

Questions submitted during Westpac Fellowship webinar, 6th July 2021 1-1:30pm

1. If it is ECR grant, does completing PhD in 2020 count?

Unfortunately not, your PhD must have been awarded before 1 September 2018.

2. What's era ranking for research?

The Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) list for UoM is available here:

<https://dataportal.arc.gov.au/ERA/Web/Outcomes#/institution/MEL>

Your research must be in a field of research ranked 5 ("well above world standard") in the 2018 rankings.

3. How will COVID affect international opportunities?

I would recommend structuring your application as if international opportunities such as volunteering, or an internship, will be possible. You could also discuss the possibility of international opportunities such as conferences or courses being moved online if international travel is affected.

4. The eligibility criteria are different here than on the Westpac website - this states that:

"You have been awarded a PhD between 1 September 2014 and 1 September 2017; or have obtained an Eligibility Exemption from the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research) or equivalent if your PhD was awarded prior to 1 September 2014."

Some parts of the external Westpac website have not been updated however their 2022 guidelines uploaded to their website are up-to-date and should be considered the source of truth.

5. I received my PhD in October 2018. Can I apply for an exemption? Thanks.

Unfortunately not, your PhD must have been awarded before 1 September 2018.

6. If you are doing basic research in the medical field, is that type of research eligible?

Provided that your research does not breach the ARC policy - <https://www.arc.gov.au/policies-strategies/policy/arc-medical-research-policy/arc-medical-research-policy-version-20201>

7. Are you going to provide more detail about the three focus areas?

The 3 focus areas identified by Westpac are: technology and innovation, strengthening Australia-Asia ties, and enabling positive social change.

8. So any health-related related research is ineligible?

No, not necessarily. Eligible medical research is defined in the ARC policy:

<https://www.arc.gov.au/policies-strategies/policy/arc-medical-research-policy/arc-medical-research-policy-version-20201>

9. Is social science research that is connected to studying healthcare workers eligible for this fellowship?

Yes, provided that it is in one of the 3 focus areas and does not breach the ARC policy:

<https://www.arc.gov.au/policies-strategies/policy/arc-medical-research-policy/arc-medical-research-policy-version-20201>

10. Can you give us an example of the kind of 'giving back' to the network?

As Dr Jess Heerde discussed during the webinar, two key examples of giving back include mentorship and providing leadership to continue the network.

11. If our research is relevant to two of the Foundations priorities, should we discuss both or just focus on one?

You can discuss more than one focus area if it is relevant to your research however as PVC Prof Julie McLeod elaborated, you should consider whether it would be beneficial to focus in on one area rather than try and cover two areas.

12. Can you give an example of what increasing Australia-Asia ties mean?

Westpac have not strictly defined/elaborated on their focus areas however you may consider exploring some of the previously funded Westpac projects on this topic:

<https://scholars.westpacgroup.com.au/scholars/>

13. Are there ballpark 'academic excellence' figures (e.g. publication rates or citations) that we should be aware of as a baseline? Or is this something looked at through the EOI? And do these take into account relative to opportunity?

No as this will vary across disciplines.

14. What is the process for submitting EOI? Is there a template?

The template EOI can be downloaded from the UoM Westpac website:

<https://sites.research.unimelb.edu.au/research-funding/domestic/westpac-research-fellowships>

15. Does the Westpac Research Fellowship include the on cost (e.g., DECRA includes a 30% on cost)?

UoM covers the top-up portion on the \$110,000/year contribution from Westpac for salary including on-costs.

16. Does the scheme provide salary for the applicant for three years or funding for spending on the project?

The Fellowship package provides funding for your salary, your research budget and funding for the Westpac Professional Development Fund. This is explained in greater detail in the Westpac Guidelines.

17. How 'economic' is the Fellowship focused? For instance, would studying Chinese immigrants in Australia for example suffice or does it have to link specifically economic/trade relations?

The research must have the potential to make a difference and have impact to Australia's future in one of the three focus areas. There is not a specified requirement to link to economic/trade relations per se or limit the focus area solely to economic benefits.