MGSE Researcher Development Schemes
2021 Guidelines

1. Introduction

MGSE research funding has been reconsidered and reframed to align with the University's Advancing Melbourne strategy. The strength of MGSE research lies in the applied nature of our research, resulting in conceptual and practical knowledge that advances the discipline or field as well as influencing policy. The 2021 *Researcher Development Schemes* aims to support the next generation of MGSE researchers; foster collaborations; and enhance research impact.

2. Objectives

The objectives of the Scheme are to:
- Support early-career and mid-career researchers to progress their research careers;
- Provide competitive funding for high quality research projects and pilot research projects that enhance competitiveness in applying for Cat 1-3 external research grants;
- Enhance research impact through quality and applied outcomes;
- Foster a diverse and inclusive academic community with a strong research culture;
- Provide research funding for projects that are strategically aligned with the University's Advancing Melbourne strategy.

Research at Melbourne. https://research.unimelb.edu.au/research-at-melbourne
Advancing Melbourne. https://about.unimelb.edu.au/strategy/advancing-melbourne

3. Funding

There will be two schemes available for MGSE researchers:
1. **Team-based research seed funding:** Grants for up to $20,000 per project which build on current work within an Academic Group/Hub/Centre and align with the University's Advancing Melbourne strategy. These initiatives will involve a team of at least three academics, including an ECR and a professor as co-CIs. Applications should have a clear statement of research impact, proposed outcomes, identify key deliverables and present an argued case for how the research outcomes will lead to increase competitiveness for the nominated external funding (Category 1-3 research).

Key Milestones

The following is a proposed schedule of major milestones for the project which will be linked to funding. The dates and the deliverables will be included in the proposed applications. Please note that the final stage of the research can include funding to be used for conferences.

Award of funding	50% of funding requested
Data collection & initial report on findings	40% of funding
Preliminary report and dissemination (to be spent within 6 months of project end date)	10% of funding

2. **Individual seed funded projects:** Funding for individual research proposals with a maximum $8,000 per application. These grants will support Level A-C academics to conduct research that will result in publication in Q1 journal (submitted) and support the further development of a competitive external grant proposal for either Category 1 -3.

Key Milestones
The following is a proposed schedule of major milestones for the project which will be linked to funding. The dates and the deliverables will be included in the proposed applications. Please note that the final stage of the research can include funding to be used for conferences.

Award of funding	50% of funding requested
Data collection & initial report on findings	40% of funding
Preliminary report and dissemination (to be spent within 6 months of project end date)	10% of funding

Five percent of funding will be designated to projects that increase our impact in Indigenous education research and teaching.

Funding will be available for up to 18 months. Applications for a further request of a 6-month extension (total 24 months) can be requested, subject to the AD-R approval, to complete their outputs. After 24 months, any remaining funds will be returned to MERI*
*subject to notification of any medically related issues that resulted in a delay to conduct the research

4. Eligibility

4.1   The project should not go past the length of the staff members fixed term

4.2   Only one application per year will be accepted from the lead researcher. These schemes are open to all academics with the following university contracts, Teaching and Research (T&R), Research Only (RO) and Teaching Specialists (TS)**

**TS academics can apply as part of their available 20% research time for the scholarship of teaching

4.3   Research-only (RO) staff whose salary is sourced from an externally funded project must demonstrate to the satisfaction of the relevant Academic Division that the nature of their appointment means that they are allowed, and have the time available, to pursue additional research activities (see Part A3 of the Application Form).

5. Application Eligibility

5.1   Applications must be submitted via the University of Melbourne's SmartyGrants application portal. Signatures may be handwritten, approved digital signatures, or image files used with explicit permission of the signatory.

5.2   All application completion and formatting requirements must be adhered to as detailed in the Guidelines.

5.3   Requested funding must adhere to the amounts available in each of the schemes.

5.4   Applications which request funds that duplicate or supplement another current internal University of Melbourne grant, external grant or research contract will be excluded from consideration. If an applicant already holds a grant in a related area, it is the applicant's responsibility to provide sufficient information to assure that this funding is not being used to 'top-up' another existing grant.

6. Application Process

6.1   Prospective applicants should read and follow the Instructions to Applicants document when completing their application.

7. Budget Items

7.1   Budget items supported
         7.1.1   Items that directly support the research program, which may be funded, are:
                   a) Research Assistant;
                   b) Relief from marking;
                   c) Consumables;
                   d) Other.
Please refer to Section 3 (Part C) of the Instructions to Applicants document for further guidance on supported budget items and budget justification.

The committee reserves the right to make reasonable adjustments to the budget of an awarded project.

7.2   Budget items not supported
         7.2.1   Funding may not be sought or used to fund Chief Investigators salaries and/or on-costs.
         7.2.2   Funding may not be sought or used for teaching buyout.

8. Selection Criteria

8.1   All applications will be assessed by a subsection of the Research Committee using the following selection criteria:

a) Researcher Development (40%)
> • How the project will contribute to the researcher's career development and enhance their competitiveness in securing external funding in the future to support their research program. This includes a statement on the applicant's plans to secure funding in the future and how the proposed research will facilitate this.

b) The Quality of the Project (30%)
> • Significance of the project and the extent to which the project is soundly conceived and planned and aligns with Advancing Melbourne.

c) Feasibility (15%)
> • The extent to which the project is feasible given the timelines and budget, and the skills, experience and time commitment of the Chief Investigator and any collaborator(s).

d) Resources (15%)
> • The extent to which the budget is justified and appropriate.

8.2 Consideration will also be given to the likelihood that the research proposed will lead to:
> • An important discovery, innovation or solution of an important practical problem;
> • A contribution of economic or social benefit to Australia and beyond; and
> • Ongoing research collaboration with an external government organisation or industry.

9. Evaluation and Assessment

9.1   A committee chaired by the Associate Dean (Research) will assess applications on a competitive basis in accordance with the objectives of the Scheme (Section 2 of this document) and the selection criteria (Section 8 of this document).

10. Timetable

Scheme Opens	28 April 2021
Applications Due	28 May 2021
Outcomes	11 June 2021