## KEY DATES AND SELECTION PROCESS OVERVIEW

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Monday 27 February</strong></td>
<td>Scheme Opens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SEE WEBPAGE</strong></td>
<td>Expressions of Interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Some faculties may have internal submission requirements prior to the submission dates listed here. Please see the ECR webpage for the most up to date information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Monday 8 May</strong></td>
<td>Eligibility Exemption Requests (EERs) due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Exemptions may be requested under the following circumstances only:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• If the applicant’s PhD was awarded prior to 3 July 2018 and they can describe career interruption/s to justify the additional time post-PhD.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Other exceptional circumstances where RIC has advised the applicant to submit an eligibility exemption request.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Submission of an EER does not guarantee an exemption, and all decisions are at the discretion of the Committee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>End May</strong></td>
<td>Eligibility Exemption Request (EER) outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Monday 3 July</strong></td>
<td>Final applications due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Applicants must first submit through SmartyGrants, then upload the final PDF to the Themis Grants Workbench. Applications without a corresponding Themis submission will not be forwarded for assessment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Early July</strong></td>
<td>Eligibility Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>After the submission deadline, all applications will be reviewed for eligibility and compliance by the Researcher Development Schemes team in RIC. The team endeavors to contact any applicants whose applications have been submitted with unclear or conflicting information affecting their eligibility status, or to clarify any details as requested by the central committee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wednesday 19 July to Monday 21 August</strong></td>
<td>Faculty Ranking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Full applications are first assessed by a committee in your faculty, who produce a shortlist and recommended ranking for applications in your faculty. Around 70% of the final selections for the ECR program are decided according to these recommendations from the faculty ranking process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>September</strong></td>
<td>Central Selection Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Central Committee is chaired by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research capability) and is made up of senior representatives across the University. The central committee oversees the rankings provided by each faculty to ensure fair process and will finalise around 70% of the final selections according to the provided ranking. The reserved 30% of funding is then used to support additional projects, specifically considering interdisciplinarity, equity and diversity, and equitable distribution of funding across faculties and disciplines.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Friday 6 October</strong></td>
<td>Outcomes announced</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

If applicants are concerned that they may have an eligibility issue, they should in the first instance contact their Faculty ECR Grant administrator for advice (contact on webpage). If eligibility cannot be confirmed, they should contact RIC via res-devschemes@unimelb.edu.au.

## PhD Award Date

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How is the five-year window calculated?</td>
<td>The five-year window is counted backwards from the full application submission date. For grants in 2024, the eligibility window for PhD award date is between 3 July 2018 and 3 July 2023.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the PhD completion date?</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can I request for an exemption from the PhD eligibility window?</td>
<td>Significant interruptions in the applicant’s career since PhD that impacts their eligibility can be considered through submission of an Eligibility Exemption Request. EERs will be considered for interruptions such as (but not limited to) periods of parental leave, unemployment, or employment outside academia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What if I haven’t yet received my PhD notification?</td>
<td>We are not able to consider submissions from applicants who will not receive the above PhD notification by the full application due date. Exemption requests will not be considered for this reason.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## UoM Contract

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What if my appointment doesn’t start until 2024?</td>
<td>You are eligible to apply if the prospective Head of School/Department signs off on the certification form for your application. If awarded, your contract must be in place by 1 January 2024, and you must keep it for the duration of the ECR grant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am on a fixed term or casual appointment, but my contract does not extend into next year (yet).</td>
<td>You are eligible to apply if the prospective Head of School/Department signs off on the certification form for your application. You should speak with the HoD well in advance of your application to ensure you have their support for a fixed term contract extension for the duration of 2024 if successful.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If I am on sabbatical or SSP(L) in 2024, can I still work on my project/use my funding?</td>
<td>You should work with your academic division research office contact to confirm arrangements and ensure this is clearly detailed in your application to satisfy the feasibility component of the selection criteria.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Previous Funding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have been the Lead CI or Fellow on an NHMRC or ARC grant</td>
<td>You are not eligible to apply for the ECR grant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have received prior funding for non-research costs only (salary-only and travel-only)</td>
<td>Eligible and cannot affect how your faculty ranks your application.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have previously held a consultancy that was not obtained through a competitive process</td>
<td>Eligible and cannot affect how your faculty ranks your application.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| I have received some prior funding for research costs through a competitive (i.e., grant application) process, other than those already described above | Competitively obtained research funding, other than those already described, includes:

- Non-ARC/NHMRC
- ARC/NHMRC, but not a Lead CI or Fellow
- Any other domestic or international competitive grant or fellowship that included research costs

You may still apply for the ECR Grant; however, your faculty may consider your prior research funding experience when ranking your application for the central selection committee. |
<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have previously been awarded/currently hold a UOM McKenzie or Melbourne Postdoctoral Fellowship</td>
<td>You are not eligible to apply for the ECR grant if you have previously been awarded either of these internally funded fellowships. It is possible to apply for both the ECR grant and one of these fellowships for funding in 2024, however, applicants successful in both programs would be required to relinquish one of the awards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have previously been awarded an internal research grant/fellowship funded by my faculty</td>
<td>You may still apply for the ECR Grant, however your faculty may consider your prior research funding experience when ranking your application for the central selection committee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have previously been awarded a UoM ECR Grant</td>
<td>You cannot apply for a second ECR grant or apply for two ECR grants in the same round. There is no limit to how many times you can apply for the ECR grant if you have previously been unsuccessful but are still within the eligibility window.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will applications under consideration for funding elsewhere impact my eligibility?</td>
<td>Any applications for funding where the outcome of the proposal is not yet known, will not impact eligibility to the ECR grant program. If you are subsequently awarded an additional external grant, you will be able to hold both so long as the funded activities/aims do not overlap. You should be clear in your application how the proposed ECR Grant is distinct from other research funding (both past, current, and requested).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Most instruction is provided within the application form. As many ECR Grant applicants have limited experience applying for research funding, we have compiled some additional explanation and assistance below, corresponding with key sections of the application form.

- Applications must comply with the formatting, page and word limit requirements described in the application form.
- All questions must be answered or marked N/A.
- Applications must contain all the information necessary for assessment of the project without the need for explanation or reference for further documentation, including reference to internet sources.

Part A: Applicant Details

A2. Host Department

Indicate whether the ECR grant, if awarded, would be hosted within the University of Melbourne or if you are applying through a position at an eligible affiliated institute. If your ECR Grant, if awarded, would be hosted in a school or department of the University of Melbourne, you will be prompted to select the relevant Faculty and School/Department from dropdown lists.

- If you previously indicated that the grant, if awarded, would be hosted in an eligible affiliated institution, you will be prompted to select the affiliate institute proposing to host the grant.

If you are unsure which option to select, please contact your academic division contact in the first instance, then you can email res-devschemes@unimelb.edu.au for further clarification.

A3. Appointment Details

If you have had multiple appointments at UoM, please use the start date of your first appointment. Casual employees are not normally eligible for the ECR grant, unless their Head of Department certifies via the Certification Form that, if successful, the applicant will be on a fixed-term or continuing appointment for 2024.

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

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

The project title and 100-word summary should 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. 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. 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

In the table, please list all external (i.e., domestic and/or international) sources of funding that you wish to apply for within 2 years of completion of the ECR grant. Please include Category 2-4 funding where appropriate.

- Category 1: Australian Competitive Grants Register (ACGR)
- Category 2: Other Public Sector Competitive and Non-competitive Research Funding
- Category 3: Industry, International, Philanthropic and Other Funding for Research
- Category 4: Cooperative Research Centres (CRCs)

Part C: Proposed Budget
The Total Amount Requested is automatically calculated from the ‘Amount Requested for Category’ totals column.

Funds will not be provided for the following purposes:

- Chief Investigator salaries and/or on-costs.
- 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;
- Non-specialist equipment available readily to University staff through Academic Divisions, such as desktop computers or laptops;
- Salaries for research collaborator(s). This does not include salaries for research support staff or technical support staff.
- Article Processing Charges (APC - sometimes called open access fees) 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;
- Society membership fees.

SmartyGrants table

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

- Please do not alter the ‘Budget Category’ column as these headings are mandatory.
- Leave the 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 budget items under the relevant category headings. You can leave justifications to your project description.
- All costs should be listed excluding GST.

We recommend all applicants use the research costing and pricing tool to help with budget preparation. Cost-recovery (overheads) do not apply to internally funded programs, so please ensure that you select ‘Budget with no cost recovery’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cost Recovery Multiplier</th>
<th>1.00</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Override default multiplier</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budget with no cost recovery</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example Budget

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

Total Amount Requested: $39,799

Budget Categories

Personnel

Requests for personnel should include:
• 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) or number of hours and hourly rate for casual staff, and;
• oncosts as are automatically included by the **research costing and pricing tool**

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.

**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 and would be 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, however it should be 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 and should not request funds for standard-issue items. Where similar items of equipment are available applicants must justify why existing equipment is not sufficient. Only items of equipment considered essential for the project should be included and must be justified. 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 attend conferences or workshops but this funding would generally be provided from other sources and so should be well-justified. Travel (e.g. flights) should be separately itemised from accommodation with destinations clearly marked (e.g. Melbourne to Sydney).

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. 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.

**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.

**C2. 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. 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?

Part D: Research Support

D1. Past and Current Funding Support

The Early Career Grant gives preference is given to applicants who have not previously received significant competitively awarded funding for research costs. D1 is used to outline the applicants research experience and opportunity, and also calculate the $ amount of research funding to be considered by the faculty ranking committee.

Please provide details of all research income you have received (ARC, NHMRC, other agencies in Australia and overseas, including internal grants and research contracts such as with government departments and industry).

D2. Past and Current Funding Support

The $ amount of funding you have received since PhD should automatically calculate here. Please ensure this figure is correct and does not include projects where you have been an RA or other staff member.

D3. Requested Funding

As above, but for funding requests (proposals) that you are involved in as a named investigator or fellow where the outcome of the application is not yet known. Add more rows as necessary.

Part E: Project Description

Part E must be written in plain text into the application form. 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 list of key stages in the project and where appropriate, the experimental design.

E3. Role of the Chief Investigator, Staff, and Students

E3.i. Describe the proposed contribution of the Chief Investigator and any internal 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. External Collaborators

Collaboration with parties external to the University of Melbourne is not a requirement of this program. If you wish to collaborate with anyone from another organisation, please add a new section for each entry and answering the sub questions.
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

This section can be filled out regardless of whether the applicant has applied for an Eligibility Exemption. 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.

Please summarise any career interruptions (e.g. acute or chronic illness, child bearing, child rearing or primary responsibility for the sustained care of a dependent family member), explaining the impact on your research outputs/career trajectory. A calculation of full-time equivalent (FTE) research metrics should be provided. Example calculation below:

**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)**

_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 F2 CV will be written directly into the application form and should be no longer than 3 pages in the final generated PDF.

F3. Research Outputs

F3.i. A summary of 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 from the last five years is required for the Chief Investigator.

- Items that have not yet been published should be clearly identified as accepted or in-press and acceptance dates provided (month/year). Unpublished works should not be included.
- 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 faculty, if any. Applicants are encouraged to use the Minerva Elements publications system.
- If you have calculated career interruptions, you can include additional research outputs to equal 5 years’ worth of outputs.

F3.iii. List your three best research outputs and provide a summary detailing your contribution and the impact they have made in your field.

Part G: Declaration

If information in an application is later proved misleading or fraudulent, the award will be withdrawn.

SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

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

- Generate a PDF copy of your application and double check the sections with page limits.
- Submit the PDF to your Head of School/Department with the HoD Certification Form (available for download from the ECR Grants webpage).
- Upload the signed certification form into the SmartyGrants application and submit via SmartyGrants. Once the final application is submitted it cannot be altered.
- Complete the Themis submission. A walk through of this process is found here. The status of the workbench submission should be ‘Forwarded to HoD’ by end of submission day.