

RESEARCH THEME PROGRAM GRANT ASSISTANCE SCHEME 2024 GUIDELINES

Expressions of Interest are now open for the Research Theme Program's grant assistance scheme. This scheme supports researchers within Schools and Institutes to build capacity for pursuing future funding applications in either Category 1 (e.g., ARC Linkage Grants, NHMRC Partnership Grants, NHMRC Centres of Research Excellence Grants); Category 2 (public sector, incl. research contracts); or Category 3 (private sector, philanthropy, international sources) are now open. **EOI will close 27 November 2023.**

The research must align with the Research Themes of **Education & Work; Health & Wellbeing, Environment & Sustainability and/or Urban Living Futures & Society**. WSU must be the lead on the application; and academics from more than one cluster must be involved. Applications must include at least one external partner from an industry or government organisation.

Funding up to \$10,000 will be provided to successful applicants to cover expenses involved in preparing a **funding application in Quarter 1 2025, or earlier** (this can be extended for those targeting CRE applications). These funds can be used for purposes such as employing research assistance, conducting pilot studies, covering participant costs, and more. The funds are not to be used for capital equipment purchases, travel, or extending existing employment contracts. The Research Theme Champions are available to assist with the application.

Additional funding may be available for projects spanning more than one theme. In cases where a project is based across two or more themes, and the research team clearly provides expertise from two or more theme areas, a project may be co-funded by more than one theme (for example \$10k may be provided from Education & Work and Urban Living Futures making a total of \$20k). The decision to co-fund a project in such a way will be determined by the assessment panel.

All funding must be spent by **29 November 2024**, and the application for external funding must be submitted before the end of March 2025.

1. Roles & Responsibilities

It is the applicant's responsibility to:

- a) complete the Expression of Interest form and submit it by the due date of 27 November 2023 to researchthemeprogram@westernsydney.edu.au
- b) ensure in advance that the relevant Research Director, Associate Dean Research (ADR), Dean or Institute Director supports the application (proof of support and signature must be provided);
- c) provide an interim report to the Office of the DVC REI by 28 June 2024 detailing progress and outputs that have resulted from this funding (such as draft and submitted grant applications, publications, partnerships, collaborations, non-traditional outcomes, impact, and achievements etc.);
- d) participate in the Mid-Point Workshop held by the Research Theme Champions in July 2024.
- e) provide a final report to the Office of the DVC REI by 15 December 2024 detailing further outputs that have resulted from this funding, thereafter the previous report (such as draft and submitted grant applications, publications, collaborations, non-traditional outcomes, impact, and achievements etc);
- f) report to the office of the DVC REI on outputs and outcomes in the year following completion of your seed grant.

2. Assessment Panel

The Assessment Panel will comprise the Research Theme Champions ensuring expertise from across the four research themes. The panel will assess applications and make recommendations to the DVC REI by the specified date.

3. Selection/Eligibility Criteria

1. Applications will be accepted from teams only (i.e., you must have a team of at least two on-going WSU staff members). One Chief Investigator of the team must be an ECR or MCR. More than one cluster must be represented to clearly indicate inter- or trans-disciplinary research.
2. At least one external partner (e.g., industry and/or government) is compulsory with evidence of supporting this seed project and interest in supporting an external grant application. Whilst collaboration with other universities is supported, additional industry and/or government organisations must be included.
3. Applicants must identify at least one funding scheme to whom a grant application will be submitted, along with a timeline for that application.
4. Applications are open to academic staff from Schools, Institutes and Centres, and the lead applicant must be an on-going staff member.
5. Applicants should explain how this funding is of benefit and enables the specified future grant application.
6. Applicants should provide the real-world impact or the potential for real-world impact the project will achieve.
7. Applicants should explain how their project aligns with the [UN Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDGs) and their indicators.
8. Funding must be expended by 29 November 2024.
9. Purchases cannot be for equipment that would be provided to you as an employee such as:
 - i. Data storage hardware – hard drives, USBs, etc. – please see Data Management (Section 4C)
 - ii. Computer hardware – items such as these should be provided through your School/Institute
 - iii. Recording devices – cameras, video cameras, phones, voice recorders etc.
 - iv. Consumables – stationery, lab supplies, office equipment
 - v. Laboratory equipment
 - vi. Phones or iPads
10. A case can be made for the purchase of specialised research equipment that will relate to the project you are applying to have funded.
11. All budget items must be fully justified and aligned with a timeline.
12. If applying to fund a Research Assistant, details must be given as to what role the RA will be given (e.g., data analysis, interviewing, literature review, field work, ethics applications, etc.).
13. If ethics is required for the project, the application is to be submitted no later than March 2024.

4. Guidelines for completing the application form

A. Research Assistance

Preference should be given in the first instance to PhD students either enrolled or under examination from the Graduate Research School. The RA's HEW level must be fully justified in the budget section. Remember to include on-costs (15.9% on top of the 25% casual loading rate) and any potential pay rises when budgeting for RA's. Please refer to the [Professional Staff Casual Rates](#) list for pay rates.

You are strongly advised to have identified a potential research assistant prior to submitting your application. Research

assistants are often hard to source, and your project may suffer if you are unable to employ an appropriate person to take on this role or the person you had in mind is unavailable. Furthermore, the project does not have to be limited to just one research assistant, should one not be suitable.

B. Submission of the Application form

- i. Submissions must be lodged with the Office of the DVC REI by 27 November 2023
- ii. Applications should be sent, as **one** PDF document to researchthemeprogram@westernsydney.edu.au
- iii. The subject line should state the theme your project relates to and the surname of the project lead (e.g., Health and Wellbeing/JONES)

5. Timeline (*subject to minor changes if required*)

<i>Date</i>	<i>Action</i>
15 October 2023	Call for applications
27 November 2023	Applications due to Office of the DVC REI
15 December 2023	Assessment Panel Meeting
4 December 2023	Awardees notified
January 2024	Project started and funding transferred to schools
28 June 2024	Interim report due
July 2024	Mid-Point Workshop
29 November 2024	Funds expended
13 December 2024	Final report due
October 2025	Report on subsequent grant success