



VICE-CHANCELLOR'S GENDER EQUALITY FUND

2021 Fund Guidelines

The Vice-Chancellor's Gender Equality Fund (the Fund) offers staff the opportunity to apply for support in facilitating gender equality initiatives and promoting workplace inclusion at Western Sydney University. Primarily, the Fund seeks to:

- develop a deeper understanding of any obstacles, and the steps required, to tackle gender inequality within the University and its community;
- foster collaboration and knowledge exchange between stakeholders within the University and its community in collective efforts to promote gender equality; and
- advance practice-based outcomes within the University by creating a praxis between academic and professional perspectives to leverage 'real-world' improvements and identify readily implementable recommendations which seek to improve current programs, initiatives or practices.

This funding is available for professional and academic staff, including fixed-term, casual and sessional staff, and is for projects that would not normally be funded by Divisions, Schools or Institutes.

1. Award Categories

a) Gender Equity Research at WSU – up to \$5,000

This category of funding seeks to support researchers employed at the University to undertake research focusing on gender equity issues at the University. In particular, research proposals are welcomed that will document gender inequalities (e.g. in employment and earnings across the University) and propose practice-based strategies to redress such issues. This funding can be used to support research in a variety of ways including covering teaching or administration buy-outs and project costs.

Funding may also be available to collaborate or partner with another university, organisation or industry, noting that issues germane to the University may be the basis of research more generally in higher education or corporate/industry settings. Funding will also be considered where academic applicants partner with professional staff to research collaboratively with academic staff serving as lead researcher.

Funding may be awarded to applicants who address issues relevant to gender equality and inclusion and can demonstrate clearly how the funding will be impactful to the University's practices. All applicants will be required to research a project and/or provide outputs that may lead to future external funding. This project may be a new initiative, or can further/extend an existing project.

b) Gender Equality Education and Promotion – up to \$5,000

This category seeks to offer funding for the purpose of delivering consultation, focus groups, in-house training, seminars and promotional activities for identified gender equality issues. These initiatives may bring together advocates, experts and practitioners from across business, government and academia to provide a forum for shared learning and discussion to identify and seek solutions to remove the barriers preventing equality in the workforce, particularly at board and management levels.

Funding in this category may assist in covering costs such as conference organisation and travel for speakers, and will be awarded on a competitive basis for seminars that can demonstrate impact. Purchases may only be made for implementation in the same year (e.g. travel for speaker/s cannot be approved in a calendar year and used in the next calendar year).

c) Targeted Gender Equality Initiatives – up to \$5,000

Open applications are invited under the following targeted gender equality initiative focus areas:

- Solutions to closing the gender pay gap based on best practice models from across industries.
- Overcoming career progression barriers for women from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and culturally diverse backgrounds.
- Impact of COVID-19 on women’s research and publication rates, and mitigative strategies to minimise longer term impact on WSU women researchers.
- Better understanding of the barriers faced by trans and non-binary students and staff, and ways to improve their inclusion, wellbeing and progression.
- Ways to improve the recruitment, progression and retention of staff into executive professional roles and non-traditional fields, including STEMM.
- Understanding gender-based issues affecting student progression and retention rates, including impacts from COVID-19, and support strategies most likely to retain women and enable maximum completion.

2. Application/Eligibility Criteria

- a) Applications can be made by individuals or teams. Teams can be a combination of academic and professional staff, and can be multidisciplinary or transdisciplinary in composition.
- b) Consideration will be given to the provision of funding greater than \$5,000 for applications submitted by teams of two or more staff members.
- c) *Award Category A* applicants must be:
 - i. a tenured or a contracted academic employee, with a contract finishing after 31 December 2021; or
 - ii. a sessional academic employee who can provide:
 - evidence from their School that they will be teaching until end of 2021; and
 - evidence of their employment with the University for the past two years.
- d) Applications under *Award Categories B* and *C* are open to both Professional and Academic staff.

- e) Applicants may apply for more than one grant, however, only one grant per person will be awarded in each year.
- f) Academic staff who are employed via an Australian Research Council or National Health and Medical Research Council grant are ineligible to apply.

3. General Expenditure Guidelines

- a) The tracking and reporting of funding expenditure is the responsibility of the applicant.
- b) Funding must be expended by **10 December 2021**. Any funding not expended by this date will be returned to a central funding account. Purchases may only be made for implementation in the same year (e.g. travel for speaker/s cannot be approved in a calendar year and used in the next calendar year).
- c) Requests to extend funding expenditure timelines beyond 10 December 2021 must be made in writing by **28 November 2021**, and must be related to a specific issue or delay which has impacted the project timeline.
- d) Funding provided cannot be used for the purpose of purchasing equipment that would normally be provided to you as an employee. A case can be made for the purchase of specialised research equipment that will relate to the project you are applying to have funded. Funding for the items below will generally not be considered:
 - i. Data storage hardware – e.g. hard drives, USBs.
 - ii. Computer hardware – items such as these should be provided through your School/Institute.
 - iii. Recording devices – e.g. cameras, video cameras, phones, voice recorders.
 - iv. Consumables – stationery, laboratory supplies, office equipment.
 - v. Laboratory equipment.
- e) Funding cannot be used to extend an existing employment contract.
- f) All budget items must be justified and reported in an itemised summary, reconciled against the original application budget proposal and submitted with the project's Final Report.

4. Application and Accountability Process

An applicant must complete an Expression of Interest (EOI) form which is available for download from the [Vice-Chancellor's Gender Equality Fund](#) webpage. It is the applicant's responsibility to:

- a) Ensure in advance that the relevant Supervisor, Director, Dean or Institute Director demonstrates their support by signing the application.
- b) Provide evidence of a submitted ethics application with the EOI, if ethics approval for the proposed research is required (i.e. the project includes use and/or collection of personal, collective or cultural data from participants). Funds will not be made available until evidence of ethics approval is provided to the Vice-Chancellor's Gender Equality Committee (GEC). If ethics approval is not obtained by **31 March 2021**, the offer of project funding may be withdrawn. For more information visit the [Research Integrity and Ethics](#) webpage.
- c) Submit an application to the GEC via the Senior Manager, Equity and Diversity (gefund@westernsydney.edu.au) by COB Friday, **23 October 2020**.

If successful, applicants must:

- a) Provide a mid-project Progress Report (template provided) to the GEC by COB Friday, **25 June 2021**.
- b) Provide a Final Report (template provided) to the GEC by COB Friday, **10 December 2021** with details of:
 - i. outputs (such as publications, partnerships, collaborations, non-traditional outcomes, impact, and achievements etc. that have arisen from this funding);
 - ii. up to 10 practice-based recommendations;
 - iii. itemised budget expenditure.
- c) Present project results as part of the Research Development Showcase in the year following completion of the project.
- d) Submit Progress Reports and Final Reports via email to the Senior Manager, Equity and Diversity (gefund@westernsydney.edu.au).
- e) Prior to project commencement, if an applicant determines they are no longer able to undertake their research in the period awarded they must notify OED via email (gefund@westernsydney.edu.au) as soon as possible so that funds can be reallocated.

5. Extension Requests for Final Reports

- a) Extension requests for submission of Final Reports must be made by COB Friday **3 December 2021** via email to gefund@westernsydney.edu.au for consideration by the Senior Manager, Equity and Diversity.
- b) Requests for extension must include details of the reasons for the delay and the steps the Awardee will take to ensure the Final Report will be submitted by the requested extension date.
- c) A maximum of two extensions may be granted by the Senior Manager, Equity and Diversity for the following periods:
 - i. First extension request – up to one month may be granted.
 - ii. Second extension request – an additional one week will be considered in extenuating circumstances.
- d) While the above requests for extensions may be granted, any funding not expended by **10 December 2021** is automatically recouped by the University's Finance Office.

6. Assessment of EOIs

- a) A sub-committee of the Vice Chancellor's Gender Equality Committee will discuss the merit and strategic value of all applications for funding, with a final decision to be made by the Vice-Chancellor.

7. Timeline

1 September 2020	Call for applications is released
23 October 2020	Deadline for lodgment of applications
December 2020	Successful and unsuccessful applicants notified of application outcome.
January/February 2021	Funding allocated

31 March 2021	Evidence of obtained Ethics approval due (if required)
25 June 2021	Mid-project Progress Report due
August 2021	Mid-project meeting with the Office of Equity and Diversity and Vice Chancellor's Gender Equality Committee representative
10 December 2021	Final Report due
10 December 2021	Funding expires and cannot be extended