

## RESEARCH GRANTS POLICY



Current version in effect from: 16 Oct 2025  
Approved by Council: 7 Oct 2015  
Revised by Council: 2 May 2018, 2 Dec 2020, 14 April 2021, 22 Jun 2022, 10 May 2023, 13 Mar 2024, 15 Oct 2025

### Related Documents

Conflict of Interest Policy

Regulation 7: Libraries

Regulation 8: Members of the University

Appeals Policy

Strategic Plan 2030: Research Strategy

### 1. Aims

To support the University's mission and Research Strategy, the Council allocates funds in the University's annual budget for research grants. These grants enable our scholars to produce and disseminate research at or above world standard, engage external stakeholders and audiences, and make an impact beyond the academy.

### 2. Research Grants

<i>Type of Grant</i>	<i>Funding Amount</i>	<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Assessment Criteria</i>
Conference Grant	Up to \$5,000 per applicant per annum	To support researchers presenting at a national or international conference that will lead to demonstrable outcomes such as publication, creation or advancement of external partnerships, or an external grant application.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Evidence of acceptance of paper</li><li>• Strength of planned publication, grant, or partnership outcomes</li><li>• Strength of rationale for conference attendance/presentation</li></ul>
Project Development Grant	Up to \$10,000 per applicant per annum	To support activity that either develops a new research project or advances a project already underway, and that will lead to demonstrable research outcomes such as	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Project quality (40%)</li><li>• Applicant track record (40%)</li><li>• Strength of proposed publication, grant, or partnership outcomes (10%)</li></ul>

		publication, creation or advancement of external partnerships, or an external grant application.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alignment with the University's Research Strategy (10%)</li> </ul>
Impact and Engagement Grant	Up to \$10,000 per applicant per annum	To support activity that develops or advances research projects with social, cultural, public, policy, community or other external impact; or develops or advances research collaborations with public, community, government, church or other external stakeholders; builds the University's capacity for mission-aligned impactful research partnerships; and/or assists with the development and submission of external industry (Category 3) grant applications.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project quality (40%)</li> <li>• Applicant track record (40%)</li> <li>• Strength of proposed impact, engagement, grant, or partnership outcomes (10%)</li> <li>• Alignment with the University's Research Strategy (10%)</li> </ul>
Extraordinary Large Research Grant	\$10,000-\$20,000 (usually one available annually)	To support research projects and activities that require more significant funding. Such projects should support the UD's strategic research goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applicant(s) research track record (40%)</li> <li>• Project quality (40%)</li> <li>• Alignment with the University's Research Strategy (20%)</li> </ul>

### 3. Research Grants Panel

#### 3.1 Membership:

- a) The Dean of Research Strategy
- b) Five academic staff of the University appointed by the Academic Board for a term of up to three years
- c) An academic external to the University may be appointed by the Academic Board for a term of up to three years as the need arises.

In making appointments the Academic Board should ensure the Panel has:

- d) expertise in assessment of grant applications
- e) expertise across a range of disciplines
- f) members from a range of Colleges and/or Schools
- g) appropriate gender balance.

3.2 The Chair of the Research Grants Panel (“Panel Chair”) is elected by the Panel from its membership for a term of up to three years, with this role ordinarily being filled from among the College members.

- a) a deputy chair will be elected by the Panel from its membership for a term of up to three years, and may ordinarily be filled by any member of the Panel.
- b) in cases throughout this policy where the Panel Chair has a conflict of interest, the Deputy Chair serves as the acting Panel Chair.

3.3 A quorum for a meeting of the Research Grants Panel is four Panel members.

3.4 The Research Grants Panel may appoint external assessors to assist them in the assessment of a round or of individual applications. In instances where external assessors are appointed, the identity of the assessors must remain confidential to the members of the Panel.

3.5 The following officers of the University are not Panel members and are ineligible for appointment as Panel members or as external assessors:

- a) The Chancellor
- b) The Vice-Chancellor
- c) The Chair of Academic Board
- d) The Dean of the School of Graduate Research.

#### **4. Conflicts of Interest**

4.1 Conflicts of interest must be handled in accordance with the University’s Conflict of Interest Policy.

4.2 Declaration of conflicts of interest

4.2.1 A Panel member who has an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest in relation to a grant application from another applicant must declare the conflict to the Panel prior to that application being discussed and voted on at the meeting for the round. The declaration of this conflict of interest is to be made either through the standing register of conflicts of interest or by declaring the matter to the Panel Chair.

4.2.2 A Panel member who is an applicant or co-applicant for a research grant must declare the conflict to the Panel Chair upon submitting their application for the round.

4.3 Actions for handling common conflicts of interest:

	<i>Circumstance</i>	<i>Action</i>
1.	Panel member applies for grant.	Panel member excluded from the Panel for the entirety of that round.
2.	Panel Chair applies for grant.	Panel Chair excluded for the entirety of that round. The Deputy Chair of the Research Grants Panel acts as Panel Chair for that round. If the Deputy Chair also has a conflict of interest by virtue of having applied for a grant in that round, then the acting Chair for the round is appointed by the Vice-Chancellor from among the other members of the Panel.
3.	Application from another member of a Panel member's home College/School.	Panel member may participate in discussion but must not vote on that application.
4.	DRS applies for a grant.	Should the DRS apply for a grant, then the DRS will not advise other applicants for that round or provide feedback for that round.

4.4 In the event that the exclusion of Panel members due to conflicts of interest means that in the opinion of the Panel Chair there is a risk of the Panel being unable to achieve a quorum, the Dean of Research Strategy or Vice-Chancellor has delegated authority to appoint an additional temporary Panel member (either from the University or an external appointment) for that application round only.

## 5. Applications

5.1 The number and closing dates of application rounds are decided by the Panel by 31 October of the prior year and published in the University Calendar.

5.2 Grant funding limits

- a) An applicant may apply for a maximum of \$5000 per annum in Conference Grants and, in addition, a maximum of one Project Development Grant or one Impact and Engagement Grant per annum.
- b) An applicant may only be awarded a combined maximum of \$10,000 of funding for Project Development Grants and Impact and Engagement Grants per annum
- c) An application submitted by co-applicants for either Project Development Grants or Impact and Engagement Grants may only be awarded funding to the greatest amount that any one eligible applicant would receive individually.

5.3 Eligibility to apply for a research grant requires the applicant, or in the case of a group at least one of the applicants, to be currently:

- a) an academic staff member of the University as defined by Regulation 8: Members of the University

- b) a staff member of a library of the University as defined by Regulation 7: Libraries.
- c) eligible applicants will usually be research active or equivalent.
- d) honorary staff members are eligible to apply for Conference, Project Development, and Impact and Engagement Grants, but may only be included in an Extraordinary Large Grant application if they are a co-applicant alongside an eligible academic staff member employed by the University.

5.4 Eligible expenditure for inclusion in a research grant is any expenditure that demonstrably supports the production or dissemination of research at or above world standard, research-based or research-informed engagement with external stakeholders or partners, or the preparation of applications for external competitive grants.

Examples of eligible expenditure include but are not limited to:

- a) travel, registration and accommodation associated with presenting a paper at a research conference
- b) library or archival research or fieldwork
- c) research assistance
- d) sponsorship or seed-funding for running a conference, symposium or workshop supported by the University
- e) visiting scholar costs
- f) expenses relating to a peer-reviewed publication, such as copyright permissions, images, or costs for open access publication
- g) research items such as books, manuscripts, or digital collections where these are unavailable through a library of the University or a library with which the University has reciprocal borrowing rights
- h) teaching relief that leads to the production or dissemination of research or an application for an external grant
- i) specific costs such as honoraria where appropriate to support Indigenous collaboration
- j) costs for software or online services essential to the research activity and for which the University cannot provide access.

5.5 Applications are to be submitted via the University's online application portal on or prior to the closing date and time published in the University Calendar for each round.

5.6 The Dean of Research Strategy is responsible for:

- a) ensuring guidelines, application forms and training materials are available to prospective applicants
- b) providing training/information sessions for potential applicants.

5.7 Applicants are responsible for:

- a) adhering to this Policy and to any guidelines issued by the Dean of Research Strategy and made available to applicants
- b) ensuring applications are complete and the applicants and proposed expenditure fall within the eligibility criteria of this Policy
- c) making a case as to the quality and feasibility of the proposed research and providing evidence to support that case
- d) providing a full, evidenced and justified budget for the proposed research costs
- e) where applicable, providing evidence that an Australian Human Research Ethics Committee approval for the proposed research has been applied for or obtained.

5.8 An application may be deemed ineligible if any of the following apply:

- a) the application is submitted after the advertised closing date and time
- b) the applicant is not eligible to apply under this Policy
- c) the proposed expenditure is for activities undertaken prior to the closing date and time for the round.

## 6. Assessment

6.1 The Panel is provided with all applications that were received prior to the cut-off date and time for an application round.

6.2 The Panel must make one of the following decisions with respect to each application:

	<i>Decision</i>	<i>Outcome</i>
1.	Incomplete or ineligible	Application not considered. If ineligible, may apply to a future round dependent on meeting eligibility criteria.
2.	Ranked below the level at which funding is available	Application unsuccessful. May apply to a future round.
3.	Partially funded (Panel to advise total sum funded)	Application successful, partially funded.
4.	Fully funded	Application successful.
5.	Partially or fully funded, subject to provision of evidence of HREC approval.	Application successful, subject to the applicant providing evidence of ethics approval which, to the satisfaction of the Panel Chair, has been: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) granted by an HREC in Australia</li> <li>ii) submitted to the Panel within 90 days of the notification of the outcome of their Research Grant application.</li> </ul>

		If evidence not provided, application unsuccessful. May apply to a future round.
6.	Partially or fully funded, subject to specific clarification requested by the Panel.	Application successful, if satisfactory clarification is provided to the Panel Chair within 30 days of notification. If satisfactory clarification not provided, application unsuccessful. May apply to a future round.

6.3 The Panel has delegated authority:

- a) to decide its own working procedures to facilitate the fair and timely assessment of applications;
- b) to award no grants in a round;
- c) to award grants to a total amount less than the available funding for that round;
- d) to give priority to applications from early career researchers (as defined by the Australian Research Council);
- e) to give priority to applicants who have not previously been awarded a research grant.

6.4 The Panel does not award research grants beyond the funds available in the University's annual research grants budget. Unspent funds are not carried forward from one year to the next.

## 7. Reporting and Acquittal

7.1 The Panel must inform each applicant in writing of the outcome of the application within fourteen days of the meeting at which the application was considered.

7.2 Successful applicants for Project Development and Impact and Engagement Grants must submit a report to the Dean of Research Strategy detailing how the funds have been expended and how the outcomes of the project have been achieved within twelve months of the award of the grant. Failure to provide this report constitutes grounds for the Panel to decide that a future research grant application is incomplete.

7.3 Funds awarded for a Conference, Project Development or Impact and Engagement Grant may only be disbursed by the University on presentation to the Financial Controller of an invoice or purchase order for payment, or a receipt for reimbursement.

7.4 For Conference, Project Development and Impact and Engagement Grants, funds must be claimed within twelve months of the date on which the grant was awarded. After twelve months unclaimed funds are forfeited by the applicant.

7.5 In exceptional circumstances where unforeseen events hinder the capacity of a successful applicant to carry out part or all of the activities for which the funding has been awarded, and where this would result in the surrender of all or part of the funding awarded, the applicant or applicants may apply to the Panel for a variation in funding.

The variation request must be submitted to the Dean of Research Strategy at the earliest opportunity and must:

- a) explain the circumstances that have necessitated the change in research plans
- b) include the submission of a revised budget and timeline
- c) explain the alternative use to which the funding will be applied
- d) describe how that activity advances the goals of the research project for which funding has been awarded.

7.6 In circumstances where the budgeted expenses as authorized by the Research Grants Panel in their award of a grant requires revision, then the applicant must submit a variation request to the Dean of Research Strategy at the earliest opportunity and must:

- a) explain the reason(s) for the change in the needs of the research activity's budgeted expenses
- b) demonstrate that the revised budget item(s) is/are eligible for funding in accordance with this Policy
- c) demonstrate that the revised budget item(s) do not exceed the amount originally awarded.

7.7 A list of successful Project Development and Impact and Engagement Grants will be published after each application round, including the type, amount, researchers and project title.

7.8 The Panel must provide an annual report to the Academic Board and Research Strategy Committee providing:

- a) information on how the funds set aside for Research Grants were expended in that year, including how any special allocations were expended
- b) how many applications were received and how many grants were awarded (the success rate)
- c) how much funding was requested and how much funding was awarded (the funding rate)
- d) any recommendations for improvements or changes to this Policy.

## **8. Review and Appeal**

8.1 An applicant may apply for a review of the Panel's decision on their application by lodging a completed Review Request Form with both the Chair of Academic Board and University Secretary within one week of receipt of notice of the outcome of the application. Disagreement with the Panel's assessment of the merits of an application is not sufficient grounds for an appeal; the onus lies on the applicant to explain how the Panel's decision did not follow due process as set out in this Policy or any guidelines issued by the Dean of Research Strategy.

8.2 The University Secretary must acknowledge receipt of the review request in writing to the applicant within five working days.

- 8.3 The Chair of Academic Board may consult with Panel members or the Financial Controller before making a decision, and usually consults the Panel Chair.
- 8.4 If the review request is upheld, the Chair of Academic Board must make recommendations to the Dean of Research Strategy, Panel Chair or other appropriate officers of the University.
- 8.5 The Chair of Academic Board must provide a report and decision on the review request in writing to the applicant, the Panel Chair, the Dean of Research Strategy, and the University Secretary within ten working days of receipt of the review request.
- 8.6 An applicant has recourse to the Appeals Policy to dispute the outcome of the review request.

**9. Date of next review**

- 9.1 This policy must be reviewed no later than 31 December 2029.