



Research Initiatives Fund (RIF) Collaborative Equipment Grant 2022 Instructions to Applicants

1. Introduction

This document is intended to provide guidance and instructions to applicants on completing the application for the RIF Collaborative Equipment Grant in 2022. It is intended to be read in conjunction with the following Supporting Documents, which can be found on the [RIF Collaborative Equipment Grant Scheme](#) website:

- Funding Rules
- Application form (available online via SmartyGrants)
- Instructions to Applicants (this document)
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Co-Investment Approval Form

Milestone	Date
Applications open	Wednesday June 1 st 2022
Applications close	Monday July 18 th 2022, 9am
Notification of outcome	Friday September 2 nd 2022
Acquittal of Funds	Monday December 19 th 2022 (pending confirmation of year end calendar)

2. Preparing your application

A complete application consists of:

- A completed application form submitted through SmartyGrants. An application number will be generated once you have started the application. Please retain this number and use it for any queries relating to the application.
- A quote for the requested equipment in AUD (excluding GST). Under the exceptional circumstances, the quotations could be obtained in foreign currencies; however, applicants will be responsible of bearing the costing difference in the event of currency fluctuations. Currency conversion rates should be included within the application.
- Applicants are recommended to engage with Commercial Services in seeking assistance with the negotiation of competitive pricing and inclusion of extended warranty (three-year) as part of quotation package. Where possible, it is encouraged to secure the validity of quotation for a three-month period.
- Evidence of cash co-investment greater than or equal to 25% of the total purchase cost of the equipment from the relevant signatory. A Co-Investment Approval Form should be downloaded and completed. Please ensure that all contributors sign at the prescribed areas of the form. This form can then be uploaded when prompted within SmartyGrants under Section 5.
- Evidence of support for the proposed equipment location from the relevant signatory. Email documentation from the Head of Department, Dean or Associate Dean of Research stating support for the proposed physical location is considered acceptable. If the requested equipment is to be located within an existing platform (MCRIP-funded or otherwise) you should include evidence of endorsement for inclusion into the platform by the Platform Manager and/or Platform Steering Committee.
- If the application you are considering for RIF CEG funding is eligible for funding under the ARC LIEF scheme, clear justification needs to be provided for why it was not submitted through the ARC LIEF scheme and why it was a suitable application for RIF CEG.

If the application is for equipment with a cost less than \$100,000, then applicants are also required to submit a written rationale (300 words or less) for the following types of application:

- Discipline-specific
- A one-off software purchase with the minimum threshold of \$50,000.

3. Application form

To ensure the applicants adhere to the requirements of the application template, there are word limits applied to text boxes and drop-down lists to select options. Please adhere to these.

Section 1 Application Overview

Please ensure that a copy of complete Co-Investment Approval Form is forwarded to your Academic Division research office (contacts are available via [Research Gateway](#)).

Section 2 to 4 Applicant Details

Complete details for each applicant. A maximum of **three** applicants may be listed. Please note that there is no evaluation weighting given to the track record of the applicants, and early/mid-career researchers, Platform Managers, professional staff and female applicants are particularly encouraged to apply.

Section 5 Equipment Details

Equipment Cost

If the cost does not meet the **Equipment Cost Threshold** of \$100,000, please ensure you provide a written rationale (300 words or less) for the following types of application:

- Discipline-specific
- A one-off software purchase with minimum threshold of \$50,000.

Trade-in of Old Equipment

Please indicate if the obsolete or superseded equipment was traded in at the time of obtaining the quotation.

If selected 'Yes', please provide the detail of trade-in price and/or financial return offered by the vendor. Please also indicate the value within the quote.

Currency used in Quotation

If the quotation is provided in a foreign currency, please provide the following information:

- Rationale
- Type of currency
- Total cost in the foreign currency
- Conversion rate

Equipment Components and Suppliers

Outline the cost (in AUD) of the equipment as a numbered list of components and their corresponding prices (excluding GST) and attach quotes from the preferred supplier to your application when prompted. While there is no set maximum permitted value of equipment requests, investment will be guided by a whole-of-University perspective on collaborative equipment needs.

While it is only necessary to obtain quotes from the preferred supplier, the **Alternate Supplier** section asks for the names of other potential suppliers. Purchases above \$400,000 are required to progress through University Procurement Review Board evaluation, in accordance with the [Procurement Policy \(MPF1087\)](#). These processes may require identification of and engagement with multiple suppliers and this section will facilitate that process should an application be successful.

Cash Co-Investment

Please provide a list of contributors (the name of Department/School/Academic Division) and the corresponding contribution amounts. At the prompt to download the "Co-Investment Approval Form", if you

haven't done so already (the Form is also available via [RIF CEG scheme webpage](#)). Complete the Form and upload a copy at the prompt to "Attach Co-Investment Approval Form here (with signatures)". Noting that the minimum co-investment level is 25% of the total cost of equipment, higher level of co-investment will be viewed favourably, in particular with regard to equipment requests of high value.

N.B Any cash co-investments for refurbishment, operational or maintenance costs should not be included in the percentage cash co-investment calculation.

Section 6 Equipment Justification

Section 6.1 requires that the applicants outline the steps taken to determine that the specific equipment or equipment with a similar function is not currently available within existing research platforms (MCRIP-funded or otherwise) on campus.

If selected 'Yes':

Section 6.1a and 6.1b require applicants to provide contact and location details for the equipment and the outcome of any enquires made regarding gaining access to the equipment. Reasons for not being able to access or use the equipment should be given.

Section 6.2 requires the applicants to outline the need for and proposed use of the equipment.

Section 6.2a should address the following:

- Is this a new piece of equipment?
- Is this replacing outdated or decommissioned equipment?

Section 6.2b should address the following:

- Will the equipment be used for research, research training and/or teaching purposes?
- What is the projected utilisation and expected life of the equipment?
- How does it pass the 'collaborative test'? Refer to Section 11 of the Funding Rules for collaborative test information.

Section 6.3 asks applicants to summarise the potential of the equipment to increase University research capability, quality and output. Supporting evidence will be essential to make a compelling case.

Section 6.4 requires applicants to identify whether the equipment meets the eligibility requirements of the Australian Research Council's Linkage Infrastructure, Equipment and Facilities (LIEF) scheme. Equipment considered eligible for LIEF would not usually be considered eligible for support through the RIF Collaborative Equipment Grant scheme. If unsure whether your request could be eligible for ARC LIEF funding, please contact RIC [Research Infrastructure](#) **prior** to developing an application for support through the RIF Collaborative Equipment Grant Scheme.

In Section 6.5, applicants are asked to indicate whether the equipment has ever been requested through the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences Large Equipment Grant Scheme. If the proposed equipment was the focus of an unsuccessful application, the same or similar equipment may be requested through the RIF Collaborative Equipment Grant scheme, provided it complies with eligibility requirements of this scheme. If your answer is a "Yes" to this question, please provide details of the outcome.

Section 7 Collaborative Nature of Proposed Use

In this section you elect to complete either Sections 7.1 and 7.1a (Equipment requested for inclusion in existing platform) or Section 7.1, 7.1a, 7.1b and 7.1c (Equipment requested for to be located outside a platform).

Section 7.1 If selecting Yes:

Choose the relevant platform name from the drop-down list (refer to Appendix A).

Proposed Equipment Location should indicate the building name and room number, as well as the name of node if the Platform is consisted of multi-nodes (e.g. Biosciences node). When prompted, attach evidence of platform leadership endorsement, which may be in the form of an email or a letter of support, as long as it indicates the proposed location and date of endorsement. Platform Managers must be contacted for approval at least two weeks prior to the closing date of applications.

If selecting No, **Host** should include the name of the equipment custodian, name of research lab and department/school/academic division/centre. Follow the instructions above for **Proposed Equipment Location**. When prompted, attach evidence of endorsement by host, which may be in the form of an email or a letter of support, as long as it indicates the proposed location and date of endorsement.

Section 7.1a Please provide Information on why the proposed location is suitable and how access will be managed.

Section 7.1b **Expected Demand** should outline the type of users (staff/student, Department/School/Academic Division), the expected utilisation of the equipment over time, and any opportunities for use by industry or external collaborators. Supporting evidence will be considered favourably.

Section 7.1c **Management Plan** should include details of staffing, responsibility & governance, access procedures for internal & external users, the access system (web-booking, etc.), fee schedule, technical expertise for operation & maintenance of equipment, as appropriate.

Section 8 Operations

In the **Operating Costs** section, please list the operating expense and the associated costs in AUD. Indicate technical support, subsequent ongoing costs such as upgrades to software or software support costs, service maintenance and operational consumables that will be provided (in kind) for the equipment. Amounts and expense types are required here.

Section 8.1 should outline the source(s) of funding for the operating costs in the previous section.

Section 9 Capital Works

When completing this section, it is important to note that it is **not** necessary to obtain quotes for this work.

Section 10 Letters of Support

A maximum of three letters of support may be uploaded here to demonstrate the value and importance of the proposed equipment.

Appendix A

Definition of “Platform” – A platform is an organised structure through which an end-user can gain access to equipment, facilities and services without the need for formal collaborations. It is a way for researchers to access a vast range of technology, expertise and support for research.

Further details of platforms are available via [Research Gateway](#).

List of the University research platforms

Biological Optical Microscopy Platform

BioSciences Microscopy Unit

Ian Holmes Imaging Center @ Bio21

Large Animal Research Facilities

Libraries and Collections

Mass Spectrometry and Proteomics Facility

Materials Characterisation and Fabrication Platform

Melbourne Bioinformatics

Melbourne Bioresources Platform

Melbourne Brain Centre Imaging Unit

Melbourne Cytometry Platform

Melbourne Data Analytics Platform

Melbourne Histology Platform

Melbourne Magnetic Resonance

Melbourne Protein Characterisation

Melbourne Statistical Consulting Platform

Melbourne Trace Analysis for Chemical, Earth and Environmental Sciences

Metabolomics Australia

Methods and Implementation Support for Clinical and Health research Hub

Phenomics Australia Histopathology and Slide Scanning Services

Plant Growth Facilities

Platform for Research Software Solutions

Research Computing Services

University Digitisation Centre

Victorian Centre for Functional Genomics