



IIT Madras - Melbourne 2026 CALL FOR PROPOSALS

The Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IIT Madras) and the University of Melbourne (Melbourne) continue to develop their strategic partnership through the [Melbourne India Postgraduate Academy \(MIPA\)](#), offering opportunities for research collaboration and engagement.

In 2026, IIT Madras and Melbourne are calling for project proposals from engineering, IT and science to establish up to three (3) pairs of supervisors, with each supervisory team supporting one (1) joint PhD candidate. Candidates participating in the program are jointly supervised by PIs from Melbourne and IIT Madras.

Each recruited PhD candidate will receive a funding package that includes tuition fee waivers/remission scholarships, a stipend, health insurance, travel insurance, relocation and travel support. Candidates will be enrolled at, and meet, both institutions' academic standards and requirements. They will be co-recruited and co-supervised by collaborative teams.

Candidates will work towards submission of a single thesis that meets both institutions' requirements and undertake a final oral examination. Upon completion, candidates will be eligible to graduate with two testamurs – one from each institution, noting the partnership with the other – and participate in the convocation ceremonies at both universities, should they choose to do so.

All recruited PhD candidates must meet the eligibility requirements and be enrolled in the relevant PhD course at both universities.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

The supervisory team must consist of at least two Principal Investigators (PIs), one from IIT Madras and one from Melbourne. The PIs must have the capacity to serve as principal supervisors for jointly enrolled PhD candidates. Each PI must meet the supervisor eligibility criteria set by their own institution and each PI is responsible for checking their own eligibility to apply.

This call is open to proposals from engineering, IT and science.

The University of Melbourne

Melbourne academics must be registered to supervise as per the [Graduate Research Training Policy \(MPF1321\)](#). Primary supervisors should be employed at Melbourne beyond the envisaged submission date of their PhD candidate (2031). If their employment contract does not extend beyond the candidates' submission date, then alternative arrangements must be in place, by either having:

- a) A named co-supervisor employed at Melbourne beyond the envisaged submission date of their PhD candidate (2031); *or*
- b) A letter of support from the respective Head of Department/Head of School detailing the arrangements in place to ensure continuity of supervision.

For more information, including forms for supervisor registration, please consult the [information for supervisors section on the Graduate Research Hub](#).

Honorary employees whose primary academic affiliation is with Melbourne are eligible to lead an application as a PI if they are a registered Principal Supervisor at Melbourne, and either:

- a) Their primary employer has entered into a written agreement for this call, using the provided approval form to fund the Melbourne cash component (AUD\$5,000) of the collaborative activity; *or*
- b) They participate at their own expense if they are otherwise unaffiliated (for example, they hold an emeritus position).

Melbourne academics must not have outstanding Progress Reports or Final Reports from any other University of Melbourne Researcher Development or ICRA Schemes.

IIT Madras

- To supervise the progress of the scholar, an IITM faculty member shall be nominated as a guide by the Dean (AR).
- In addition to the guide, at most one faculty member from IITM may be nominated as a co-guide.
- A co-guide from outside IITM may be allowed with the approval of the Chairperson, Senate.
- If the guide from IITM proceeds on leave for more than a year, another faculty member may be appointed as a co-guide.
- A faculty member retiring within 5 years may be permitted to be a guide for a new scholar. However, another faculty member with at least 7 years of remaining service at IITM will be appointed as a co-guide when the scholar joins IITM. On retirement, the co-guide will become the main guide, and the retiring faculty member will continue as a co-guide. Before allotment, the Head of the Department will evaluate the graduating capacity of the faculty and consider the average time scholars take to graduate while working with the concerned faculty.

For further information on IIT Madras PIs, please refer to the [PhD Ordinances and Regulations](#).

Additional notes for all applicants

Additional academics (including other partners in Australia, India, or internationally) are not eligible to apply as primary supervisors, although they can participate in the co-supervision of joint PhD candidates. However, involvement of shared external partners that benefit the project, for example through translation support or providing internship opportunities, is encouraged. PIs cannot submit more than one proposal for one (1) joint PhD candidate as part of this call but can co-supervise other projects.

Adherence to respective equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) policies are a core feature of this scheme to ensure that all participants can do their best work, thrive and succeed. Applicant teams should consider how they can take meaningful steps in their future collaborations to foster an environment that values, supports and respects a diverse range of views, knowledge and experiences. Applicants should consider EDI as it applies to gender, indigenous peoples, disabilities, career stages and sectors.

To be eligible, every application must satisfy the specified eligibility requirements as above.

PROJECT STRUCTURE AND FUNDING

Up to a total of three (3) project proposals will be funded.

Each project must identify IIT Madras or Melbourne as the Home/Lead Institution. The Home Institution is where the candidate spends most of their research time and will commence and conclude their degree. The Host Institution is where the candidate spends the remainder of their candidature as part of a research stay. Candidates must spend at least 12 months at each institution.

At Melbourne, all candidates will receive a [Graduate Research Scholarship](#) for the time they are at Melbourne.

At IIT Madras, all candidates will receive PhD HTRA scholars are eligible for Institute Fellowship of Rs. 37,000/- per month for the first two years and Rs. 42,000/- per month for the next three years. In addition, they are also eligible for HRA, as per GOI norms, for the time they are at IIT Madras. For more details – [IITM Research Admissions Brochure](#)

Split Funding Model:

The Split Model is where the living stipend is paid by the institution where the candidate is located at the time.

In this model, all candidates (Home and Host) are offered a standard Graduate Research Scholarship for the time they are at Melbourne*, and IIT Madras offer their standard stipend/scholarship payment when the candidates are physically located there.

*Noting, a Melbourne Graduate Research Scholarship is paid when the candidate is located in Melbourne for up to 2.5 years (Melbourne Home institute) or up to 2 years (Melbourne Host institute).

Summary of funding for each project:

University of Melbourne	The Indian Institute of Technology Madras
Faculty funded tax-free scholarship (stipend) for each candidate when at Melbourne. See the Graduate Research Scholarship page for full details.	Tax-free scholarship (stipend - HTRA as applicable) and accommodation (nominal fee) for each candidate when at IIT Madras.
Tuition-fee waiver/scholarship for each candidate	Tuition-fee waiver/scholarship for each candidate.
<i>Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC)</i> Single Membership for any candidate who is an international candidate and requires a student visa to study in Australia, and <i>Travel insurance</i> while on Study Away.	Institute wide health insurance while at IIT Madras campus (nominal fee).
Relocation allowance to come to Melbourne for joint PhD candidates: \$2000 AUD for candidates moving / relocating from States or Territories other than Victoria or \$3000 AUD for candidates moving / relocating from outside Australia.	Partial Travel support for IIT Madras Home candidates from Office of Global Engagement (OGE) under the OGE Travel Grant.
Each participating Faculty to provide \$5,000* per candidate to support**: ● PI travel ● Melbourne Home candidate travel to IIT Madras ● Graduate recruitment ● Workshop costs or virtual collaboration expenses	IIT Madras to support: ● Hosting Melbourne PIs ○ Accommodation (subject to availability) ○ local transport ○ hospitality

**The funds provided by the Faculty is pooled and allocated to the Academic Lead of the joint PhD program. The Academic Lead is responsible for the funds for the uses described.*

***Please note that ineligible costs include: directly incurred staff (e.g. Research Assistants), replacement research/teaching costs, directly allocated costs including applicants' time, indirect costs/estates costs, publication costs, equipment, consumable costs, scholarships, conference attendance, tuition fees and honoraria. Melbourne and IIT Madras reserve the right to determine the eligibility of expenses.*

PROJECT PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

Before preparing a proposal, please note the following about the structure of the program:

- Up to three (3) applications will be successful as part of this call. Projects should be co-designed by the participating PIs.
- PIs should ensure that they have the capacity to take on a new PhD candidate in line with their institution's policies and meet the eligibility requirements to participate in the scheme.
- PhD projects should be designed to be submitted within four years of full-time enrolment at Melbourne.

The online application form requests:

- The details of the PIs/research groups involved, including CVs and links to each PIs website
- An abstract for the PhD project, which will be used for recruitment if the proposal is successful
- An overview of the PhD project:
 - IIT Madras or Melbourne as the Home/Lead Institution
 - Outline of the project, including expected outcomes
 - A supervision plan, highlighting why the project requires time to be spent at the partner institution and benefits of doing so
 - A GANTT chart showing the division of time to be spent by the candidate at both institutions
 - How the proposed project reflects the equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) priorities.
 - The project and applicant's suitability must align with the relevant foreign engagement regulatory frameworks. For more details, including access to the self-assessment decision tool, FAQs and the link to request an assessment from the Office of Research Ethics and Integrity (OREI), Melbourne PIs please refer to the [International safeguards and research security](#) and [Export Controls](#) pages.
- A summary of the collaboration value and potential impact, noting:
 - The extent of the planned collaboration between the PIs beyond joint supervision
 - How the proposal could lead to the development of a larger network of researchers across both institutions
 - A plan for leveraging future external funding, if applicable.
- All Melbourne applicants must attach an endorsement from the respective Head of School/Department and Associate Dean (Graduate Research).
- All IIT Madras applicants must attach approval from the Head of the respective Department and the academic research office, along with an endorsement from the Dean of Global Engagement, IIT Madras.

It is recommended that applications are written in lay terms for reviewers to better understand the project's potential impact and its anticipated outcomes.

Key dates:

Submissions open	2 February
Deadline for project proposal applications	15 March
Outcome notifications and projects advertised for recruitment*	May
PhD candidates to commence	2026

PIs must ensure their preferred candidate* has commenced by December 2026. If the PIs do not meet this

deadline, the scholarship and mobility funding will be recalled for use in a future call.

*Candidates from IIT Madras are eligible to be recruited to the joint PhD project if they have successfully completed their coursework and Candidacy Examination as per the IIT Madras PhD Ordinance, up to 6 months prior to the date on the 2026 MIPA Call for Proposals outcome letter.

REPORTING AND OTHER CONDITIONS

Melbourne recipients will be required to provide regular updates on project progress during the candidature of their joint PhD candidate. These updates will be requested annually by the International Collaborative Research Academy (ICRA) Academic Lead. Recipients who fail to participate in regular reporting mechanisms for this ICRA may be found ineligible for participation in future ICRA Schemes.

The information will be shared with IIT Madras.

EVALUATION OF PROJECT PROPOSALS

Melbourne and IIT Madras will rank the proposals in order of meeting the selection criteria and agree on the top-ranking projects to award funding.

Selection Criteria

- **Collaborator complementarity** – What is the added value of a new collaboration or building on an existing research relationship? How does the collaboration combine mutual areas of interest and strength?
- **Quality of supervision** – Do the PIs have a track record of supervising PhD candidates to completion? Do the PIs have experience of co-supervising PhD candidates internationally? How will the PIs work together effectively in jointly supervising their shared PhD candidates? What are the beneficial learning outcomes and experiences for the joint PhD candidates?
- **Project design and rationale** – How clearly presented and justified is the basis for, and design of, the joint PhD project? What are the anticipated benefits of involving joint PhD researchers in the collaboration for the project, the PhD researchers, and PIs? What is the benefit of the candidate spending a minimum of 12 months at each institution?
- **Potential impact** – What is the level of originality and innovation in the research proposal? To what extent does the research proposal plan to address significant challenges and what is the anticipated benefit to local or international communities?
- **Capacity for expanded collaboration** – What is the extent of the planned collaboration between the PIs beyond joint supervision? How well does the proposal plan to leverage external funding? To what extent are future collaborations made possible as a result of the proposed activities?

SUBMISSION AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Melbourne PIs must submit a single, jointly prepared application via the [Microsoft form](#) by Sunday 15 March at 5.00pm AEST/11.30am IST. Applications should be written for an audience proficient, but not expert, in the field. The Melbourne administration team will transfer all submitted applications as pdf to the IIT Madras research co-ordination office after the deadline. There is no need for IIT Madras PI's to submit an application directly to the IIT Madras administration in parallel.

All applications must attach endorsement from the respective Head of School/ Department and Associate Dean (Graduate Research) [Melbourne] and approval from the Head of the respective Department, the academic research office, along with endorsement from the Dean of Global Engagement, IIT Madras [IIT Madras]. Melbourne applicants must ensure that the endorsement is attached to the application using the approval forms provided on the [website](#). Endorsement must include the commitment of a scholarship. Melbourne applicants who hold an Honorary position must also complete the Honorary declaration form.

APPLICATION FORM

The link to apply is: [Microsoft form](#)

Submission and Melbourne contact details:

The International Collaborative Research Academies Team
Graduate Research, Student and Scholarly Services
The University of Melbourne
jointphd-admin@unimelb.edu.au

IIT Madras contact details:

**Global Academic Initiatives
Office of Global Engagement**
Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IITM)
outbound@ge.iitm.ac.in