

# FAQs for Macquarie University Research Fellowships (MQRF) Commencing 2025

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<b>GENERAL MQRF .....</b>	<b>4</b>
1. What is the primary objective of the MQRF Scheme? .....	4
2. How does the MQRF Scheme benefit early career researchers? .....	4
3. How many Research Fellowships will be awarded, and for how long? .....	4
4. What is the salary range for the Fellowship? .....	4
5. What positions are offered? .....	4
6. Can I teach during my Fellowship? .....	4
7. What research costs are covered by the Fellowship? .....	5
8. How frequently will Fellows be paid? .....	5
9. What happens after the application submission? .....	5
10. Where can I find additional information and resources? .....	5
11. When does the application period open and close? .....	5
<b>ELIGIBILITY .....</b>	<b>5</b>
12. Who is eligible to apply for MQRF? .....	5
13. Can I apply if my PhD was conferred before 1 March 2021? .....	5
14. When do I need to provide evidence of career interruptions? .....	5
15. What if I cannot provide evidence within the given timeframe? .....	6
16. What if my PhD was conferred on or after 1 March 2021? .....	6
17. Can I apply if my thesis has not yet been awarded? .....	6
18. What if I'm not an Australian or New Zealand permanent resident or citizen? .....	6
19. How do internal grant reports impact eligibility? .....	6
20. Is full-time attendance at Macquarie University required for Fellows? .....	6
21. Can applicants with a history at Macquarie University apply? .....	6
<b>APPLICATION .....</b>	<b>6</b>
22. How do I submit my application for the Macquarie University Research Fellowships (MQRF) Scheme? .....	6
23. What documents are required for the application? .....	7
24. Are there specific formatting guidelines for the Project Description? .....	7
25. Why am I required to provide some information twice in Workday and the CV and Research Opportunity Form? .....	7
26. How do I access Workday and submit my application? .....	7
27. What happens if my application is incomplete? .....	7
28. Can I request an extension for the submission date or make changes after the closing date? .....	7

29. Are hard copy applications or emailed applications accepted? .....	7
30. What policy terms do I need to agree to by submitting the application? .....	8
31. What additional documentation might be required during the assessment process? ..	8
32. What approvals do I need to work on obtaining during the application process? .....	8
33. How are applications assessed in the multi-stage process? .....	8
34. What happens if I decline the Fellowship offer? .....	8
35. How should I present my proposal? .....	8
36. What precautions should I take in preparing my proposal? .....	9
37. Can I copy and paste publicly available text in my proposal? .....	9
38. What should I consider if I have a history with Macquarie University? .....	9
39. Where can I find additional guidance on the proposal? .....	9
40. What is the purpose of providing FoR codes in my MQRF application? .....	9
41. How many FoR codes should I provide for my MQRF application, and what is the maximum limit? .....	9
42. Can I list the FoR codes in any order? .....	9
43. Is there a restriction on assigning the same percentage to two FoR codes? .....	10
44. What are SEO Codes in the context of the MQRF application? .....	10
45. Why is it important to provide SEO Codes for my project? .....	10
46. How many SEO Codes should I provide, and in what format? .....	10
47. Where can I find the list of SEO Codes and descriptors? .....	10
48. Why is it important to explain the interdisciplinary nature of my project? .....	10
49. How should I explain the interdisciplinary aspect of my research project? .....	10
50. Can I include more than two disciplines in my explanation? .....	10
51. Why would I consider a salary-only Fellowship? .....	11
52. How do I justify choosing a salary-only Fellowship in my application? .....	11
53. How does this impact the assessment of my application? .....	11
54. When is the deadline for submitting my MQRF application via Workday? .....	11
55. How should I format the submission of my MQRF Application Form and Project Description? .....	11
56. Can I submit my application in multiple files? .....	11
57. Where do I access the Workday platform for submission? .....	11
58. What happens if I miss the submission deadline? .....	11
<b>SPONSORS .....</b>	<b>12</b>
59. How many sponsors can I nominate for the Fellowship? .....	12
60. Can a Sponsor support more than one Fellowship per round? .....	12
61. Can an honorary staff member be a Sponsor? .....	12
62. What is the role of the Sponsor during the assessment process? .....	12
63. What is the importance of the Sponsor's research profile? .....	12

64. What confirmation is required from the Sponsor?.....	12
65. What is the purpose of the Sponsor and Head of Department/School Statements? ..	12
66. When will the Sponsor and Head of Department/School Statements be required?...13	
67. What is the deadline for submitting the Sponsor and Head of Department/School Statement? .....	13
68. Can I provide input or assistance in completing the Sponsor and Head of Department/School Statement? .....	13
<b>BUDGET .....</b>	<b>13</b>
69. How much funding do Fellows receive, and how is it allocated over the years? .....	13
70. Is a full budget required during the application process? .....	13
71. What personnel costs are eligible, and how should they be estimated? .....	13
72. Can I request equipment as part of the budget? .....	13
73. What are the eligible travel expenses, and how should I estimate them? .....	13
74. Can carer costs be included in the budget?.....	14
75. What other items are allowable in the budget? .....	14
76. What expenses are excluded from Fellowship funds? .....	14
77. Can Fellowship funds cover tuition for Higher Degree Research (HDR) students? ...14	
78. Are teaching-related expenses covered by Fellowship funds?.....	14
79. Can I use Fellowship funds for professional development courses or membership fees? .....	14
80. Are relocation costs covered by Fellowship funds? .....	14
81. Can I use Fellowship funds to purchase alcohol or cover entertainment costs? .....	15
82. Can insurance costs be covered by Fellowship funds? .....	15
83. Are fees for international students or the Higher Education Loan Program (HELP) covered by Fellowship funds? .....	15
<b>AWARD CONDITIONS.....</b>	<b>15</b>
84. Is there a requirement for MQRF recipients during their tenure? .....	15
85. What is the time allocation requirement for research activities for Fellows appointed at 100% research, or 75% research and 25% teaching? .....	15
86. Is there flexibility in re-allocating unspent funds during the funding period? .....	15
87. What reporting obligations do Macquarie University Research Fellows have? .....	15
<b>RESPONSIBILITIES.....</b>	<b>15</b>
88. Where can I find Macquarie University policies? .....	16
89. How is privacy handled in research projects supported by internal Macquarie University schemes? .....	16
90. What ethical principles should researchers adhere to?.....	16
91. What controls are maintained for research involving human or animal subjects, and biosafety issues?.....	16
92. How can researchers determine if their research requires ethics, biosafety, or export controls approval? .....	16

93. When will a grant commence if the proposed research requires ethics, biosafety, and/or export controls approval? .....	16
94. How are conflicts of interest managed in research?.....	16
95. What are the implications of the Autonomous Sanctions Act 2011 (Cth) for researchers? .....	16
96. How is intellectual property handled in the context of research? .....	17

## GENERAL MQRF

### 1. What is the primary objective of the MQRF Scheme?

The purpose of the Macquarie University Research Fellowships (MQRF) Scheme is to provide support to researchers within three years of the award of their PhD who exhibit an outstanding track record relative to their opportunities or show evidence of excellent research potential.

### 2. How does the MQRF Scheme benefit early career researchers?

The Scheme offers an incubation period to early career researchers, allowing them to enhance their competitive edge in securing research funding from non-University sources. Additionally, it aims to strengthen research capabilities in existing and emerging areas of research strength at Macquarie University.

### 3. How many Research Fellowships will be awarded, and for how long?

Up to ten full-time Research Fellowships will be awarded on a competitive basis, commencing in 2025 and tenurable for three years (or four years subject to approval).

### 4. What is the salary range for the Fellowship?

The salary for the Fellowship will commence at [Level A Step 6 of the Academic Salary Scale](#), inclusive of annual leave loading and additional 17% employer superannuation.

Negotiation for a higher level may be considered, but approval is required from the Head of Department/School and the Faculty Executive Dean at Stage 2 of the application process.

### 5. What positions are offered?

Positions are offered either 100% research over 3 years, or 75% research and 25% teaching over 4 years.

### 6. Can I teach during my Fellowship?

Yes, but the Host Department/School is responsible for the 25% teaching component's salary. Approval is required, and negotiation does not guarantee approval.

If approval is not obtained for the 4-year option, you will be offered a 3-year 100% research Fellowship. Early discussion with your sponsor is crucial for exploring options.

### **7. What research costs are covered by the Fellowship?**

In addition to salary, Fellows receive \$50,000 over three years for research costs associated with the proposed project, with a maximum of \$20,000 in any one year. See Section 6 of the Guidelines for details.

### **8. How frequently will Fellows be paid?**

Fellows will be paid on a fortnightly basis through the University's payroll system.

### **9. What happens after the application submission?**

Applications will undergo a multi-stage assessment process, including Stage One Assessment by Faculty-based panels, Stage Two Assessment by University panels, and Stage Three Assessment involving interviews for shortlisted applicants. Successful applicants can expect outcomes in July/August 2024. See 4.1 of the Guidelines for details.

### **10. Where can I find additional information and resources?**

All the information relating to the MQRF can be found linked on our [website](#), or from links within the Forms and Guidelines (also available on the website).

### **11. When does the application period open and close?**

The application period opens on Monday 4 March 2024, and closes at 11.59pm (Sydney time) on Monday 8 April 2024.

## **ELIGIBILITY**

### **12. Who is eligible to apply for MQRF?**

The Fellowship is open to Early Career Researchers from any country who are within 3 years of their PhD conferral.

Applicants must have received their PhD on or after 1 March 2021, or have their thesis submitted by 31 December 2023.

### **13. Can I apply if my PhD was conferred before 1 March 2021?**

You may be eligible to apply if your PhD was conferred before 1 March 2021, if you have experienced significant career interruptions. You must provide evidence of allowable career interruptions demonstrating no more than 3 years of research employment since PhD conferral (See Section 2 of the Guidelines).

### **14. When do I need to provide evidence of career interruptions?**

If you are shortlisted to Stage 2 (University panel assessment), you will be asked to provide evidence for the interruptions you claimed in Section 5 of the CV and Research Opportunity Form. We expect the shortlist to be announced in mid May, and you will be given a short timeframe within which to provide acceptable evidence so that it can be reviewed and approved before the University panel meets. See Appendix 1 of the Guidelines for acceptable evidence.

**15. What if I cannot provide evidence within the given timeframe?**

It's crucial to have documentation prepared in advance. Failure to provide acceptable evidence within the Stage 2 timeframe renders the application ineligible and will not proceed further.

**16. What if my PhD was conferred on or after 1 March 2021?**

If your PhD was conferred on or after 1 March 2021, you are automatically eligible to apply.

**17. Can I apply if my thesis has not yet been awarded?**

If your thesis was submitted on or before 31 December 2023, you are eligible to apply. However, the Fellowship cannot commence until the PhD has been conferred, and Fellowships must commence no later than 30 June 2025.

**18. What if I'm not an Australian or New Zealand permanent resident or citizen?**

The Fellowship is open to applicants from any country. Non-residents or citizens must obtain the appropriate Visa before starting the Fellowship and adhere to Visa terms and conditions. You do not need to have a Visa in place at the time of application.

**19. How do internal grant reports impact eligibility?**

Applicants with Macquarie University internal grant schemes must not have overdue reports. Overdue reports will affect eligibility.

**20. Is full-time attendance at Macquarie University required for Fellows?**

Macquarie University Research Fellows must maintain full-time attendance at Macquarie University, except for approved travel for conferences or fieldwork. During the Fellowship, Fellows can request approval from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) to convert to part-time status for specific periods.

**21. Can applicants with a history at Macquarie University apply?**

If you have a PhD from Macquarie, or have been employed by Macquarie University at any time since 2021, you must explain in your application why it is appropriate for you to continue or recommence your research career at Macquarie University. Note that this does not mean that applicants currently at Macquarie are discouraged from applying, or are less competitive than external applicants.

## **APPLICATION**

**22. How do I submit my application for the Macquarie University Research Fellowships (MQRF) Scheme?**

Applications, including all required forms, must be submitted electronically through the Macquarie University HR portal, Workday. Applications not submitted through Workday will be deemed ineligible.

**23. What documents are required for the application?**

The application consists of three documents:

- a) Completed MQRF 2025 Application Form and Project Description (combined as a single PDF)
- b) Completed CV and Research Opportunity Form
- c) Evidence of PhD conferral (if awarded) or (if not awarded) thesis submission date (for example your testamur, or correspondence confirming receipt of your thesis for assessment)

**24. Are there specific formatting guidelines for the Project Description?**

Yes, your Project Description must adhere to the formatting and content guidelines provided in Appendix 2 of the guidelines.

**25. Why am I required to provide some information twice in Workday and the CV and Research Opportunity Form?**

In Workday, you will be asked to complete some of the same information as in the CV and Research Opportunity Form to pre-populate data in the Macquarie HR system, which will be retained if you are appointed as a Fellow or if you apply to Macquarie University in the future.

**26. How do I access Workday and submit my application?**

Go to the Fellowship job advertisement by visiting <https://mq.wd3.myworkdayjobs.com/CareersatMQ> In the advertisement, click 'Apply', and you will be asked to log in or create an account. From there, you will be directed to the submission form, where you will complete your details and upload your application forms and supporting documents.

Documents are uploaded to the 'Resume and Cover letter' section of the Workday form. Note that no additional resume or cover letter are required. You should only upload the three mandatory application documents (see FAQ 23).

**27. What happens if my application is incomplete?**

Incomplete applications will be deemed ineligible and not reviewed by the panel.

**28. Can I request an extension for the submission date or make changes after the closing date?**

No, extensions of the submission date or changes to the application following the scheme closing date will not be accepted.

**29. Are hard copy applications or emailed applications accepted?**

No, hard copy applications will not be accepted, and emailed applications will not be accepted. Applications not complying with these guidelines will be ruled ineligible and not considered for funding.

**30. What policy terms do I need to agree to by submitting the application?**

By submitting the application and associated documents, you confirm that you have read and agreed to the policy terms (see page 13 of these Guidelines) in relation to:

- a) MQ Privacy Policy
- b) MQ Human Ethics, Animal Ethics, and Biosafety Committees
- c) MQ Research Integrity
- d) MQ Intellectual Property

**31. What additional documentation might be required during the assessment process?**

You will need to provide additional documentation as requested during the assessment process (see Appendix 3).

**32. What approvals do I need to work on obtaining during the application process?**

By submitting the application, you confirm that you will work with your Sponsor to obtain any necessary approvals from the Head of your prospective Department or School and (if necessary) Faculty Executive Dean with regard to your appointment (See Section 2 of the Guidelines).

**33. How are applications assessed in the multi-stage process?**

Applications will go through a multi-stage process:

- a) Stage One Assessment: Conducted by a panel of Faculty-based discipline experts.
- b) Stage Two Assessment: Shortlisted applications from stage one will be assessed by either a HASS or STEMM University panel. Evidence of career interruptions and approvals will be required at this stage.
- c) Stage Three Assessment: Twenty applicants, shortlisted at stage two, will be invited to interview, including a presentation and broader interview with research leaders and experts.
- d) Successful applicants: Ten applicants, shortlisted at stage three, will be offered a Fellowship, and up to four applicants will be placed on a ranked reserve list.

**34. What happens if I decline the Fellowship offer?**

If any successful applicants decline their Fellowship offer, places will be offered to those on the reserve list in order of rank.

**35. How should I present my proposal?**

All information should be presented in a straightforward and clear manner, using plain language accessible to non-experts in the field. Technical terms and jargon should be avoided to ensure assessors can comprehend the proposed research, its significance, and expected impactful outcomes.



**36. What precautions should I take in preparing my proposal?**

Careful attention should be given to preparing the proposal, making it informative to non-discipline experts. Avoid using excessive discipline-specific language, acronyms, or unexplained jargon. The goal is to facilitate understanding among assessors outside your field of expertise.

**37. Can I copy and paste publicly available text in my proposal?**

Copying and pasting publicly available text, especially in sections related to sponsor fit and environment, is discouraged. These sections should showcase genuine engagement with your sponsor and a thorough understanding of why Macquarie University is the suitable location for the project.

**38. What should I consider if I have a history with Macquarie University?**

If you were a PhD candidate at Macquarie University or had any employment with the university since the beginning of 2021, you must make a compelling case in Section 5 of the Application Form for continuing or recommencing your research career at Macquarie University.

**39. Where can I find additional guidance on the proposal?**

Further advice on points to consider under each heading of the project description can be found in Appendix 2 – Project Description.

**40. What is the purpose of providing FoR codes in my MQRF application?**

FoR codes in your MQRF application serve the purpose of categorising and classifying your proposed research project into specific research areas. These codes help in accurately identifying the field and subfield to which your research belongs. Such categorisation is a standard practice in the application process for [external funding](#). FoR codes and descriptors can be found on the [Australian Bureau of Statistics website](#).

**41. How many FoR codes should I provide for my MQRF application, and what is the maximum limit?**

You need to provide up to three 6-digit Field of Research (FoR) codes relevant to your proposed project in the MQRF application. This ensures that your project is accurately categorised and aligned with specific research areas.

**42. Can I list the FoR codes in any order?**

When providing FoR codes, list them in descending order based on their relevance to your proposed project. The percentages assigned to each code should be highest to lowest. This order is crucial for maintaining statistical integrity, as required by government agencies.

**43. Is there a restriction on assigning the same percentage to two FoR codes?**

Yes, there is a restriction on entering two codes with the same percentage. To meet statistical integrity requirements, each FoR code you provide must have a different percentage allocation. For example, if you enter two codes, a distribution like 51/49 is necessary to fulfill this requirement.

**44. What are SEO Codes in the context of the MQRF application?**

SEO (Socio-Economic Objective) codes in your MQRF application are used to specify the social and economic objectives that your proposed research project aims to achieve. These codes help in classifying and identifying the broader societal and economic impacts of your research.

**45. Why is it important to provide SEO Codes for my project?**

Including SEO codes is crucial as it allows for the clear identification of the intended outcomes and impacts of your research on society and the economy. It helps align your project with relevant socio-economic objectives, providing a comprehensive understanding of its broader significance.

**46. How many SEO Codes should I provide, and in what format?**

You need to provide up to three 6-digit SEO codes relevant to your project. List them in descending order of relevance, with each code allocated a different percentage. This ensures accurate representation and prioritisation of the socio-economic objectives associated with your research.

**47. Where can I find the list of SEO Codes and descriptors?**

The SEO codes and descriptors can be found on the [Australian Bureau of Statistics \(ABS\) website](#). Refer to this resource to accurately select and allocate the SEO codes that align with the objectives of your research project.

**48. Why is it important to explain the interdisciplinary nature of my project?**

Providing an explanation of how your project incorporates interdisciplinary research helps reviewers understand the diverse academic perspectives and methodologies contributing to the research. It enhances the clarity of your project's approach and its potential impact.

**49. How should I explain the interdisciplinary aspect of my research project?**

You are required to provide a concise explanation in a maximum of 50 words. Touch on how your project draws on multiple academic disciplines, outlining the synergies and contributions each discipline brings to the research.

**50. Can I include more than two disciplines in my explanation?**

While the maximum word limit is set at 50 words, you can include information about how your project draws on multiple disciplines. However, it is essential to be concise and focused on your explanation.

**51. Why would I consider a salary-only Fellowship?**

If your research project does not require additional direct research costs, opting for a salary-only Fellowship is appropriate. This means the funding will be dedicated solely to covering your salary.

**52. How do I justify choosing a salary-only Fellowship in my application?**

In Section 6.2 of the application form, provide a clear explanation of why your project does not require extra funding beyond your salary. Present a convincing case for the feasibility of your research project without the need for additional financial resources. Address any specific aspects of your project that make it suitable for a salary-only Fellowship. This could include the scope of your research, the methodologies employed, or existing collaborations and resources at your disposal.

**53. How does this impact the assessment of my application?**

The justification of a salary-only Fellowship will be considered as part of the feasibility criterion in the evaluation process. Ensure your explanation is thorough and demonstrates the appropriateness of this funding model for your research project.

**54. When is the deadline for submitting my MQRF application via Workday?**

The submission deadline is 11.59pm (AEST) on 8 April 2024. Late submissions will be deemed ineligible, so it's crucial to adhere to the specified timeframe.

**55. How should I format the submission of my MQRF Application Form and Project Description?**

Combine the MQRF Application Form and Project Description into a single PDF file. This consolidated document, along with your CV and Research Opportunity Form, and evidence of PhD conferral or submission, should be submitted via the Workday platform.

**56. Can I submit my application in multiple files?**

No, all required documents must be submitted as a single PDF file. Ensure that your MQRF Application Form and Project Description are merged into one document, along with the other necessary attachments.

Documents are uploaded to the 'Resume and Cover letter' section of the Workday form. Note that no additional resume or cover letter are required. You should only upload the three mandatory application documents (see FAQ 23).

**57. Where do I access the Workday platform for submission?**

The Workday platform is the designated portal for submitting your MQRF application. Ensure you follow the submission instructions provided on the platform for a successful application process: <https://mq.wd3.myworkdayjobs.com/CareersatMQ>

**58. What happens if I miss the submission deadline?**

Late submissions will be deemed ineligible, and your application will not be reviewed by the panel.

## **SPONSORS**

### **59. How many sponsors can I nominate for the Fellowship?**

You must nominate a Primary Sponsor from the Host Department/School at Macquarie University. Additionally, you may nominate a Co-Sponsor who can be from the same department/school as the primary sponsor, or from a different department/school or if needed a different Faculty. It is essential to secure the support of an appropriate Fellowship Sponsor.

### **60. Can a Sponsor support more than one Fellowship per round?**

No, a Sponsor, whether Primary or Co-Sponsor, may sponsor only one Fellowship per round. This restriction applies to both Primary and Co-Sponsors.

### **61. Can an honorary staff member be a Sponsor?**

Adjunct staff members and those holding honorary positions are also eligible to act as Sponsors, provided their ongoing research primarily occurs at Macquarie University, and their affiliation on published work is attributed to Macquarie University.

### **62. What is the role of the Sponsor during the assessment process?**

You and your proposed Sponsor(s) must collaborate closely in developing the MQRf application and continue this consultation throughout the assessment process.

### **63. What is the importance of the Sponsor's research profile?**

In addition to an appropriate research profile for your Fellowship project, your Sponsor's association with an area of recognised or emerging research strength within the University is crucial. It is important to align the proposed research with existing or emerging strengths at Macquarie University.

### **64. What confirmation is required from the Sponsor?**

Your Sponsor must confirm with the prospective Head of Department/School that Macquarie University has the necessary resources, systems, facilities, and core research infrastructure to complete the proposed Fellowship project. They should also obtain approval if the Fellowship appointment is for 4 years or above Level A Step 6.

### **65. What is the purpose of the Sponsor and Head of Department/School Statements?**

The Sponsor and Head of Department/School Statements are crucial components of the Stage 2 assessment process. They provide additional support and validation for your MQRf application.

**66. When will the Sponsor and Head of Department/School Statements be required?**

If you are shortlisted to Stage 2, you will be notified, and your Sponsor will receive a copy of the Sponsor and Head of Department/School Statement Form

**67. What is the deadline for submitting the Sponsor and Head of Department/School Statement?**

The completed and signed Sponsor and Head of Department/School Statement form must be emailed to [MQRf@mq.edu.au](mailto:MQRf@mq.edu.au). Due date will be provided with the request.

**68. Can I provide input or assistance in completing the Sponsor and Head of Department/School Statement?**

No, the Sponsor and Head of Department/School Statement Form is to be completed without any input from you. It should reflect the independent views and support of the Sponsor and Head of Department/School.

## **BUDGET**

**69. How much funding do Fellows receive, and how is it allocated over the years?**

Fellows receive \$50,000 over three years, with a maximum of \$20,000 in any one year. The funding is intended for direct research costs associated with the proposed project.

**70. Is a full budget required during the application process?**

No, a full budget is not required in the application form. However, you must indicate the anticipated expenditure for each year of the project. If successful, you will work with your Sponsor to develop a fully itemised budget before the Fellowship commencement.

**71. What personnel costs are eligible, and how should they be estimated?**

Eligible personnel may include Research Assistants or professional specialists. Estimate personnel costs using the current [Macquarie University Salary Scales document](#), ensuring salary levels align with the role's duties.

**72. Can I request equipment as part of the budget?**

Yes, items of minor equipment may be requested if they are essential to and exclusively used for the project. Ensure there is a specific need for the item, and consult with your Sponsor about procurement and support within the Department/School.

**73. What are the eligible travel expenses, and how should I estimate them?**

Travel must be directly related to the project, including fieldwork, archive visits, and conference attendance. Estimate travel costs based on known destinations or, if uncertain, provide the best estimate possible. Review the [University Travel Policy](#).

**74. Can carer costs be included in the budget?**

Yes, if you have carer responsibilities, you may include costs necessary to cover responsibilities such as childcare during fieldwork.

**75. What other items are allowable in the budget?**

Other allowable items include consumables, publication costs, consumer payments, interview transcriptions, or conference registration fees. Ensure these items are directly related to and essential for the project.

**76. What expenses are excluded from Fellowship funds?**

Fellowship funds cannot be spent on:

- a) HDR stipends, tuition, or related HDR costs
- b) Teaching relief or materials
- c) Basic facilities normally funded by Macquarie University
- d) Capital works and general infrastructure costs
- e) Costs not directly related to the project, including but not limited to:
  - a. Professional membership fees
  - b. Professional development courses
  - c. Fees for patent applications or visas
  - d. Relocation costs
  - e. Entertainment costs (other than reasonable hospitality costs)
  - f. Purchase of alcohol
  - g. Insurance
  - h. Gifts
  - i. Mobile phones (purchase or call charges)
  - j. Other indirect costs
- f) Fees for international students or the Higher Education Loan Program (HELP)

**77. Can Fellowship funds cover tuition for Higher Degree Research (HDR) students?**

No, Fellowship funds cannot be used for HDR stipends, tuition, or any other related HDR costs.

**78. Are teaching-related expenses covered by Fellowship funds?**

No, teaching relief, teaching materials, and other teaching-related expenses are not covered by Fellowship funds.

**79. Can I use Fellowship funds for professional development courses or membership fees?**

No, costs for professional development courses or professional membership fees are not eligible for funding from the Fellowship.

**80. Are relocation costs covered by Fellowship funds?**

No, relocation costs are considered indirect costs and cannot be covered by Fellowship funds.

**81. Can I use Fellowship funds to purchase alcohol or cover entertainment costs?**

No, Fellowship funds cannot be used to purchase alcohol or cover entertainment costs, except for reasonable hospitality costs directly related to the project

**82. Can insurance costs be covered by Fellowship funds?**

No, insurance costs are considered indirect costs and cannot be covered by Fellowship funds.

**83. Are fees for international students or the Higher Education Loan Program (HELP) covered by Fellowship funds?**

No, Fellowship funds cannot be used to cover fees for international students or HELP.

## **AWARD CONDITIONS**

**84. Is there a requirement for MQRF recipients during their tenure?**

Yes, it is a condition of the award that MQRF recipients apply during the second year of their MQRF tenure to external agencies, such as the [Australian Research Council \(ARC\)](#) and [National Health and Medical Research Council \(NHMRC\)](#), for a Research Fellowship to be based at Macquarie University.

**85. What is the time allocation requirement for research activities for Fellows appointed at 100% research, or 75% research and 25% teaching?**

Fellows appointed at 100% research must spend a minimum of 90% of their time on research activities related to their project. Fellows appointed at 75% research and 25% teaching must spend 75% of their time on research activities related to their project.

**86. Is there flexibility in re-allocating unspent funds during the funding period?**

Any request to re-allocate unspent funds must reach Research Services at least one month before the end of the funding period and must be submitted via a ServiceNow Carry Forward Request. Such requests must include written support from the Sponsor and the Head of Department/School.

**87. What reporting obligations do Macquarie University Research Fellows have?**

Macquarie University Research Fellows must provide Research Services with annual progress reports by the end of the first and second years of the Fellowship. Funds awarded in years two and three are conditional upon the approval of these annual progress reports. A final report is also required after the end of the Fellowship, with deadlines provided by the Post Award Team.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**



**88. Where can I find Macquarie University policies?**

All Macquarie University policies can be found in the Policy Central pages of the Macquarie University website: <https://policies.mq.edu.au/home.php>

**89. How is privacy handled in research projects supported by internal Macquarie University schemes?**

The conduct of research projects supported under internal Macquarie University Schemes is subject to the provisions of the [Privacy Act 1988 \(Cth\)](#). Information in applications will be treated as confidential, and assessors are required to treat applications in confidence.

**90. What ethical principles should researchers adhere to?**

All researchers are expected to uphold an honest, ethical, and conscientious research culture and apply the principles articulated in the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#).

**91. What controls are maintained for research involving human or animal subjects, and biosafety issues?**

Macquarie University maintains strict control over all research activities involving human or animal subjects and work involving biosafety issues. Such research must meet ethical and safety requirements outlined in relevant government legislation or guidelines and satisfy the requirements of external funding agencies.

**92. How can researchers determine if their research requires ethics, biosafety, or export controls approval?**

Researchers should consult Macquarie University's Human Research Ethics Committee, Animal Ethics Committee, Biosafety Committee, and Defence Trade Controls web pages to determine whether their research is subject to respective guidelines and review processes.

**93. When will a grant commence if the proposed research requires ethics, biosafety, and/or export controls approval?**

If the proposed research requires human ethics, animal ethics, biosafety, and/or export controls approval, the grant will not commence until approval has been obtained.

**94. How are conflicts of interest managed in research?**

Researchers are expected to be transparent in declaring and managing conflicts of interest when engaged in research, including in the peer review process. For guidance on the declaration process, please refer to Macquarie University's [conflict of interest policy](#).

**95. What are the implications of the Autonomous Sanctions Act 2011 (Cth) for researchers?**

Researchers may be subject to review under the [Autonomous Sanctions Act 2011 \(Cth\)](#), which restricts Australian organisations, including Macquarie University, from interacting with people or organisations associated with countries on the sanctions list.



**96. How is intellectual property handled in the context of research?**

Intellectual property embodied in the proposed research should be protected before submission of an application. Upon a successful applicant taking up employment as a Research Fellow at Macquarie University, all intellectual property developed during the period of employment will become the property of Macquarie University under the normal terms of employment. Refer to the [University's Intellectual Property Policy](#) for more information.