Once the final application has been submitted it cannot be altered.

1.4 Late applications will not be accepted.

2 ELIGIBILITY EXEMPTION REQUESTS

2.1 EERs may be submitted to request an exemption under the following circumstances only:

- If the applicant's PhD was awarded[1] prior to 26 July 2016;
- Other exceptional circumstances where RIC has advised the applicant to submit an eligibility exemption request[2].

2.2 Applicants should note that submission of an EER does not guarantee an exemption will be granted, and all decisions are at the discretion of the Committee.

3 COMPLETING THE APPLICATION FORM

3.1 All questions are to be answered or marked 'not applicable'. Do not leave any sections blank.

3.2 Applicants must adhere strictly to page and word limits in each part of the Application Form.

3.3 All documents must be written in English and must comply strictly with the format and submission requirements.

1 The award of the PhD is defined as the date of the official notification letter or, for those awarded PhDs where the institution does not supply such letters, the date that the applicant has completed all the required steps to be eligible to graduate with a PhD. Submission of a PhD for examination is not an indication that all steps have been completed.

2 If applicants believe they have another proposed eligibility issue, they should in the first instance contact their Academic Division ECR administrator for advice. If at that point eligibility cannot be confirmed, they should contact RIC via ric-internalgrants@unimelb.edu.au, who will advise whether an EER should be submitted.

3.4 The application must contain all the information necessary for assessment of the project without the need for explanation or reference to further documentation, including reference to internet sources.

3.5 Formatting Requirements will be dictated by the application form.

Part A: Administrative Summary

Department Certification

Please provide your Head of School/Department with a PDF copy of your application and request that they complete the certification form (available from the website). If you have indicated you are on a Research-Only appointment, please additionally have your supervisor sign the form where indicated. Attach the signed HoD Certification as a PDF here.

Eligibility

Provide PhD award date and details of your current appointment

A1. Applicant Details

A2. Applicant Location

A2.i. Please select your Academic Division from the list.

A2.ii. Please select your School, Department or Centre from the list. If you are from an MDHS institute, centre or department not in this list, please select "MDHS - Institutes, Centres and Departments".

A2.iii. If you selected "MDHS - Institutes, Centres and Departments", this additional question will appear, allowing you to specify your place of employment.

A3. Appointment Details

A3.i. This is the start date of your UoM employment. If you have had multiple appointments at UoM, please use the start date of your first appointment.

A3.i. End of current appointment (if not continuing)

A3.iii. Appointment type: continuing (permanent), fixed-term contract or casual. Casual employees are not normally eligible for the ECR scheme, unless their Head of Department certifies via the Certification Form that, if successful, the applicant will be on a fixed-term or continuing appointment from 1 Jan 2022-31 December 2022.

A3.iv. Appointment level: This is the salary band under which you are employed, e.g. Level A6.

A3.v. Appointment duties: Please indicate whether you are employed in a research-only, teaching and research, or teaching-only role.

A3.vi. Please enter your appointment's FTE (Full-time equivalent) e.g. Full-time = 1FTE, 4 days a week = 0.8FTE, etc.

A4. Research Only Applicants – only applicable to applicants who selected 'Research Only' at A3

A4.i. Please include the details of the research project/s on which you are employed. If you are employed on more than one project, you can click 'add more' to repeat this section.

A4.ii. Please briefly summarise the research project you are employed on. Must be no more than 100 words.

A4.iii. In this section, RO staff must explain how their time commitment to this project can be made within their current workload and their conditions of employment (including any restrictions specified by an external funding body). RO staff must describe how their proposed ECR project is distinct from your current research project. Please note that ECR funding cannot be used to 'top-up' an existing grant. Applications requesting funds that duplicate or supplement another internal grant, external grant or research contract will be excluded from consideration.

Part B: Project Summary and Funding Plan

B1. Project Summary

B1.i. Provide a short descriptive title of no more than 10 words.

B1.ii. It is important that the 100-word summary be written for an intelligent lay reader, as this is one of the first pieces of information used by committees to gauge the overall significance of the research project. The Project Summary may also be used in official University of Melbourne publications and reports to demonstrate the research profile of the University and satisfy both internal and external performance evaluation requirements.

B2. Funding Plan

B2.i. Please explain how the project will contribute to your research career development, enhance competitiveness in securing future external research funding and foster future collaborations outside of their current research group. This should include plans to attract future funding

B2.ii. Here you can specify funding bodies, schemes, potential academic collaborators, rounds for future applications, and fellowship requests if applicable. Future funding opportunities can also include industry bodies, government bodies, NGOs and philanthropic organisations. To add multiple entries, click 'add more' and the section will be repeated.

Part C: Proposed Budget

You are expected to provide a detailed budget and budget justification.

Applicants should only request items that are essential for the completion of the project. Only include items that you want funded under the scheme. Do not include any items being supplied from other sources.

- Please do not alter the 'Budget Category' column as these headings are mandatory.
- Leave line blank if you are not requesting items in a particular category.
- List individual budget items for each category in the central column, with their individual costs.
- Enter the overall cost for that category in the third column.
- Only list items and their relevant details and costs. You can leave justifications to your project description.
- All costs should be listed excluding GST.

Budget items not supported

Funds will not be provided for the following purposes:

- Fees for international students or Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS) or Higher Education Loan Program (HELP) liabilities;
- Staff seeking funding for their own postgraduate studies;
- Costs not directly related to research or the project;
- Funds that duplicate or supplement another current internal University grant, external grant or research contract;
- Salaries for Chief Investigator or collaborator(s).
- Article Processing Charges (APC) to make a work openly accessible where the University already has an institutional subscription to the journal (hybrid journals). Researchers who wish to publish in subscription journals can make their work openly accessible through the deposit of a copy of their work in the institutional repository, Minerva Access. Applicants should contact their local liaison librarians for further advice.

Example Budget

Budget Category	Items requested (include individual costs)	Amount Requested for Category
Personnel	Laboratory assistant HEW 5.1, 0.4FTE for 1 year: $36,899	$36,899
Relief from teaching/other duties	Marking for Course X – X hrs: $400 Marking for Course Y – Y hrs: $200	$600
Equipment	2x Audio tape recorders: $300	$300
Maintenance	Lab consumables: $200	$200
Travel	Conference X airfare (Melbourne-China return): $1300 Conference X accommodation (5 days): $500	$1800
Other	N/A	$0

Total Amount Requested: $39,799

The Total Amount Requested is automatically calculated from the 'Amount Requested for Category' totals column. For applications from the Humanities and Social Sciences, a minimum of $5000 and a maximum of $25,000 may be requested. For applications in STEMM fields, a minimum of $5000 and a maximum of $40,000 may be requested.

Budget Categories

Personnel

Salaries will not be awarded for Chief Investigators.

Requests for personnel should include:

- The official designation and level of the position (e.g. Laboratory technical assistant HEW 5.1);
- The Full-Time Equivalent fraction for part-time staff (e.g. 2 days per week is 0.40 FTE);
- The total number of hours and the hourly rate for casual staff;
- Enterprise Bargaining increases and on-costs.

All requests for Research Assistants must be well justified in the Project Description. Applicants should clearly demonstrate a distinct divide between the activities of the Chief Investigator (applicant) and those of the Research Assistant, with appropriate levels of complexity for each. The tasks of the Research Assistants must be included in the budget justification and should be clear to the selection committee.

All applicants requesting personnel must use the Research Costing and Pricing tool available at:
https://gateway.research.unimelb.edu.au/resources/contracts/preparing/costing-pricing-support

Relief from teaching/other duties

Requests for support to relieve a staff member of teaching and/or other duties should be specified in the application and will be considered where it is argued that this is essential for the research work and the successful outcome of the project. Final decisions regarding teaching relief are dependent on approval by the relevant Associate Dean (Research) in conjunction with the applicant's Head of Department/School. There is no set rate for requests to provide relief from teaching or other duties. The amount requested should be determined in consultation with the Head of Department/School and Department/School Manager, based upon the specific tasks for which relief is required (e.g. lecturing, marking, student consultation) and the time involved.

Equipment

Researchers should plan to use existing equipment wherever possible. Applicants should not request funds for standard-issue items, such as a computer for a Research Assistant. Where similar items of equipment are available at the University of Melbourne, applicants should include in their justification an explanation of why existing equipment is not being used. Only items of equipment considered essential for the project should be included and must be justified. Other items will not be funded. Indicate the cost of equipment, including installation, and the names of the manufacturer and supplier. The cost of equipment and installation should not be estimated but should be based on the latest prices that can be obtained from the supplier. Do not attach quotes to the application.

Maintenance

Maintenance includes:

- Consumables (major headings only);
- Sets of printed material and microfilm;
- Computing (other than funds requested for the purchase of computing equipment or the hire of personnel for data preparation or programming which must be included under 'Equipment', 'Personnel' or 'Other', as appropriate). Any requests for funds for programming, preparation and storage of data or the hire of external computer time must be fully justified.

Estimate the prices that will apply at the time of purchase.

Travel

Travel funds may be provided for fieldwork and related expenses/allowances; for visits to and/or use of libraries, and/or the facilities of laboratories nationally, or internationally.

Applicants may request funds to pay for travel to, and attendance at, conferences or workshops but it is expected that this funding would generally be provided from other sources. **Requests for this expenditure must be necessary for the conduct of the project and clearly justified**.

Applicants should provide reasonable costs for all travel, including fares, accommodation and meals that would be above normal expenditure if in Melbourne. Travel (e.g. flights) should be separately itemised from accommodation. Travel destinations should be clearly marked (e.g. Melbourne to Sydney). Estimates can be used, but should be based on the most likely destinations for travel Applicants may wish to use the Australian Tax Office's determinations concerning reasonable travel expenses. Requests which exceed the recommended ATO allowances are unlikely to be funded except in justified exceptional circumstances i.e. the applicant has a mobility condition requiring additional travel support.

Applicants must ensure that the budget for travel expenses is modest and reasonable. The committee reserves the right to award less funding than is requested where the budget is deemed to be unreasonable.

Any other eligible cost items should be included here. This will often include services contracted from other organisations (e.g. consultation fees, purchasing data, training costs). It may also include costs for items that do not appropriately fit under the other headings (e.g. workshop services, mailing surveys).

Other

Any other eligible cost items should be included here. This will often include services contracted from other organisations (e.g. consultation fees, purchasing data, training costs). It may also include costs for items that do not appropriately fit under the other headings (e.g. workshop services, mailing surveys). Reasonable costs associated with publication of project outputs (not including open access charges as detailed on p. 3) can also be included here but should be proportionate to the overall project expenditure and with a robust justification in Part E.

Part D: Research Support

D1. Please provide details of all research funding (ARC, NHMRC and other agencies in Australia and overseas, including internal grants) you currently hold, or have submitted a request for and are awaiting the outcome. Please only include projects in which you are a named Chief Investigator. List all projects/proposals/ fellowships awarded or submitted funding requests involving the applicant.

Funding Support Table Example

Funding Description	Same Research Area	Support Status	2020 ('000)	2021 ('000)	2022 ('000)	2023 ('000)
Dr A Example, *Proposal Title*, UoM, ECR, ID: ECR001, CIA, 0.4FTE.	Yes	Requested		25		
Prof B Exempli & Dr A Example, Project Title, Seed Funding Grant, ID: 123456, CIC, 0.2FTE.	No	Current	5	5	5	

Please provide details of all research income you have received or requested (ARC, NHMRC, other agencies in Australia and overseas, including internal grants,) for the years 2020 to 2023 inclusive. This should include research contracts with government agencies/departments and industry. List all projects/proposals/fellowships awarded or requests submitted for funding involving the Chief Investigator on this ECR application. Please list this ECR application first in the table.

Please note that this should only include funding awarded or funding requests submitted where you (i.e. the researcher applying to this ECR scheme) are a named Investigator or Fellow. Add more rows as necessary.

D2. Please provide the total amount of research funding (excluding salary-only/travel-only awards) that you have received as a named investigator on a project. This does not include projects where you have been an RA or other staff member.

Part E: Project Description

The Project Description should be no longer than 4,000 words.

Please provide a description of the project proposed. The information provided under each heading is indicative and is not meant to be prescriptive, nor is it an exhaustive guide to all of the issues that might be relevant to the project proposed. It is recognised that different academic disciplines may take different approaches to completing this section. Project Descriptions must be prepared using the following headings:

E1. Aims, Significance and Expected Outcomes

This might include but is not restricted to: an appreciation of progress in the field of the proposal, the relation of your work to the field in general and reference to the very best Australian and international research, how the research project aligns with both Academic Division and University strategic priorities. A full literature review is not required, but there should be enough information to show that the applicant is fully conversant with the field, the importance of the research, the degree of innovation involved in the project and the role of this grant in developing the applicant's research. *This section should also include the likelihood that the research will lead to:*

- A real conceptual advance;
- An important discovery, innovation or solution of an important practical problem;
- A contribution of economic or social benefit to Australia;
- On-going research collaboration with an external government organisation or industry.

E2. Research Plan, Methods, Techniques and Proposed Timing

Items that might be included are a clear indication of the scope and limitations of the project, a timetable showing the achievement of key stages in the project and where appropriate, the experimental design.

E3. Role of the Chief Investigator and Collaborators in Project

Describe the proposed contribution of the Chief Investigator and any collaborators to the project, provide an explanation of each researcher's skills, training and experience relevant to the project, and details of the role

of other participants not included in the budget request (i.e. associate investigators, technical, research or other staff, postgraduate students etc.) and their level of input. Applicants should indicate here where their project might draw on expertise, support or mentoring from more senior colleagues.

E4. Justification of the Budget

Explain why each item listed is essential for the project; do not simply restate information that is already provided in the budget. For example, it is not enough to say in the justification that a senior research assistant costs $X per annum, as this should already be shown in the budget. Justification of the claim should state why an item is required. The same level of explanation is required for all items. For example, if a full-time senior research assistant is requested:

- Why can't this work be done without a research assistant?
- Why are they needed full-time as opposed to part-time or casual appointments?
- Why is the experience of a senior research assistant, rather than a more junior assistant required?

E5. References

Provide a list of all the references that are cited in the Project Description. All references that are cited must be listed and all listed references must be cited. Applicants should format their reference list in a manner that is typical of their field of research (e.g. using the 'cited reference' format set out by a journal in their field).

Part F: Research Opportunity and Performance Evidence

F1. Career Interruptions

Applicants who have had a career disruption (e.g. acute or chronic illness, child bearing, child rearing or primary responsibility for the sustained care of a dependent family member) should provide a Career Interruption statement. Please summarise any career interruptions and explain the impact on your research outputs/career trajectory. Applicants whose research or research activity has been seriously constrained by the COVID19 pandemic may also document this for consideration by the eligibility subcommittee. Applicants who have experienced career interruption can provide additional research outputs beyond the 5-year limit in accordance with the time frame of the interruption experienced. For example, an applicant who took 9 months 1.0FTE maternity leave, can include outputs from the last 5 years and 9 months

Applicants completing this section should also include a calculation of their full-time equivalent (FTE) research metrics. Please see an example as a way to calculate this, as follows:

Maternity leave for 12 months (effective FTE = 0 years)
Part time (0.5FTE) working status for 12 months (effective FTE = 0.5 years)
Full-time status for 3 years (effective FTE = 3 years)

Therefore, in the past 5 years I have worked the equivalent of 3.5 FTE years, I have therefore included 1.5 more years' additional research outputs.

F2. Curriculum Vitae and Research Outputs List

The CV will be written directly into the application form. The CV should be no longer than 3 pages in the final generated PDF, excluding publications. (You can generate the PDF at any time to check length).

If you have calculated career interruptions above (see example), you can include additional research outputs to equal 5 years' worth of outputs.

The CV must address the headings detailed below. Where appropriate, all details should be listed in reverse chronological order.

- Full name;
- Full details of education, postgraduate training, present and past appointments;

- Research experience and productivity, relative to opportunity (maximum one page);
- Awards or prizes (include $ amount where applicable);
- Seminar/conference presentations (details of conference, indicate if invited talk, selected for oral, or poster presentation);
- Current and previous collaborations;
- Postgraduate and undergraduate teaching and supervision (including demonstrating, tutor roles or co-supervision of students);
- Leadership and service activities related to scientific discipline or the University of Melbourne (e.g. membership of societies and committees, peer review experience, administrative responsibilities);
- Community engagement activities;
- A statement of your career aspirations for the next 5 years.

Conference papers must be peer-reviewed in published conference proceedings (i.e. oral or poster conference abstracts should not be included). The category 'Other Publications' should contain references that are scholarly, publicly available and that can be critically reviewed (e.g. newspaper articles, government reports, technical reports). Within each of these categories, organise the entries in descending date order. Applicants should use the format set out by their Academic Division, if any. Applicants are encouraged to use the Minerva Elements publications system (https://minerva-elements.unimelb.edu.au/).

F3. Research Outputs

F3.i. Please provide a brief summary (no more than 100 words) describing the common publishing practices in your field, particularly concerning how your field assesses research and publication quality. Examples may include authorship in alphabetical order rather than overall contribution to publication, relative role of last-named author, average citation numbers, publication numbers.

F3.ii. A list of research outputs is required for the Chief Investigator. Only accepted or published refereed publications since 1 January 2016 (inclusive) are to be shown. Items that have not yet been published should be clearly identified as accepted or in-press and acceptance dates provided (month/year). List publications under the following category headings and asterisk (*) research outputs relevant to this application:

- Original refereed publications;
- Full published conference proceedings (do not include conference abstracts);
- Reviews;
- Book chapters and monographs;
- Patents;
- Other publications.

F3.iii. Please list your three (3) best research outputs; and provide a brief summary detailing your contribution and the impact they have made in your field.

Part G: Declarations and Certification

G1. Applicant Declaration

4 SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

4.1 How to Submit

- Complete the form in SmartyGrants, except for the certification section

- Generate a copy of your application and submit to your Head of School/Department with the *HoD Certification Form* available for download from the RIC ECR webpage.
- Upload the signed certification form into this application and submit via SmartyGrants. Once the final application is submitted it cannot be altered.
- Themis submission is required. Once this form is submitted on SmartyGrants, please take the PDF and attach it to a Themis Grants Workbench submission. If you are unfamiliar with this process, you can contact your faculty research office in the first instance for further advice. Technical issues can be resolved by contacting the central research office via ric-internalgrants@unimelb.edu.au. The status of the workbench submission should be 'Forwarded to HoD' by end of submission day.