

MQ Research Projects New Staff (MQNS) Funding Rules 2018

Key Dates:

Faculty Closing Date	Wednesday 9 August 2017, 5pm AEST
Research Office Closing Date	Wednesday 23 August 2017, 5pm AEST
Notification of Results	Mid-October 2017
New Staff Project Management Workshop	<i>To be announced</i>

Submission:

Only electronic copies will be accepted. You must complete the Word application form and submit it via email as **an Adobe PDF (converted from Word, not scanned)** to research.preaward@mq.edu.au (cc: to your Faculty's Faculty Research Manager) by **Wednesday 23 August 2017, 5pm AEST**.

Files should be named according to the following convention: "Surname_MQNS" e.g. "Smith_MQNS".

Late applications will not be accepted. Hard copies and applications submitted via the online APLI form will not be accepted.

Certification:

You must also complete and submit a [MQ APLI form](#) by the closing date.

Research Office Contact:

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Executive Summary

Macquarie University Research Projects aim to ensure that Macquarie researchers are competitively positioned and well supported to attract external research funding. The following grants are supported through Macquarie University Research Projects:

- Macquarie University New Staff (MQNS) Grants
- Macquarie University Restart Grants (for Academic Staff Returning from Parental Leave)
- Macquarie University Research Development Grants (MQRDG)

1. New Staff Grants

1.1 Overview

The primary purpose of Macquarie University New Staff (MQNS) grants is to assist academic staff recently appointed at Level A or B to establish their research profile at Macquarie and increase their competitiveness in applying for external funding. Applications are evaluated on academic merit and individual need. The scheme is only open to academic staff appointed to “teaching and research” positions.

1.2 Eligibility

- 1.2.1 To be eligible for a New Staff Grant, applicants must be new academic staff appointed to “teaching and research” positions at Level A or B only, and must hold a continuing or fixed-term appointment at the time of application and for the duration of the grant. Fixed-term appointments must be for at least two years. Applicants must have commenced their appointment at Macquarie on or after 1 January 2015. The scheme is not open to academic staff appointed to “research” (or “research-only”) positions.
- 1.2.2 Staff who were employed at MQ prior to 1 January 2015 are not eligible to apply for a New Staff grant, even if the funding rules deemed them ineligible during the period before 1 January 2015. The purpose of MQNS grants is to assist academic staff recently appointed at Level A or B to establish their research profile at Macquarie and increase their competitiveness in applying for external funding.
- 1.2.3 Where it is unlikely that an applicant’s continued employment will be approved by the time the New Staff Grant is submitted, but it is the Faculty’s intention to re-employ them, they are eligible to apply given inclusion of a letter from the HoD confirming the intention to renew the employment. Use of funds is conditional on the employment being renewed, and assurance from the HoD that the intention is to employ the person beyond the period of the project.
- 1.2.4 Applicants for a New Staff Grant may apply prior to their arrival at the University, provided the University’s Human Resources Office has confirmed their appointment (evidence must accompany the application).
- 1.2.5 Staff enrolled in a PhD are not eligible to apply for a New Staff Grant. Level A or B academic staff who commenced a research degree within their first two years of employment at Macquarie University may apply for a New Staff Grant up to two years after having been awarded their degree. Under these circumstances, applicants must have been awarded their degree on or after 1 January 2015 to apply.

- 1.2.6 During their employment at Macquarie University, eligible staff members may submit an application for a New Staff Grant at most two times. If the first application is unsuccessful, an application may be submitted in the next round provided that they meet the eligibility criteria and that they improve their re-application based on (1) the feedback on the previous application from the Assessment Panel and (2) substantive guidance from their mentor on the re-working of the application. The application form will require formal endorsement by the mentor as to his/her input to the re-worked proposal for the second application.
- 1.2.7 Applicants may only hold one New Staff Grant; i.e. once an application is successful, a subsequent proposal may not be submitted.
- 1.2.8 Staff members who are employed to undertake a specific project or projects are ineligible to apply. The Assessment Panel expects that these staff will focus on the project(s) for which they are employed. This exclusion applies irrespective of the proportion of the staff member's salary that is funded from the grant(s) or other source(s) used to fund the project(s).
- 1.2.9 Staff members who are in receipt of external grant funding or Macquarie University DVCR start-up packages are ineligible to apply.
- 1.2.10 Applicants must nominate a mentor to oversee the proposed project. The expectations of the mentor are outlined in [Section 1.3](#). If successful, the grant recipient is required to meet with their mentor at the six-month mark and work with their mentor on their project reports, as described in [Section 1.4](#).
- 1.2.11 An exception to one or more of the above eligibility requirements may be considered by the Panel for staff where documented support from their Executive Dean/ Dean is provided.

1.3 Conditions of Award

Project Management Workshop

Successful New Staff Grant recipients are required to attend a one-day Project Management Workshop. Allocated funds **will not be** released until this condition is satisfied.

Mentors

Being a mentor to an applicant for a New Staff Grant is an important responsibility and, although it should not be burdensome, does require some effort and genuine engagement on the part of the mentor. During the development of the grant, the minimum expectation of the mentor is to discuss and provide feedback on the New Staff application at least once prior to submission. If the grant is awarded, further involvement is needed. At the minimum, this will be (1) to read the draft Mid-Term Report mid-way through the grant and meet with the grant recipient to help them finalise their report and (2) to read the Progress and Final Report to help the recipient formulate a high-quality report. Mentors are welcome, and encouraged, to provide further discipline-specific expertise throughout the course of the project where appropriate.

1.4 Reporting

The report templates for New Staff Grants are available on the [Research Office Website](#). Failure to submit a report by the specified date will render the grant recipient ineligible for further Macquarie University funding.

a. Mid-Term Report and Meeting with Mentor. The aim of this report is to ensure that the grant recipient is making appropriate progress with their project and to provide a framework for discussion with their mentor.

At the halfway mark of the project, the grant recipient must meet with their nominated mentor to discuss the progress of the project. The grant recipient must have drafted their **Mentor Meeting/Mid-Term Report** and submitted to his/her mentor at least one week before the meeting. The finalised report should be submitted to the Research Office Post Award Team (research.postaward@mq.edu.au) within two weeks of that meeting.

b. Progress Report. This report should describe outputs and outcomes relating to the original aims outlined in the application.

At the completion of the project, the grant recipient should prepare the **Progress Report** with input from their mentor. This must be submitted to the Research Office Post Award Team (research.postaward@mq.edu.au) no later than one month after the end date of the grant.

c. Final Report. The Final Report is intended to capture longer term outcomes and outputs from awarded grants.

Within one year after the completion of the project, the grant recipient should prepare the **Final Report** with input from their mentor. This must be submitted to the Research Office Post Award Team (research.postaward@mq.edu.au).

2. Application Preparation

2.1 All applicants are encouraged to take advantage of any mentoring or other grant-writing assistance provided within their Faculty prior to submitting an application to this scheme. Applicants should talk to their Head of Department or Faculty Research Manager for more information.

2.2 Applicants for a New Staff Grant must discuss their project with their nominated mentor (see [Section 1.3](#)) prior to submission of the application. This requirement is in addition to any further grant-writing support received at Department or Faculty level.

2.3 Great care should be taken when preparing the application. All information must be set out simply and clearly, in plain English and accessible to **non-experts** in the field, such that assessors can understand what it is that the applicant is proposing to do, and how this might be achieved.

2.4 The **Project Description** should clearly state the following information (with due consideration for the Selection Criteria) in no more than four and a half pages:

- Project title
- Background
- Project aims, significance and innovation, and expected outcomes
- Approach and methodology
- National benefits
- References

This outline should be reflected in the Requested Budget and Budget Justification sections.

3. Selection Criteria

Grants will be ranked and awarded on the basis of the following criteria:

Track record of applicant(s) relative to career stage and opportunity (40%)

The application should demonstrate:

- A strong research publication record, relative to career stage and opportunity.
- An excellent record of attracting resources for support of research, relative to career stage and opportunity.
- Other evidence of capacity and expertise to undertake the proposed research.

Project aims, significance and innovation, and expected outcomes (20%)

The application should demonstrate that:

- The research is significant and addresses an important problem within the research area.
- The research is novel and innovative.
- The anticipated outcomes will advance the knowledge base of the discipline; and/or develop new methodologies or technologies; and/or advance processes or therapies in practice; and/or contribute to public policy and debate, business or industry thinking or practice, or community understanding or behaviour.

Approach, methodology and role of personnel (20%)

The application should demonstrate that:

- The conceptual framework, design and methods are well developed and are integrated and appropriate to the aims of the project.
- The proposed timeline of activities appears realistic and achievable.
- The role, responsibilities and contributions of each investigator and the roles and levels of involvement of other participants, such as technical staff, are appropriate to the requirements of the project. The mentoring role of any senior researcher(s) should be clearly demonstrated.
- The budget is well justified and appropriate to the project.

National benefit (10%)

The application demonstrates outcomes that will benefit Macquarie University (including contributions to the [Research Framework](#)) as well as Australia, including contributions to the Commonwealth Government's [Science and Research Priorities](#) and to international links.

Strategy and schedule for attracting substantial external funding (10%)

The application demonstrates that there is a clear and achievable strategy and schedule for attracting substantial external funding.

4. Budget

The maximum amount that may be applied for is \$20,000 for project costs, and can include requests for personnel, teaching relief, equipment, maintenance and travel (funding for conference travel is not permitted). The funding allocation period is 1 January 2018 to 31 December 2019.

Two basic principles must be used in calculating and justifying budgets. These are:

- accurate costings; and
- a clear explanation of the reasons for all proposed expenditure in relation to the research plan.

A budget justification is not merely stating proposed expenditure. Researchers **must** provide details of particular grades or types of expenditure and an explanation as to why that particular expenditure is essential in relation to achieving the aims and outcomes of the project.

4.1 Personnel

Applicants should indicate the level and duration of assistance required and cost it accordingly. Vague, unspecific requests for assistance will not be supported. All requests for funding of casual research personnel must include allowance for on-costs at the rate of 17%. Applicants should contact their Faculty Finance Manager if they require additional information.

The University will not fund requests for CI or AI salaries.

MQ Salary Rates can be found on the [Research Office Website](#).

4.2 Teaching Relief

Teaching relief will be funded only where researchers have specified and strongly justified exactly why it is essential for their research project. The applicant must justify why the proposed tasks cannot be undertaken within their current approved workload allocation.

Support for teaching relief must be certified by the Head of Department and Executive Dean of Faculty via the MQ APLI form.

All requests for teaching relief must specify the number of hours of teaching for which relief is sought, together with an estimate of the costs involved, calculated at the appropriate academic award (casual or part-time) rate and including on-costs (17% for casual appointments).

Applicants who require additional information should contact their Faculty Finance Manager.

4.3 Equipment

Items of minor equipment may be requested. A descriptive statement of each item of equipment must be included in the budget justification. Quotation requirements are as per the [Macquarie University Quotations Policy](#). Applicants are reminded that all equipment purchased with research grants remains the property of Macquarie University.

Applications for computer equipment will need to provide a particularly strong justification, establishing the specific need for the item in the project. General computer needs will not be supported. Laptop computers are not eligible budget items unless a particularly strong and convincing case is made for exclusive use of the laptop for the proposed project for purposes such as fieldwork and archival procedures.

Only enter equipment costing \$1,000 or more in this section.

4.4 Maintenance

Consumables and any equipment costing less than \$1,000 should be listed in this section. Each of these items must be fully justified.

4.5 Travel

Request for travel funds will only be considered when the travel is directly related to the research project. As with all items requested, award of funding is based on the justification and is awarded at

the discretion of the Assessment Panel. Any funds awarded for travel are subject to the [Macquarie University Travel Policy](#).

New Staff applicants are not eligible to request conference travel.

4.6 OSP

Funding cannot be used for travel between Australia and the approved OSP location.

The Panel will consider applications for travel support from the OSP location to other destinations where the applicant wishes to carry out fieldwork or consult primary data sources in locations remote from the OSP location.

5. Application Process

Only electronic copies will be accepted. You must complete the Word application form and submit it via email as **an Adobe PDF (converted from Word, not scanned)** to research.preaward@mq.edu.au (cc: to your Faculty's Faculty Research Manager) by **Wednesday 23 August 2017, 5pm AEST**.

Files should be named according to the following convention: "Surname_MQNS" e.g. "Smith_MQNS".

Please note that hard copies and applications submitted via the online APLI form will not be accepted. Late applications will not be accepted and incomplete applications will be deemed ineligible.

6. Certification

In addition to completing an application form, you must also complete and submit a [MQ APLI form](#) by the Research Office closing date detailed in the scheme specific information.

Please note that the APLI form is the means of obtaining HoD and Faculty approval but is not a way of notifying the Research Office of your intention to apply for a grant. Applications must be submitted to research.preaward@mq.edu.au (cc: to your Faculty's Faculty Research Manager).

7. Assessment Process

A Panel comprising the five Associate Deans (Research) will assess all eligible New Staff applications. Following review of the applications, the Panel will meet to make recommendations for funding. The final endorsement of the recommendations will be made by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research). The Panel may co-opt additional members from among the Macquarie University academic staff to assist with the assessment process.

8. Appeals

Unsuccessful applicants have the right to seek a review of outcome, on procedural grounds only. To request a review of outcome, please write a brief letter detailing the basis on which the review is

requested. The letter, clearly marked “Confidential Appeal”, should be submitted as an email attachment to julian.zipparo@mq.edu.au, Manager, Pre-Award, Research Office.

9. Conditions of Award

9.1 Variation of Expenditure

A request is required only when a significant change to the budget is necessary; for example, when using the funds for travel instead of personnel, where travel was not included as a budget item in the application.

Requests for variation of expenditure must be submitted on the appropriate form found on the [Research Office Website](#). Requests must be fully explained and justified, and applicants should consult their Faculty Research Manager prior to submission to the Research Office. Please submit requests for variation of expenditure to the Post Award Team via research.postaward@mq.edu.au.

Further information is available on the [Research Office Website](#). Questions relating to variations should be directed to the Post-Award Team via research.postaward@mq.edu.au.

9.2 Carry-Forward

Successful grant recipients are expected to manage their research projects to completion within the specified duration of the grant. Therefore, funds must be fully expended within the allocated funding period.

Carry-forward of funding beyond the allocated funding period is strongly discouraged, and will be approved only in **exceptional circumstances** that were beyond the control of the researcher.

Carry forward requests must be submitted on the appropriate form found on the [Research Office Website](#). Requests must be fully explained and justified, and applicants should consult their Faculty Research Manager prior to submission to the Research Office. Please submit carry forward requests to the Post Award Team via research.postaward@mq.edu.au.

Further information is available on the [Research Office Website](#). Questions relating to carry-forward should be directed to the Post-Award Team via research.postaward@mq.edu.au.

9.3 Reporting

Please see **Section 1.4** for information on these requirements.

9.4 Website Publication

Summary information about successful applicants and their grants may be published on the Research Office website.

10. Privacy policy

The conduct of research projects supported under all internal Macquarie University Schemes is subject to the provisions of the Commonwealth Government’s National Privacy Principles and other statutory provisions relating to ethics and biosafety. As part of the assessment process, the Research Office may provide the Assessment Panel with its record of the details of the applicant’s funding and publications history. This action is consistent with the provisions of the National Privacy Principles.

11. Ethics

Macquarie University maintains strict control over all research activities involving human or animal subjects, and work in which issues of biosafety are involved. Such research must meet the ethical and safety requirements of the relevant government legislation and guidelines, and satisfy the guidelines of external funding agencies such as the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC). Any research in which such issues are relevant must first be approved by the relevant ethics or biosafety committee.

11.1 University Human Ethics, Animal Ethics and Biosafety Committees

Researchers should consult the Human Research Ethics Committee, Animal Ethics Committee and Biosafety Committee web pages to determine whether their research is subject to the respective guidelines and review processes.

If the proposed research requires human, animal or biosafety ethical approval, the grant will not commence until approval has been obtained. Please contact the Ethics Secretariat ([Human Ethics](#), [Animal Ethics](#), [Gene Technology & Biosafety](#)) for further information.

11.2 Research Integrity

Researchers are expected to be scrupulous in avoiding conflicts of interest (especially where commercial issues are involved) when engaged in the peer review process. In addition, by encouraging public scrutiny of research results by publication and other means, the University also wishes to help combat fraud and misconduct.

All researchers, research coordinators and supervisors of postgraduate students should be familiar with the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#), and relevant external and internal ethical guidelines. These conditions include compliance with the [Macquarie University Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#).

12. Faculty Research Managers

Arts – Jan Zwar	artsro@mq.edu.au
Business & Economics – Agnieszka Baginska	fberu@mq.edu.au
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