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**Researcher Development Funding 2022**

**GUIDELINES\***

The concept of assessing researchers relative to their ‘research opportunity and performance evidence’ or ROPE is the practice of the Australian Research Council (ARC). ROPE was introduced to ‘help provide a more realistic consideration of a researcher’s capabilities and assist those who have had career interruptions for family and other reasons’ and can readily be applied for by academics seeking internal funding available from 2022 onwards. ROPE provides a framework within which the quality and benefit of achievements is given more weight than the quantity or rate of particular achievements. It considers working arrangements, major disruptions, career histories and personal circumstances and provides an acknowledgement of research performance given the opportunities available.

The Researcher Development funding scheme (Western’s internal funding scheme) offers three awards. These funding opportunities are directed towards staff who meet the ROPE criteria, and who are endeavouring to establish and/or expand their research profile including considering grant funding from an external agency. The awards include: Women’s Fellowships, ECR Fellowships and Career Interruption. These awards are not directed to staff with an established research profile (i.e. those that have previously been awarded external funding such as ARC and NHMRC grants).

Applications will be assessed using performance evidence in reference to research opportunity. Any assessment of research will need to apply an approach that quantifies your actual research time as well as the ongoing ramifications of the interruption. A career interruption due to carer responsibilities or other reasons can vary greatly dependent on the nature and duration of the associated responsibilities.

**1. Roles & Responsibilities**

It is the applicant’s responsibility to:

1. complete the Expression of Interest form and provide a Research Activity Statement (RAS)
2. ensure in advance that the relevant Research Director, Associate Dean Research (ADR), Dean or Institute Director supports the application
3. in consultation with your Research Director/ADR, partner with a discipline specific internal mentor (level D or E) to strategically develop the application and create a timeline to support the project and be prepared to work with the mentor for the duration of project.
4. submit the application as **one combined PDF document** (including proposal and Research Activity Statement (RAS)) to the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor REI by 6 August 2021 to email address [researcherdevelopment@westernsydney.edu.au](mailto:researcherdevelopment@westernsydney.edu.au)
5. provide a report to the Office of the DVC REI by 5 July 2023 detailing outputs that have resulted from this funding (such as publications, partnerships, collaborations, non-traditional outcomes, impact, and achievements etc.)
6. participate in a Researcher Development Showcase event the year following completion of the award to present the findings and future direction of their research.
7. participate in surveys related to the award and provide feedback for the development of the program; and
8. participate in career development opportunities provided by Office of the DVC REI (refer to the [Researcher Events Calendar](https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/research/events/_nocache)).

**2. Assessment Panel**

The Assessment Panel will be drawn from the academic body across the University ensuring expertise from across the four research themes, including a representative from the Vice-Chancellor’s Gender Equality Committee. The panel will assess applications and make recommendations to the DVC REI by the specified date.

**3. Application and Eligibility Criteria**

***(Additional criteria may apply for specific awards – please see below)***

1. Applications are for individuals only – not teams.
2. Applications must have a PhD or equivalent to apply for the ECR Fellowship.
3. Applicants must either be a tenured or contracted academic employees (whose contract does not finish before 31 December 2022).
4. Applications are open to academics in substantive Level A, B and C academics positions who meet the established criteria.
5. Applicants must be employed 0.6 FTE or more.
6. Only applicants with 60% or less research workload will be considered for Women’s Fellowships. ECRs and Career Interruption applicants who have 60% or more research workload, will be eligible, where their project is externally funded, tied to a specific project, and where their contract conditions allow participation in alternate research.
7. Applications are open to eligible academic staff from Schools and Institutes.
8. Academic staff who are employed via an ARC or NHMRC grant are ineligible to apply for the Women’s Fellowship award.
9. Applicants can only be awarded the ECR Fellowship and Women’s Fellowship once.
10. Applicants may apply for only one type of fellowship or award per round.
11. Applicants are not eligible to apply for Career Interruption funding if they have already received any WSU Researcher Development funding during the interruption period.
12. Applicants undertaking ADP leave may apply for funding – but will not be eligible to apply for teaching/marking/administration relief funding as a part of the application.
13. Funding may be requested for a new initiative or project, or for additional funding for an ongoing project.
14. Applicants should provide the real-world impact or the potential for real-world impact the project will achieve.
15. Applicants should indicate the [UN Sustainable Development Goal](https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/sustainable-development.html) (SDG) and ABS [Field of Research](https://www.arc.gov.au/grants/grant-application/classification-codes-rfcd-seo-and-anzsic-codes) (FOR) aligned to their project.
16. Applicants should indicate the Research Theme that aligns to their research.
17. Applicants to articulate how this funding will enhance their career.
18. Funding must be expended by 30 November 2022. Purchases cannot be made in 2022 for use in 2023 (e.g. travel cannot be paid for in 2022 and taken in 2023).
19. Purchases cannot be for equipment that would be provided to you as an employee such as:
    * 1. Data storage hardware – hard drives, USBs, etc. – please see Data Management (Section 4.3)
      2. Computer hardware – items such as these should be provided through your School/Institute
      3. Recording devices – cameras, video cameras, phones, voice recorders etc.
      4. Consumables – stationery, lab supplies, office equipment
      5. Laboratory equipment
      6. Phones or iPads
20. A case can be made for the purchase of specialised research equipment that will relate to the project you are applying to have funded.
21. Funding cannot be used to extend an existing employment contract.
22. Funding for travel expenses for conference or travel associated to the research, will be awarded for domestic travel only. Conference funding will cover online and domestic conferences, including conference fees, approved incidentals, and air travel. Conference funding will be awarded conditionally, pending the applicant being accepted to present at the listed conference.
23. All budget items must be fully justified and aligned with a timeline.
24. Applicants must have all publications uploaded on the Researcher Portal. For more information please contact [Researchdata@westernsydney.edu.au](mailto:Researchdata@westernsydney.edu.au).

**4. Guidelines for completing the application form**

1. **Ethics Approval**

Ethics must be approved before funding will be awarded.  (It is recommended that applications be submitted to the October 2021 Ethics Committee). Please remember that ethics applications often need to go before the committee more than once.  Delays in obtaining ethics clearance, may jeopardise the project timeline and its proposed outcomes. If ethics approval is not obtained by 31 March 2022), funding will be withdrawn.  Furthermore, funding will not be allocated to staff to hire an RA to complete the ethics application as funding cannot be disseminated until ethics are approved.

Applicants should contact the [Ethics Committee](https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/research/research_ethics_and_integrity) for dates and timelines of meetings.

1. **Impact**

The application form has a section regarding the potential impact of your proposed research. Please note, this does not relate to publications or citations. This relates to ‘real world’ impact and how your research will translate into a tangible difference or outcome/s. The ARC defines impact as “the demonstrable contribution that research makes to the economy, society, culture, national security, public policy or services, health, the environment or quality of life, beyond contributions to academia”.

1. **Data Management Plan**

The application form has a section regarding the data management plan. Data management planning is an important aspect of the responsible conduct of research. The datasets that you create during your research project are valuable and may need to be preserved over long periods of time. Your data management plan must be provided as part of this application. Please refer to the [Data Management and Technology Planning](http://www.westernsydney.edu.au/research/researchers/data_management) website which will provide more information on university expectations of data management.

1. **Research Assistance**

It is recommended that most Research Assistants (RA) are budgeted at a Level HEW 5.1, and when considering RA staff, preference should be given in the first instance to PhD students either enrolled or under examination from the Graduate Research School. You can budget for an RA to be paid at a higher rate, however the higher rate 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](https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0009/1158453/Professional_Staff_Rates_@_05-Mar-21.pdf) list for pay rates.

HEW 5.1 Casual Rate per hour (including 25% loading) + 15.9% = Total hourly rate

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.

1. **COVID-19**

Your research project should consider government guidelines that work towards ensuring yours or others safety. Please ensure guidelines are met throughout the life of the project.

1. **Submission of the Application form**

Submissions will be accepted in PDF format only. This should be ONE document with the application form, research proposal, signature pages and RAS merged into one PDF file. The submission must be signed by your mentor, Research Director and the Dean/Institute Director of your school/institute.

1. Submissions must be lodged with the Office of the DVC REI by 6 August 2021 (except Career Interruption application’s).
2. If time is to be spent in an Institute, approval must be sought from the relevant Institute Director.
3. Applications should be sent, as **one** PDF document to [researcherdevelopment@westernsydney.edu.au](mailto:researcherdevelopment@westernsydney.edu.au)
4. The subject line should state the scheme for which you are applying followed by your School/Institute, then your surname e.g. WomensFellowship/SSS/Jones
5. **Workload Allocation**

Submissions are required to have suitable workload allocated by the School/Institute for the requested project. This needs to be **above** the standard research workload currently assigned to the academic and not included in the existing workload allocation.

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

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| --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Action** |
| 3 May 2021 | Call for applications |
| 6 August 2021 | Applications to Office of the DVC REI |
| 15 September 2021 | Panel meeting |
| End October 2021 | Start notifying awardees |
| 1 January 2022 | Funding granted to unconditional offers |
| 31 March 2022 | Deadline for award ethics approval |
| 1 June 2022 | Call for mid-year report (due 30 June 2022) |
| 30 May 2023 | Call for Year-end report (due 01 July 2023) |

**6. Specifics of each Award**

1. **Women’s Fellowship – up to $30,000**

This program is for women who are employed at Western Sydney as a Lecturer A, B or C. The University is an inclusive environment which

recognises and supports gender diversity. If you feel that this program is applicable for you then you may apply.

The Women’s Fellowship funding can be used to support your research in a variety of ways including teaching or administration buy-outs,

travel, pilot studies, research translation and project costs. It is designed to be flexible with all teaching, marking and administration buy-

outs. Please ensure you discuss any buy-out time with your school supervisor.

Funding will be awarded to applicants who clearly demonstrate how the funding will be beneficial to their research profile and career

trajectory. Consideration using ROPE ethos will be given to staff who experienced significant delays due to COVID.

These awards are not directed to staff with an established research profile. (i.e. those that have previously been awarded external funding such as ARC and NHMRC grants).

Up to $30,000 will be awarded to successful applicants. Funds will be provided from January 2022 (subject to ethics approval)

and must be spent by 30 November 2022.

Awardees are required to present the outcomes of their research at the Researcher Development Showcase event in 2023.

1. **Early Career Researcher Fellowship (ECR Fellowship) - up to $15,000**

The Early Career Researcher Fellowship supports ECRs in balancing teaching and administrative duties while establishing a

research profile. The fellowship will provide ECRs with funding to allow for teaching, marking or admin buy-out,

or RA assistance. Please ensure you discuss any buy-out time with your supervisor.

This fellowship may or may not be linked to a project and must demonstrate the building of research career trajectory.

This award is intended to be an investment in people and pilot projects that will lead to securing external research funds.

Funding will cover project costs such as personnel, travel, specialised consumables and resources relating to the project. Funding will be

awarded for projects that demonstrate outcomes that will lead to research impact, career development and enhance the recipient’s

research profile.

The Guidelines define an Early Career Researcher as someone who has been awarded a PhD within the past 5 years and are employed at

Western Sydney as a Lecturer A to C. For eligibility extensions due to significant career interruptions, applicants must apply to the PVC R

via [researcherdevelopment@westernsydney.edu.au](mailto:researcherdevelopment@westernsydney.edu.au) and provide a short justification, career interruption timeline and approval from the

School/Institute Research Director/Associate Dean Research. These will be considered prior to the submission of the fellowship

application. Further consideration will be given using the ROPE ethos to staff who experienced significant delays due to COVID.

Up to $15,000 will be awarded to successful applicants. Funds will be provided in January 2022 (subject to ethics approval)

and all funds must be spent by 30 November 2022.

Awardees are required to present the outcomes of their research at the Researcher Development Showcase event in 2023.

1. **Career Interruption – up to $10,000**

This funding supports academics:

1. returning to work after a period of personal leave or a career break; spent significant time on health or family responsibilities; transition to remote teaching and learning; experienced changes in workloads to focus on teaching and governance roles and additional pastoral care roles in response to COVID-19; or experienced a withdrawal of research funding. It is designed to help re-establish research relationships, partnerships and projects that may have lapsed or been put on hold due to a specific career break.
2. who are currently on family or carers’ leave (for a period of more than three months), to access funds for research support staff to be employed and supervised to maintain time critical experiments or projects. (n.b. an alternative supervisor must be nominated for the research support staff, whist the awardee is on leave).

To be eligible for this award, the career interruption must have taken place within the last 18 months and the application

should clearly outline which project/research has been disrupted.

Applications for Career Interruptions are open to all eligible A, B, and C academics – workload for fractional appointments will

be considered on a case by case basis.

The package will provide support for 12 months up to $10,000 per successful applicant to support pilot studies, travel, teaching

buyouts or research translation, per career interruption period.

Awardees are required to present the outcomes of their research at the Researcher Development Showcase event in 2023.

**7. Assessment Criteria for each award**

1. **Women’s Fellowship & ECR Fellowship**

Applicants must address the following criteria for assessment.

1. Originality and significance of the research — demonstrate how the research will contribute to new knowledge or advance the boundaries of the discipline.
2. Research quality and methodological robustness.
3. Research track record in relation to opportunity and how this funding will help your research trajectory. Please provide full explanation. Consideration will be given in accordance to significant delays due to COVID and ROPE ethos.
4. Research impact — describe the likely impact and benefits of the research beyond the academy.
5. [Data management plan](https://library.westernsydney.edu.au/main/researchers/data-management) – detail the methods you will use to ensure that the data collected is stored in an appropriate way. Please see link for details.
6. Likelihood of future external funding as a result of this project and/or anticipated enhancement of recipient’s research profile; clearly articulated outputs; potential to build collaborations or partnerships.
7. Show collaboration with external industry partners.
8. Identify and receive approval from a relevant mentor who will provide guidance to you throughout the project.
9. Details of the next steps for the project, (i.e. 2023 onwards).
10. Provide a fully justified budget.
11. Provide the [UN Sustainable Development Goal](https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/sustainable-development.html) (SDG) and ABS [Field of Research](https://www.arc.gov.au/grants/grant-application/classification-codes-rfcd-seo-and-anzsic-codes) (FOR) aligned to their project.
12. **Career Interruption**

Applicants must address the following criteria for assessment.

1. Impact of career break on the academic’s research ambitions and trajectory.
2. Research track record in relation to opportunity. Consideration will be made in accordance to appeals due to COVID delays and ROPE ethos.
3. Provide a fully justified budget.
4. Identify and receive approval from a relevant mentor who will provide guidance throughout the project.
5. If previously supported with this type of funding, please provide details of how this request differs.
6. Details of the next steps for the project, (i.e. 2023 onwards).
7. Provide the [UN Sustainable Development Goal](https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/sustainable-development.html) (SDG) and ABS [Field of Research](https://www.arc.gov.au/grants/grant-application/classification-codes-rfcd-seo-and-anzsic-codes) (FOR) aligned to their project.

For further information about this funding scheme, please contact:

**researcherdevelopment@westernsydney.edu.au**