MQ Research Seeding Grants (MQRSG) Funding Rules 2020

Key Dates:

Scheme Opening Date	**Wednesday 7 August 2019**
Faculty Closing Date	**Please contact your Faculty Research Office directly for earlier deadlines that you will need to meet**
Research Services Closing Date*	**Wednesday 18 September 2019, 5pm**
Notification of Results	**Late November 2019**

Submission & Certification

Applicants must complete the application form and submit it as a single PDF attachment within the [Pure Research Management System (PURE)](). Applicants must obtain the necessary approvals via PURE prior to the submission deadline.

We recommend allowing a week for your application to progress through PURE to ensure all approvals are received before the due date. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure approval is finalised prior to the deadline.

A [Quick Reference Guide]() is available which explains how to create and submit a grant application as a Researcher through the PURE system.

Application and supporting documentation must be submitted as a single PDF file (including HOD letter, itinerary, quotes, conference confirmation etc) and should be named according to the following convention: "Surname_MQRSG" e.g. "Smith_MQRSG".

Hard copies will not be accepted.

Research Services Contact:

Scheme Contact	Fiona Collison
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1. Overview

Macquarie University Research Seeding Grants (MQRSG) assist Macquarie University staff to increase their competitiveness in attracting external research funding. The grants enable researchers to develop a research project into a viable proposal for submission to an external funding body. All competitive external schemes are considered acceptable targets as a goal for Seeding Scheme applications.

The submission of an application for substantial external funding by **31 December 2022** is a Condition of Award (Macquarie University must be the Administering Institution on the application).

1.1 Funding

The maximum amount that may be applied for is $50,000 over a two-year period (maximum of $25,000 each year), and can include requests for personnel (other than salary support for named investigators), teaching relief, equipment, maintenance and travel. The funding allocation period is as follows:

Funding Commences	Funding Concludes
1 January 2020	31 December 2021

1.2 Eligibility

- To be eligible to apply as a Chief Investigator for a MQRSG, applicants must be a member of the University's academic or professional staff, holding a continuing or fixed-term appointment for the duration of the grant.

- If at the time of application, the applicant's current term of employment expires prior to 31 December 2021, the applicant must either (a) seek to have their roles extended, and have confirmation from HR prior to deadline, in order to request the full two years of funding; OR (b) demonstrate (in the Approach & Methodology section) how the proposed project will be completed in a reduced time frame. See Section 8 for further specific award conditions.

- Academic staff appointed at **Levels A, B and C** are eligible to apply as Chief Investigators.

- Academic staff appointed at **Levels D and E** can only be listed as Associate Investigators.

- Investigators must meet these level criteria at the time of application and at the start of the grant (January 1, 2020). If a Chief Investigator becomes a Level D or above by the start date, they should become an Associate Investigator. If there are no Chief Investigators remaining at that time, then the grant must be forfeited.

- MQ honorary staff at level A, B and C, can be named on the research team as a Macquarie University Chief Investigator, but not as the lead Chief Investigator. Level D and E honorary staff can only be named as Associate Investigators.

- Non-Macquarie researchers may be named as **Associate Investigators** on the research team as an indication of current or potential collaboration. Under no circumstances will successful MQRSG funding be transferred to an external institution.

- Postdoctoral fellows (with the exception of Macquarie University Research Fellows) are eligible to apply for MQRSG support.

- A researcher who is employed to undertake a specific research project(s) that is funded by one or more externally funded grants may lead an MQRSG application, providing the other eligibility requirements are also met. However, such applications must include a one-page letter signed by the lead applicant's immediate supervisor and Head of Department:
  - how the project requested under the MQRSG application is distinctly different from the project(s) already funded and from which the lead CI is employed;
  - that the lead CI has sufficient time to undertake the proposed MQRSG project, within the context of their existing research and/or teaching responsibilities;
  - that the lead CI has access to the basic infrastructure resources necessary to pursue the new project to successful completion.

- Professional staff named as Chief Investigators are eligible to apply for research support under MQRSG provided that their application is accompanied by a statement certified by their supervisor and Head of Department/Office to the effect that:

  - the project is research-driven;

  - the applicant has available time outside their duties and the capability to undertake the research;

  - adequate resources are available within the Department/Office to carry out the research; and

  - a strong case can be made that the applicant/s is/are in a position to pursue a longer term research program consistent with gaining external funding.

- Where more than one Department or Office is involved, all relevant Heads of Department/Office must certify that the above conditions have been met.

- Sole Chief Investigator applications are accepted.

- Chief Investigators may only be named on one MQRDG/MQRSG award or application at any one time, regardless of whether this is as the lead Chief Investigator (applicant) or as a Chief Investigator

- Associate Investigators may only be named on two MQRSG awards or applications at any one time.

- Chief Investigators who have previously held a MQRDG/MQRSG are only eligible if at least 12 months has elapsed since the end date of their last successful MQRDG/MQRSG grant, and they have fulfilled the conditions of award associated with that grant.

- Projects that have received funding under the MQ Safety Net Scheme, or the MQ Enterprise Partnerships Scheme are not eligible for MQRSG funding.

- Applicants cannot apply for both the Seeding Scheme and the Macquarie Enterprise Partnership Scheme (EPS) for the same project within the same year as the EPS supports projects where external partners are ready to contribute cash and in-kind, which is matched by Macquarie University. Since one tranche of internal funding per project is normal practice, funding for the same project from more than one internal scheme, irrespective of year of submission, would require strong justification, approval of the ADR and would not be guaranteed to be funded.

- Applicants for any Macquarie internal scheme must not have any overdue reports for internal grants on which they are lead investigator.

1.3 Application for External Funding

MQRSG recipients must submit an application for substantial external funding by **31 December 2022**. All competitive external schemes are considered acceptable targets as a goal for Seeding Scheme applications. Macquarie University must be the Administering Institution on this application.

1.4 Assessment Process

The MQ Research Projects Panel will assess all eligible MQRSG 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 Macquarie University academic staff to assist with the assessment process.

Applicants should note that the assessment panel is made up of members from a broad cross-section of Macquarie discipline areas. Applications should be prepared such that they are accessible to non-discipline specific readers.

2. Application Preparation

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.

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.

The **Project Description** should clearly state the following information (with due consideration for the Selection Criteria) in no more than **5 pages**:

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

- References

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 Strategy and Framework as well as Australia, e.g. economic, cultural, social, environmental benefits, including any contributions to the Commonwealth Government's Science and Research Priorities (if appropriate) 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

4.1 General information

Applicants may apply for a maximum of $50,000 (maximum of $25,000 each year) for MQRSG.

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.

Primary Carer Costs

Applicants with primary career responsibilities are able to include within their budgets extraordinary carer costs they may need to cover in order to complete this project.

Applications should include details within the budget table, under the 'Other' category, and must ensure that particular costs and why they are necessary are clearly justified.

4.2 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.

MQRSG funds may not be used to engage a higher degree research student.

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

4.3 Teaching Relief

Teaching relief will be funded only where researchers have specified and strongly justified exactly why teaching relief 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 as part of the Pure certification process

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.

4.4 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.

4.5 Maintenance

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

4.6 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]().

4.7 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 (note that if awarded this will necessitate an OSP variation).

4.8 Visiting Researchers

- Applicants may request funding to assist with the costs of bringing a research collaborator (or collaborators) from interstate or overseas to Macquarie. The visit must take place during the grant funding allocation period (without exception). Visiting researchers will be appointed via normal Faculty procedures.

- Requests for short visits for the purposes of general networking, meetings, and the strengthening of collaborative links are not supported by MQRSG.

- A maximum of $2,500 may be applied for to support travel costs of visiting researchers. A maximum of $700 per week (for a total of 8 weeks) may be requested to cover living expenses for the visiting researcher.

- Requests for visiting researcher support must clearly identify the role of the visitor within the project plan in terms of the research to be undertaken, the expertise of the visiting researcher and outcomes to be achieved across the duration of the visit.

- **Please attach to the application a two-page informative CV and a list of refereed publications (since 1 January 2014) for the proposed visitor.** (Please note this is not included in the 'no more than four and a half pages' limit)

5. Application Process & Certification

Please note applications will only be accepted through PURE as stated on page 1. It is the applicants' responsibility to ensure that applications are completed and appropriate certifications are captured and completed through the PURE system by 5pm Wednesday 18 September, the MQRSG deadline.

7. 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 toLouise.fleck@mq.edu.au, Director, Research Services.

8. Conditions of Award

8.1 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 Services Website. Requests must be fully explained and justified in consultation with your Faculty Research Manager prior to submission to Research Services. Please submit requests for variation of expenditure to the Post-Award and Reporting Team via research.postaward@mq.edu.au.

Further information is available on the Research Services Website. Questions relating to variations should be directed to the Post-Award and Reporting Team via research.postaward@mq.edu.au.

8.2 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 Services Website](#). Requests must be fully explained and justified and should be done in consultation with the Faculty Research Manager prior to submission to Research Services. Please submit carry forward requests to the Post-Award and Reporting Team via [research.postaward@mq.edu.au](#).

Questions relating to carry-forward should be directed to the Post-Award and Reporting Team via [research.postaward@mq.edu.au](#).

8.3 Reporting

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

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

Grant recipients are required to submit a Progress Report by mid-way through the grant**.** This must be submitted to Research Services Post-Award and Reporting Team ([research.postaward@mq.edu.au](#)).

B. Final Report. The report must specifically address the projected outcomes as identified in the initial application and provide evidence that credible external funding opportunities have been actively pursued.

Within twelve months after the completion of the project, grant recipients should prepare the **Final Report**. This must be submitted to the Research Services Post-Award and Reporting Team ([research.postaward@mq.edu.au](#)).

If a grant recipient's term of employment expires before the allocated funding period i.e. 31 December 2021, a Final Report must be submitted to Research Services at least three weeks prior to their employment expiration date.

8.4 Additional Conditions of Award

MQRSG recipients must submit an application for substantial external funding by **31 December 2022**. All competitive external schemes are considered acceptable targets as a goal for Seeding Scheme applications. Macquarie University must be the Administering Institution on this application.

The Assessment Panel, in recommending an award of a grant, may stipulate other conditions of award for approval of the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research). Conditions of the award will be specified with outcome notification and should be agreed to by the applicant through the post-award acceptance process.

8.5 Website Publication

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

9. Privacy policy

The conduct of research projects supported under all internal Macquarie University Schemes is subject to the provisions of the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth).

10. Research Ethics, Integrity and Related Policies

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](#) and must comply with the standards encompassed in the [Macquarie University Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#)

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 or guidelines and satisfy the requirements 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.

For more information refer to https://www.mq.edu.au/research/ethics-integrity-and-policies

10.1 University Human Ethics, Animal Ethics and Biosafety Committees

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 the respective guidelines and review processes.

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. Please contact the relevant Ethics Secretariat (Human or Animal), Biosafety Secretariat, Gene Technology & Biosafety Secretariat and/or the Export Controls Secretariat for further information.

10.2 Research Integrity

All researchers, research coordinators and supervisors of research students should be familiar with the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research and must comply with the standards encompassed in the Macquarie University Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research.

Researchers are expected to be scrupulous in transparently declaring and managing conflicts of interest when engaged in research, including in the peer review process.

11. Faculty Research Managers

Arts – Jan Zwar	artsro@mq.edu.au
Macquarie Business School– Agnieszka Baginska	mqbs-ro@mq.edu.au
Human Sciences – Jo Tuck	humansciencesresearch@mq.edu.au
Medicine & Health Sciences – Kyle Ratinac	fmhs.researchsupport@mq.edu.au
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