MQLF Awardees Commencing in 2026

Congratulations to the 10 recently announced recipients in the 2026 Macquarie University Lighthouse Fellowship (MQLF) Scheme.

The MQLF Scheme supports researchers within three years of the award of their PhD (taking into consideration career disruptions) who have an outstanding track record (relative to opportunity) and/or who show evidence of excellent research potential. The Scheme provides seed funding for early career researchers, allowing them to increase their competitiveness for securing research funding from non-University sources. In addition, the Scheme aims to accelerate and increase the pipeline of research expertise within Macquarie University Strategic Research Initiatives, existing and emerging.

The awardees are listed below in alphabetical order.

Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences (HASS) panel

Awardee Name	Host Faculty	Host School/Dept	Sponsor(s)	Project Title
Dr Rose Barrowcliffe	Faculty of Arts	Centre for Critical Indigenous Studies	Distinguished Professor Bronwyn Carlson Professor Sandy O'Sullivan	Where's our stuff? Finding Indigenous data in the big data era
Dr Joshua Hatherley	Faculty of Arts	School of Humanities	Distinguished Professor Wendy Rogers Professor Robert Sinnerbrink	In the AI of the beholder: Ethical issues in AI beauty assessments in medicine
Dr Cathy Macpherson	Faculty of Medicine, Health and Human Sciences	School of Psychological Sciences	Professor Rachel Kallen Dr Lauren McLellan	Interpersonal coordination in psychotherapy: Predicting and improving therapeutic outcomes
Dr Bec Poulsen	Faculty of Arts	School of Education	Dr Diana Tan Distinguished Professor David McAlpine	Through silence and symphony: Exploring sensory experiences, accumulative trauma, adaptive strategies, and sensory wellbeing and joy of Autistic people
Dr Roslyn Wong	Faculty of Medicine, Health and Human Sciences	School of Psychological Sciences	Professor Erik Reichle Professor Joanne Earl	Reading in the ageing brain: A window into preserving higher-order cognition across the lifespan

Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics and Medicine (STEMM) panel

Awardee Name	Host Faculty	Host School/Dept	Sponsor(s)	Project Title
Dr Ashfaq Chauhan	Faculty of Medicine, Health and Human Sciences	Australian Institute of Health Innovation	Professor Reema Harrison Associate Professor Louise Koelmeyer	Generating co-designed solutions for equitable care and outcomes in lymphoedema among culturally and linguistically diverse cancer survivors
Dr Tash Pocovi	Faculty of Medicine, Health and Human Sciences	Department of Health Sciences	Professor Mark Hancock	Reducing the global burden of low back pain: Next steps for an effective, accessible, individualised walking and education program (WalkBack)
Dr Max Reine	Faculty of Science and Engineering	School of Natural Sciences	Dr Julian Schrader Emeritus Professor Mark Westoby	Unveiling the future of Australian biocrusts: tiny dryland plants with mighty ecological significance
Dr David Sweeney	Faculty of Science and Engineering	School of Mathematical and Physical Sciences	Associate Professor Benjamin Pope Professor Orsola De Marco	Discovering the Invisible: Hulking black holes are hidden throughout our Galaxy, finding them helps greenhouse gas sensors here on Earth
Dr Anastasiia Tukova	Faculty of Science and Engineering	School of Natural Sciences	Professor Yuling Wang Associate Professor David Inglis	Novel nanotechnology for immunophenotyping of circulating tumour cells and immune cells towards precision cancer treatment and monitoring