

## Questions submitted during Melbourne Postdoctoral Fellowship Information Session - August 5<sup>th</sup>, 2021

1. How many Melbourne Postdoctoral Fellowships (MPF) will be allocated? 10 for the whole faculty?

It's ten across the University. Approximately one per faculty.

2. Can I apply for McKenzie or MPF at the same time?

No, you can only apply for one or the other not both.

3. The guidelines mention “references” however the application lacks any mention of or a section for the references from referees. Are we required to submit references?

References are required, as per the Guidelines, and no more than two should be provided.

4. When will we hear back from the EOI process?

Contact your faculty on the EOI process.

5. Where do we find information about the academic research priorities?

You should discuss this with your mentor or sponsor or with the research staff in your Faculty/School (the general contact) and they will be able to guide you on that.

Some Faculties/Schools will have statements about their research priorities on their webpage. Once you know the priority areas you need to show how your research supports these areas. For example, if there are experts that connect to your area of research and that your research connects with these areas or priorities Take advice from your faculty contacts on how to frame academic research priorities in your application.

6. Is there a calculator for career interruptions or should we use the ARCs one? Can it include periods of non-research employment?

The ARC approach provides some guidance, but you need to make the case to show how your research career has been negatively affected by interruptions or constraints. For example, working outside a research institution, caring or family responsibilities are all legitimate reasons for exemption. However, you need to show the impact of that on your research pathway and how this fellowship will address those interruptions.

7. Sorry - also a follow up on referees. The faculty of science team sent an email on Tuesday saying that referee letters were required and the attached guidelines for the fellowship mentioned letters. So, we should submit letters since Faculty of Science has asked for them?

Yes, referee reports are required as per the Guidelines.

8. Will eligibility exemptions will be assessed after the faculty rankings by the central panel?

RIC Internal Grants can discuss eligibility questions with you on a case-by-case basis; request for an exemption is included in the full application.

This will be considered at your local faculty level; for example, if your PhD was a long time ago or there have been interruptions to your research pathway. Any outstanding queries on eligibility exemptions will be reviewed during the central committee meeting.

9. Do I need to address how the salary is funded for the MPF?

No, you don't have to raise or negotiate this. Faculties know how the MPF is funded as per the guidelines. Two thirds of a level A salary over three years (A.6- A.8) and the full project costs are paid by Chancellery Research and Enterprise; and the relevant Academic Division or Faculty pays the balance of the salary costs.

10. Will there be an interview stage after the written applications, or will decisions be made only on the written pitch?

No, there will be no interviews undertaken by the central committee. The case needs to be made through the written application.

It is important to be able to communicate your work to an interdisciplinary and non-specialist audience.

11. Question C2 - fields of research codes. Are these specific to your submitted research proposal or to you as a researcher?

They are specific to the particular research project.

12. Regarding the eligibility criteria B3, could career interruption/impact due to COVID 19 pandemic such as loss of access to labs, facilities and field site be considered as a genuine disruption?

Yes, the impacts of the COVID 19 pandemic are legitimate factors in making a case for career interruptions -for example, if your publications, other outputs, field work, experimental work have been delayed due to Covid it is important to note these. You need to be able to document the impact from COVID from March last year until present. Be clear on the nature and the extent of the interruption.

13. If the \$25K is not enough for experiments in whole 3 years, should we guarantee where we can get the rest of the money? Or should we tailor the experiments to cost only \$25K for 3 years?

We recommend you discuss this matter with your faculty or project sponsor.

14. Will we hear the outcome of the EOI before the full application deadline?

That is the decision of the faculty. Please contact your faculty.

15. Is there scope for promotion within the fellowship? Or is it set at level A for the full 3 years?

Yes, you are eligible to apply for promotion and your application would be assessed against the promotion criteria and requirements. The MPF starts at A6 and there are 8 steps at Level A (A8).

16. Do we also need to submit the application in Themis?

No.

17. Do we have to have had the PhD conferred or just had the letter saying we met all requirements?

You will only need the letter to say you have met all the requirements to have been awarded your PhD.

18. General Advice: Questions to do with HR matters should be directed to your faculty for advice.

19. Could you develop more the question on listing of specific collaborations? Does this include collaboration with the mentor? Collaboration with other schools or faculties?

Yes. At the postdoctoral level, this could include your mentor or doctoral supervisor; if you have other or potential collaborators across the University, nationally or internationally, indicate those

20. Are the fields of research codes related to your proposal or you as a researcher? What is the “nominated publications” mentioned in C2

They are related to your proposal.

21. Sorry to return to budget - should we focus on the \$25k for this only, or also the base fellowship amount?

You only need to write in the 25k budget cost you don't need to justify your salary.

22. Will collaborators be contacted as part of the selection process?

No, unless they are named as referees.

23. If we came from abroad and our collaborations were largely there, will then weaken our application as we do not have the network as strong in AU?

No, this would not disadvantage you; it shows how you are able to build collaborations how the fellowship will help further this.

24. Is the RIC budgeting tool available on the internet, or only the intranet?

It is available on the Intranet. The link is here.

<https://gateway.research.unimelb.edu.au/resources/contracts/preparing/costing-pricing-support>

25. Currently I have a 2-year contract. Will this affect the application? Can I ask for just 2 years?

No, you cannot request a variation of the terms of the fellowship prior to award. The offer is for a three-year fellowship. However, once awarded, variations on the fellowship terms can be considered for e.g., illness, care responsibility, or other interruptions to research).

Variations must be approved by Chancellery Research and Enterprise.

What do you mean by relative to opportunity?

The University's definition of relative to opportunity is found at:

[https://unimelb.service-now.com/hr?id=kb\\_article&sys\\_id=cfad89aedb4070109b78be37f49619bd](https://unimelb.service-now.com/hr?id=kb_article&sys_id=cfad89aedb4070109b78be37f49619bd)

26. Can our project partially rely on the outcomes of other projects we are engaged in (e.g., the outcomes of experimental study from another project)?

Yes. It could build on or extend previous work, but you need to say how this new project is in fact a new project and not simply seeking continuation of funding for an existing project.