

Research Grants and Funding Management Guidelines

A comprehensive guide to funded research at ECU, from finding funding to finalising your project and who can help.

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1 Purpose

These guidelines outline the processes associated with the administration and management of external research grant funding¹ and should be read in conjunction with the University's [Conducting Research with Integrity Policy](#).

Research grants refer to external funding, including tenders, contract research and direct offers of funding, for research projects that meet the definition of research. For the purposes of these guidelines, it may also extend to grant schemes offered internally by Research Services and Schools grants which involve external funding coming to ECU and a contract is required for the project.

2 Definition of Research

Research is the creation of new knowledge and/or the use of existing knowledge in a new and creative way so as to generate new concepts, methodologies, inventions, and understandings. This could include synthesis, collation, evaluation, and analysis of previous research to the extent that it is new and creative and/or that it informs policy and professional practice.²

The Commonwealth Higher Education Research Data Collection ([HERDC](#)) specifications outline that for an activity to be considered a research activity it must satisfy **all five core criteria**:

1. to be aimed at new findings (novel),
2. to be based on original, not obvious, concepts and hypotheses (creative),
3. to be uncertain about the final outcomes (uncertain),
4. to be planned and budgeted (systematic), and
5. to lead to results that could be possibly reproduced (transferable and/or reproducible)³.

The HERDC specifications outline that research activity encompasses pure and oriented basic research, applied research and experimental development. The Australian and New Zealand Standard Research Classification (ANZSRC) states that research and development can be categorized into four types of activity: pure basic research, strategic basic research, applied research and experimental development. Researchers may be asked to indicate activity against either of these categories for reporting purposes.

The [HERDC Specifications](#) provides a range of specific inclusions and exclusions that must also be considered when determining if an activity is research and can be reported to the Commonwealth as research.

Within ECU, projects are determined as being research activity by Research Administration with reference to the documents (grant applications or project proposals) provided by the researcher and with consideration of the HERDC Specifications. If there is any doubt, additional information will be sought from the lead researcher or Chief Investigator and the relevant Associate Dean Research (ADR) consulted for a determination as to whether an activity is research or not. Research Services (Director) has the final decision.

¹ These guidelines do not relate to any of the Universities fundraising activities that are conducted through the ECU Foundation and its procedures and rules.

² Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, 2018 <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/publications/australian-code-responsible-conduct-research-2018>

³ *Ibid.* pp 46-48.

3 Overview of Research Services

Research Services plays a critical role in supporting and encouraging researchers and seeks to continuously support researchers in securing and managing funding, in the ethical conduct of their research and the management of their research outputs.

Research Services offers a range of services to support and inspire researchers, including:

- Professional development activities
- Assisting with identification of funding opportunities
- Submission of research applications to funding bodies
- Research ethics and integrity advice
- Administration of ECU funding schemes
- Contract preparation, review, negotiation and signing
- Contract management including submission of deliverables and arranging contract variations
- Support for HDR students and Supervisors in partnership with the Dean, Graduate Research
- Research performance expertise via quality data and systems that underpin research administration
- Preparing the University's ERA (Excellence in Research for Australian) and E&I (Engagement and Impact) submissions

Applications to external agencies or potential sponsors MUST be conducted through Research Services. This includes all legal and other communications, such as submission of progress and



4 Pre-award - from finding funding to submitting a grant application

The Pre-award team consists of the Coordinator, Research Administration (CRA) and Research Administration Officers (RAOs) who can assist you with finding funding opportunities; conducting grant compliance and eligibility checks; reviewing final drafts of the application and budget (in consultation with the Finance and Business Service Centre (FBSC)); and obtaining relevant approvals for, and submission, of your application. FBSC prepare, review, and approve budgets for grant applications with input from the researcher.

4.1 Finding research funding

Researchers can obtain research funding from a range of sources, including direct industry funding, dedicated funding bodies and grant schemes.

The University's [Research Intranet – Research Journey - Funding databases](#) provides links to Research Professional, a searchable funding database. You can access the [Research Professional](#) database and have the ability to customise your searches. Alternatively, you can access [Discipline Specific Searches](#). Research Services also compiles a weekly funding opportunities alert which can be accessed directly [here](#) or via the links in the *Research Weekly* email.

The University from time to time may offer internal funding opportunities, such as the *ECU Early Career Researcher (ECR) Grant Scheme* and *ECU Industry Engagement Scheme*. Information on centrally coordinated internal schemes can be found [here](#).

More information on funding opportunities, including internal grants will be included in Research Weekly. To subscribe to the Research Weekly newsletter, visit the [Research Intranet](#).

4.2 Pre-award help

RAOs are available to assist with administrative aspects of grant applications, including assisting you with queries regarding funding guidelines, compliance, and eligibility, submitting an internal expression of interest in ECU's Research Management System (ECURMS), application formatting requirements, compilation of documents, assistance with grant application portals, seeking internal approvals and ECU's submission processes.

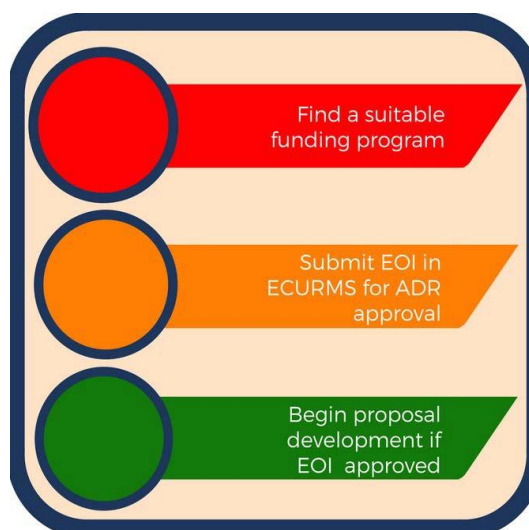
The FBSC team will be able to assist with preparing, reviewing, and approving your budgets. The FBSC team comprises:

- School Finance Coordinators (SFC), who can assist with budgets for externally funded research projects.
- Research Business Support (RBS), who can assist with foundation and trust funded grant budgets.
- Research Scholarship Business Support (RSBS), who can assist with budgets for research scholarships and student projects.
- Foundation Business Support (FBS), who can provide assistance for budgets relating to funding managed through the ECU Foundation.

4.3 Pre-award processes

Once you have identified a suitable funding opportunity, there are several pre-award processes to go through before your application can be submitted to the funding body. These include:

- Submitting an Expression of Interest (EOI) via the ECU Research Management System (ECURMS) (see 4.3.2 below).
- Developing your proposal.
- Preparing your funding budget. The relevant FBSC team (SFC/RSBS/RBS) will assist with preparing, reviewing, and approving your budget based on the funding body requirements and guidelines, and relevant university policies.
- Determining if any cash contributions are required from the University (such as a co-contribution cash or in-kind, or salary shortfall) from the funding guidelines or available grant funding. Your SFC will calculate the value of these contributions.
- Review and compliance checks of your proposal.
- Obtaining endorsement from FBSC on the budget.
- Obtaining the approval from the Associate Dean, Research (ADR) on the whole proposal.
- Submitting the proposal to the funding body.
- Responding to funding body enquiries or reviewer feedback, as required.



When a grant opportunity arises with a philanthropic funding body, the process varies from the standard, abovementioned process as the [Office of Development and Alumni Relations](#) (ODAR) becomes involved. In a bid to have the most suitable projects identified and funded, ODAR will select the relevant projects, develop the application with the CI and liaise and work closely with Research Services. In these cases, the funding is required to be accounted for through the ECU Foundation. The budget costings will therefore require to be checked by FBS ([Foundation Business Support](#)).

Additional process steps are in place for the major ARC and NHMRC grant schemes, see below.

4.3.1 Category 1 (ARC & NHMRC) Pre-assessment Process

In a bid to improve the quality of our research grant submissions, Research Services facilitates a program of internal pre-assessment. This process applies to ARC (Australian Research Council) and NHMRC (National Health and Medical Research Council) grants.

The [Category 1 Pre-assessment Process](#) will commence before the standard RAO process; the process and dates will be communicated via the Research Weekly newsletter, School Research Meetings, and on the Research intranet page.

The stages of the Pre-Assessment are reviewed by members of the Research Professorial Network, researchers with experience in the grant scheme and/or relevant ADRs. The DVCR may also be involved in Pre-Assessment reviews, particularly for fellowships applications. As much as possible the review panel remains the same throughout the Pre-Assessment process.

The stages are detailed below:

- **Stage 1: EOI**

Lead researcher or Chief Investigator (CI) submits a brief description (1-3 pages) of their proposed project (aims, background, proposed study, significance and supporting data) and a copy of their CV (ideally formatted to align with the grant scheme requirement). Based upon this information, a decision will be made as to whether the application can proceed or not. If not, support will be provided to strengthen it for future submission. In the case of resubmissions, the CI is also required to outline how they are improving their project design from their earlier application. Resubmissions that were assessed by the funding body as being close to the funding cut-offs are typically supported for resubmission, whilst those further away from the funding cut off are unlikely to be supported for resubmission unless significant improvements are made in CI/team track records and the project scope and methodology.

For Fellowship applicants the DVCR may meet with prospective applicants and discuss strategies for developing a strong application.

- **Stage 2: Initial draft**

The draft application is reviewed, and reviewer(s) provide broad advice on grantsmanship to guide the CI on how to strengthen their application.

- **Stage 3: Final draft**

Stage 3 is a second internal review of the near final draft application (this includes budget and the funding body's online portal questions), typically by the same reviewer(s) as Stage 2. The DVCR may provide Fellowship applicants with detailed feedback on their near final draft application.

- **Final Application**

CI submits their final version of the application to their respective Research Administration Officer (research-preaward@ecu.edu.au) for administrative and technical eligibility and compliance reviews, including project costings prior to submission.

- **Grant Submitted**

4.3.2 Submitting an ECU Expression of Interest

Prior to developing your proposal, you must obtain approval from your School's ADR to progress your application to submission. Approvals can be obtained by submitting an EOI through the ECURMS, which is accessible via the [Student and Staff Portal](#). The *ECURMS Guidelines* and an *EOI Cheat Sheet* ([link](#)) can assist with your submission.

An EOI should be submitted to provide a brief outline of your research plan, details of any financial contributions required from the School, and co-researchers and partners/collaborators.

When the EOI has been approved, both yourself and the assisting RAO will be notified.

4.3.2.1 Research involving or identifying Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples

The ECURMS EOI will seek information about whether your project involves clinical or epidemiological research, data linkage or data release, health services or population health research or qualitative

research which will involve or identify Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Peoples. If this is the case, you are strongly encouraged to contact relevant staff at [Kurongkurl Katitjin](#) via email kk@ecu.edu.au. Additional resources and support are also available [here](#).

4.3.2.2 Defence related research

Some Defence related grants and projects may require compliance with Defence Industry Security Program (DISP) including researchers being required to meet the employment screening requirements of the Australian Standard AS4811-2006. More information can be found [here](#).

4.3.3 Developing a research proposal

Read the funding guidelines and assessment criteria to ensure you understand the objectives and requirements of the funding scheme.

When a grant opportunity arises with a philanthropic funding body, or the guidelines require ECU to have a Deductible Gift Recipients (DGR) status then the application may be processed through the ODAR, and budgets may be prepared, reviewed and approved by FBS. ODAR, Research Services and FBS work closely to determine the best processes for each of these funding opportunities.

Most funding bodies provide detailed instructions on format, content, and structure. You should read these instructions and follow all guidance provided, in particular adhering to any page limits and formatting requirements or your application may be ruled ineligible.

When writing your proposal, remember that you need to convince the reviewers of the significance of your research (how will the research address an important problem in the discipline), and that you are the best person to undertake the research given your expertise in the area. It is critical to demonstrate your in-depth knowledge of the current state of research in the area by discussing the field's directions, knowledge gaps and similar research being done by other research teams.

Establishing an effective research team is extremely important. Think about the strategic reasons for including researchers on your project and remember your own research track record will also be considered by the reviewers.

Some funding schemes put limits on how many grants you can hold or applications you can be named on. Be sure to read the funding guidelines to **ensure all your research team members meet any of these eligibility criteria**.

In developing the research proposal, you should consider:

- All relevant application materials provided by the funding body, including funding rules, eligibility criteria, instructions to applicants and potential funding agreements.
- Time frames for submission to allow sufficient time for internal and (if required) external reviews and approval. Final applications are required to be submitted to research-preaward@ecu.edu.au no less than **10 working days** prior to the grant closing date.
- RAO assistance with administrative tasks associated with the submission.
- Project costing or budget compilation, and budget justification, including any basis of deriving the costing. The relevant FBSC team (SFC/RBS/RSBS) will assist with preparing, reviewing and finalising budgets in consultation with the CI.

- Approval for submission by the Associate Dean Research (ADR) of the relevant school/s.

4.3.4 Budget preparation

Research projects need to be fully costed, including direct and indirect costs, cash contributions (from ECU or collaborators), and any in-kind contributions provided by ECU. These could include, but are not limited to, the following costs:

- Salaries for academic, research and professional staff (inclusive of salary on-costs⁴)
- Equipment
- Consumables
- Travel and accommodation
- “Research Support Costs” or [University Services Charges](#) (USC), see Section 4.3.4.1 below for more information.
- ECU or other cash contributions (supporting documentation must be provided)
- ECU or other in-kind contributions
- Dissemination costs, such as open access publication

Your relevant FBSC team (SFC/RBS/RSBS) can assist with preparing and reviewing the budget. As CI you will need to validate any budget assumptions used by the FBSC team. Budget preparation will also include calculation of any ECU co-contribution or salary shortfalls. Approvals for ECU co-contribution or salary shortfall must be obtained from the relevant School, Institute or Centre delegate prior to the budget being finalised.

RAOs will provide the relevant FBSC team with any grant guidelines (including any finance templates required by the relevant funding body) to ascertain any specific budget related funding body conditions before finalizing the budget to be submitted as part of the grant application.

Should the application require ECU bank details to be included, RBS will need to complete and certify the relevant bank details for the application and/or completion of the funding body supplier forms/templates.

4.3.4.1 University Service Charge (USC)

[University Services Charge \(USC\) Policy](#) seeks to recover some of the indirect costs of conducting research that cannot be specifically attributed to a research project, such as infrastructure and insurance. USC can be referred to as “*Research Support Costs*” in grant applications, as it is more descriptive as to the nature of the costs. Research Support Costs can be incorporated into the total cost of each item within the budget if required by the funding body guidelines and/or template: in other instances, it can be listed as a separate item within the budget.

Some funding agencies are automatically exempted from including USC in funding budgets, for example ARC and NHMRC. Schedule 1 of the [USC Policy](#) as additional information on external funders who are exempt under the USC Policy.

⁴ On-costs refer to the costs in addition to the base salary of hiring someone, including superannuation, long services leave, worker’s compensation, and payroll tax.

Where an external funder is not exempt under the [USC policy](#), a USC exemption form is required. The [USC exemption form](#) is completed online by the researcher in consultation with the relevant FBSC team (SFC/RBS/RSBS). Exemptions should be sought as soon as possible but prior to application submission. If there are multiple applications for the same scheme, a USC exemption request is required for each application. USC exemptions are generally only granted in exceptional circumstances and approved by FBSC. USC exemption request outcomes will be sent to the researcher and Research Pre-award. Where an external funder is exempt under the USC policy a USC exemption request form is not required to be completed.

4.3.5 Data management planning

The responsible conduct of research includes proper management and retention of the research data. When you are preparing a proposal for a funding body, consider how the data generated from the project will be stored, secured, retained and made accessible for use and reuse. You should also consider any data management requirements set out by your funder. For further guidance see the [Data Management Planning](#) webpage or contact researchdatamanagement@ecu.edu.au.

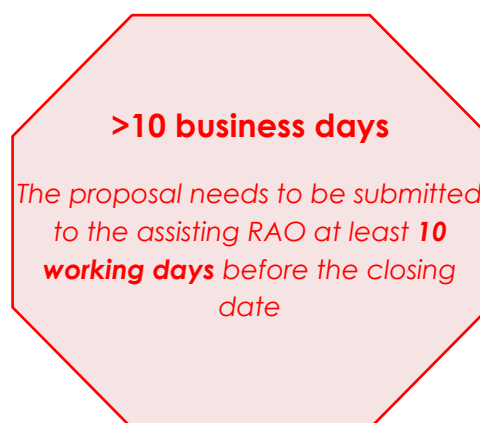
If the proposal is successful, researchers complete their data management plan as part of submitting the project into the Research Ethics Management System (REMS). You will be responsible for ensuring all research team members are aware of the data management plan and that implementation of the plan occurs by those team members who are assigned specific tasks.

While the data generated from the project will be owned by the University, as Chief Investigator, you will be the custodian and responsible for implementing a data management plan.

4.4 Research Administration review process

If peers are reviewing your proposal, please allow plenty of time PRIOR to the internal submission deadline, being **10 working days** prior to the external closing date.

The RAO will coordinate the FBSC review and approval of the budget and review the final proposal for compliance with funding body requirements and related University policies and guidelines. They will also proofread the application, making amendments and suggestions as needed. The RAOs undertake this final check to ensure the application complies with the funding body's guidelines and instructions, is free from any grammatical or typographical errors, and includes all required documentation, certifications, and signatures, preventing your application from being ruled ineligible by the funding body. Any edits and recommended changes will be returned to you to finalise prior to submission.



4.5 Obtaining School approvals

Once the research proposal has been finalised, the RAO obtains approval from the relevant ADR(s) via ECURMS. This will then prompt a final review of your final application by the Coordinator Research Administration (CRA) within Research Services.

4.6 Submitting the research proposal

The CRA will then submit your application to the funding body on your behalf (including online applications) and you will receive written confirmation, via email, notifying you when submission is complete.

5 Post award – from accepting an offer to closing the project

The following teams provide support after your project is awarded funding:

- Research Contract and Funding Team (RCFT);
- Research Ethics Team (RET); and
- Finance and Business Service Centre (FBSC).

These teams can assist you with communicating with the funder and accepting the award, meeting research ethics requirements, negotiating contracts with the funder and collaborators in partnership with you, setting up a finance project account, meeting project milestones and finalising your project.

5.1 Award and acceptance

If your proposal is successful, you will receive an email advising you to accept the award in ECURMS.

If the awarded amount is less than the submitted budget, a revised budget will need to be prepared, reviewed and approved by your relevant FBSC team (SFC/RBS/RSBS) and subsequently approved by the School's ADR. The revised budget and approval will need to be submitted to the RCFT prior to accepting the award in ECU RMS.

At this point in the process, if you haven't already done so, you should be considering what you will need to do to meet research ethics requirements. Preparing ethics applications and obtaining ethics approval may take some time and it is recommended that this process starts as early as possible after the funding outcome is known.

5.2 Direct offer of funding research projects

This type of project arises when a researcher is offered funding by a funder outside of a formal grant or tender process. You should advise the RCFT of these projects as soon as you can and provide the following supporting documentation:

- A final copy of the project proposal;
- A copy of the award notification letter or email; and
- A budget prepared, reviewed and approved by the relevant FBSC team (SFC/RBS/RSBS).

5.3 Project Establishment

Once the award has been accepted, there are three key steps to be completed before a project code, in the financial system, can be requested, and the research started.

1. Preparing, reviewing, negotiating, and signing the research contract; including any International Compliance Reviews.
2. Completing Intellectual Property Deeds for all ECU researchers listed on the project.
3. Obtaining ethics approval.

Once the above have been completed a project account, in the financial system, can be requested from FBSC and expenditure on the project can commence.

5.3.1 Contract preparation and review

The University organises an agreement/contract with the funding body, and any other collaborators, for research projects. The [HERDC Specifications](#) requires ECU to maintain documentation to demonstrate that research income meets the HERDC criteria. This documentation is typically agreements, such as funding agreements, letters of agreement, and research contracts. RCFT access several ECU approved template agreements to facilitate contract preparation as much as possible. However, some funders require use of their own agreements or some projects require bespoke agreements.

If you are the first named investigator or CI, you will be responsible for complying with the University's policy and procedures as outlined in the [Conducting Research with Integrity Policy](#) and supporting procedures and guidelines established to ensure the obligations of the funding contract are met.

The RCFT will work with you to review, negotiate and coordinate the sign-off and execution of any research contracts. The team will review the agreement and will manage other internal reviews or input, including by legal, finance and Graduate Research Services, ensuring contract terms meet University requirements and the contract aligns with the research project. Only the Vice-Chancellor, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) and the Director, Research Services are authorised to sign research contracts for the University.

As CI, you will be required to review drafts of the contract from the perspective of the research project to ensure all the details are accurate, up to date, reflect the current project plan and that any requirements relating to dissemination or later use of the findings are acceptable.

Your project must be carried out as described in your proposal and in accordance with the terms of the funding contract and/or conditions of award. You will need to remain aware of these terms/conditions throughout the project and notify RCFT of all significant changes to project scope, timing, personnel, or budget expenditure. Significant changes may require a variation to the contract to be negotiated and the RCFT will manage this process with you and communicate with the funding body and any collaborators.

5.3.1.1 Industry Engagement Scholarships

[Industry Engagement Scholarships](#) are scholarships for Higher Degree by Research (HDR) students which are co-funded by an industry partner. When an Industry Engagement Scholarship EOI has been submitted in accordance with the guidelines and approved by the Director, Research Services it is provided to the RCFT to prepare the Industry Engagement Scholarship agreement with the Industry Partner and a related Student Agreement.

The Industry Engagement Scholarship agreement and the related Student Agreement are prepared based on information provided in the Industry Engagement Scholarship EOI and the budget information confirmed by RSBS. RCFT will request the Principal Supervisor review the Industry Engagement Scholarship agreement prior to it being sent to the Industry Partners.

Once the terms of the Industry Engagement Scholarship agreement are confirmed:

- A copy will be sent to the Graduate Research Services and the Scholarships teams, who will arrange for the Scholarship Letter of Offer to be sent to the student; and

- RCFT will prepare the related Student Agreement. RCFT will request the Principal Supervisor review the Student Agreement and forward the agreement to the Student.

If there are any changes in the student project, candidature or enrolment, contact RCFT (research-grants@ecu.edu.au) to see if a variation is required to the Industry Engagement Scholarship Agreement and the related Student Agreement.

5.3.1.2 International Compliances Reviews

The University must comply with several legislative obligations when engaging with foreign individuals and entities. These compliance obligations include:

1. [Sanctions](#) imposed by the United Nations Security Council and Australia
2. [Defence Trade Controls](#)
3. [Foreign Influence Transparency Scheme](#)
4. [Foreign Arrangement Scheme Reporting](#)
5. [Indonesian Foreign Research Permits](#) when conducting research in Indonesia. Further information is available from <https://frp.brin.go.id/index.php>.

The International Compliance Review (ICR) process has been developed to ensure that the University reviews the compliance risks posed by our various interactions with foreign individuals and entities. The ICR process involves the following reviews:

- a) **DFAT Consolidated List Review** which ensures appropriate due diligence regarding the entity ECU will be contracting with, as well as the entity's senior staff, directors and the individual researchers ECU is collaborating with. To assist in conducting a review of the DFAT Consolidated List the University has developed a [Consolidated List Review Form](#) (CLRF); and
- a) **International Compliance Review** which reviews the activity, arrangement, or research project against the relevant international compliance requirements the University must adhere to. The [International Compliance Review – Foreign Engagement](#) form (ICR-FE) facilitates the ICR process and incorporates consideration of the above compliance obligations.

RCFT will assist with the completion of the ICR-FE and CLRF. The International Research Compliance Coordinator, within RCFT, will facilitate the review and assessment of the forms by the Senior Complaints, Compliance and Integrity Advisor and will communicate the outcomes of the assessment with RCFT and the researcher. For more information see Strategic and Governance Services webpages on [International Compliance Reviews](#).

5.3.2 Assignment of Intellectual Property (IP)

All University academic staff and students involved in the research project are required to sign a deed which assigns ownership of IP to the University. It is the Chief Investigator's responsibility to ensure all researchers contributing to the project complete IP deeds and return these to RCFT. More information is available [here](#).

5.4 Meeting research ethics requirements

The Australian research environment is governed by several guidelines on how research is to be conducted. To maintain its standing as an ethical research and teaching institution, the University must comply with the relevant guidelines including the [Australian Code for Responsible Conduct of Research](#). Consequently, all research projects must comply with research ethics requirements.

Research which involves the following requires ethics approval:

- Human participants; or
- Previously collected human data being used for another project; or
- Animals for teaching or scientific purposes.

At ECU all research projects are required to be submitted in the Research Ethics Management System (REMS) via the [Proportional Review Checklist](#) (PRC) to determine the level of research ethics review required for the work. Even if you are sure your work does not require human or animal ethics review, you should still complete the PRC so your research activity is recorded.

The PRC can be completed online using [Research Ethics Management System \(REMS\)](#). New users should first refer to the [Research Ethics and Integrity](#) intranet page.

Ethics approval must be in place before a project code, in the financials system, can be request from FBSC, recruitment of participants or data collection can commence. Retrospective ethics approval **cannot be granted**.

More information is available on the [Research Intranet – Research Ethics](#) website.

5.4.1 Development phase approval

Sometimes researchers need to seek approval for the development phase of their research to develop or finalise data collection materials, purchase equipment or employ staff for research projects.

This approval is for six (6) months only.

Development Phase ethics approval may be granted to allow project funds to be released for the development phase of the project only. The conditions of development phase ethics approval are as follows:

- approval is for the development phase only, and **does not** include approval to conduct any recruitment of participants or data collection for research involving humans, or any use of animals for scientific purposes; and
- a full ethics application must be reviewed and approved by the Ethics Committee before any recruitment or data collection can occur.

The Research Ethics Team (RET) will contact researchers prior to the Development Phase approval expiry date to open the application and allow the full application to be completed and submitted for review. If you wish to complete your full application prior to this time, you can contact the RET to request access to your application.

5.4.2 Outside of Scope/Exempt from Ethics Review and Data Management Plan

A PRC may determine that a research project is “Outside the Scope” of or is exempt from ethics review. This may happen for research that does not involve animals or human participants. These projects still

require a Data Management Plan to be completed prior to the Research Ethics Team approving the research to commence. Submission of the Data Management Plan is required before the project can be made 'ACTIVE' in ECURMS and the project account being established by FBSC.

5.4.3 Multi-centre research projects

If research ethics approval has been granted for your project by another institution's ethics committee, ECU may be able to reciprocate this and provide an Executive Ethics Approval. You will need to complete the Proportional Review Checklist and answer 'YES' to the question regarding prior review. A condensed application form will then need to be completed with the following documentation attached:

- Ethics application approved by the other ethics committee;
- Any supporting documents and correspondence; and
- Final ethics approval notification by the other ethics committee.

Executive ethics approval can only be granted by the Executive Committee of the HREC who will review the documents, assess any implications, determine any monitoring conditions, and provide feedback and/or approval.

5.4.4 Ethics monitoring and reporting

All ethics applications are approved with monitoring conditions that are outlined when ethics approval is granted.

Researchers must complete an annual progress report (if the project is longer than one year) and a final report at the end of the project. You will be notified when a report is due.

If an extension of ethics approval is required for the project, researchers must apply for an extension prior to the expiry of their current ethics approval. Failure to do so may require a new ethics application to be submitted for review and approval.

These reports are submitted directly into REMS. Guidance can be found in the [Factsheet Managing Research in REMS](#).

5.5 Record keeping

Retaining and maintaining research funding documentation on your project will be organised by the RCFT. This includes copies of the proposal, contract, IP deeds and other approvals and supporting documentation.

6 Managing your project

Effective project management is essential for obtaining successful outcomes and will enhance your track record and increase your chances of securing subsequent external funding.

Once the award has been accepted, there are several important processes to manage:

- Conducting the project.
- Organising invoicing.
- Managing your project as per budget.
- Reviewing your project expenses (SFC/RBS can provide assistance).
- Reporting research outputs.
- Preparing technical reports and confirm financial report.
- Preparing and coordinating contract variations, where applicable.
- Finalising the project.
- Implementing your research data management plan.

The RCFT will be your main contact and will assist you with each of these processes. RET will be able to assist with any ethics or data management questions. The relevant FBSC team (SFC/RBS/RSBS) will be able to assist with invoicing, budgeting and financial reporting queries.

6.1 Reporting technical/project progress to the funding body

Most, if not all, funding bodies will require the submission of regular technical/project progress reports. These can include progress, milestone, annual and final reports and will be detailed in the offer of award, conditions, or contract.

You will be responsible for preparing and writing the reports. The RCFT will assist in tracking due dates and submitting the reports on behalf of the University to the funding body.

It is essential as lead CI you ensure all technical reports are submitted to RCFT and the funder in a timely manner to meet all the contract milestones. Failure to submit reports in time may result in ECU being in breach of agreement terms and conditions. Funders may also deem CI's ineligible for future grant submissions if reports are not submitted on time. Changes to the timing of the submission of project and final reports may require formal variation of the agreement.

6.2 Managing the budget and financial reporting

FBSC will allocate a project code in the financial system which will be used to record all income and expenditure related to your project. The relevant FBSC team (SFC/RBS/RSBS) will assist the researcher with queries on project income and expenditure throughout the life of the project. The CI is responsible to ensure that all expenditure of the project funds is in accordance with any budget approved by the funder. Any changes in the budget may require formal variation to the agreement.

The funding body may require periodic and final financial statements to be submitted with progress reports. This requirement will be detailed in the contract. The relevant FBSC team (SFC/RBS/RSBS) will prepare the periodic and/or final financial acquittals based on information extracted from Oracle (the financial system) and in the format required by the grant/funding body. The CI, at all times, is required to confirm if there are any further expenses that need to be recorded against the project. FBSC is

responsible for compiling and certifying all financial acquittals. No financial information should be disclosed to external parties unless via FBSC certified financial acquittal statements. The RCFT will submit the reports to the funding body, together with any progress or final reports.

Researchers are **not** permitted to disclose financial statements to funding agencies, including the amount of any residual funds. Only RBS and the RCFT (through providing the certified financial acquittal provided) have the authority to do so.

6.3 Contract variations

There may be changes to the project due to a variety of reasons. Whilst not all changes will require the consent of the funding body, many will. Examples include changes to researchers working on a project or delays in meeting the reporting due dates.

You should contact the RCFT once it becomes apparent that there is a significant change to the project or a variation to the research contract. RCFT will advise if the change to the project requires notification to the funding body, a formal request, or variation to the agreement. The RCFT will work with you by reviewing the contract requirements. If required, RCFT will assist you by preparing and reviewing the variation documentation, communicating with the funder, and coordinating signing of the variation.

You should contact FBSC (SFC/RBS/RSBS) as soon as possible if the contract variation will result in amendments to the budget. A revised budget will need to be prepared by the relevant FBSC team (SFC/RBS/RSBS) with the input of the CI.

6.4 Terminating a project at ECU

There are a few reasons why your project may be terminated or end early. Please liaise with the RCFT who can assist with the following:

- Review of the contract termination requirements;
- Review of the budget by the relevant FBSC team (SFC/RBS/RSBS) to identify the impact of the termination; and
- Recommendation on the viability and documentation requirements for a contract termination.

6.5 Closing your project

When you come to the end of your project, the following requirements need to be fulfilled:

- Submission of final report and financial acquittal (if required) to the funding body through Research Services
- Final ethics report to be completed
- Storage of records in accordance with University policy and State legislation
- Attending to the retention of research data according to your Data Management Plan

Final ethics reports can be completed in REMS. Any queries contact research.ethics@ecu.edu.au.

For advice on storage of research data and records at the completion of your research project and your Data Management Plan contact:

- General queries: researchdatamanagement@ecu.edu.au
- For digital data storage and security questions, please contact ITServices@ecu.edu.au
- For hard copy data storage and data retention questions, please contact IMAS@ecu.edu.au
- For open access and repository questions, please contact Library Research Services on researchonline@ecu.edu.au

Closure of project records in ECURMS and ECU's finance system will be completed by RCFT and FBSC once all final reporting and financial acquittals have been completed.

6.6 Final reporting

Most funding bodies will require a final report. The format, due date, and other requirements will be detailed in the contract or a report template.

The CI will be responsible for preparing and writing the final report (sometimes referred to as the "technical report"), in conjunction with any co-investigators. The report should be forwarded to the RCFT.

RCFT will also coordinate with FBSC to provide any financial acquittals that are required by the funder.

RCFT will submit both technical and financial reports to the funder on behalf of the researcher.

Researchers are not permitted to disclose the amount of any residual funds to funding bodies; only FBSC and RCFT (via certified acquittal) have the authority to do so.

6.6.1 Financial acquittals

Lead CIs will need to work with their relevant FBSC teams (SFC/RBS/RSBS) to ensure all project related expenses have been correctly allocated to the project code in the finance system. RBS, working with the relevant SFC if a school project, will arrange acquittal of the project code. If required, RBS will also arrange any financial acquittals, audits or reports required by the funder. Any financial statement will be forwarded to the funder by RCFT.

6.6.2 Surplus project funds

At the end of the project FBSC will review the project and there may be unspent or surplus funds remaining in the project code. FBSC (RBS) will administer and clear the unspent project funds as per the [Accumulated Operating Surpluses Policy](#).

Researchers **should not disclose** any financial information about project accounts to funders or other third parties other than via FBSC certified acquittals. If a researcher receives any queries in relation to project funds, please refer the queries to RBS (researchbusinesssupport@ecu.edu.au), cc-ing RCFT (research-grants@ecu.edu.au).

7 Acronyms

ADR	Associate Dean, Research
ANZSRC	Australian and New Zealand Standard Research Classification
ARC	Australian Research Council
CI	Chief Investigator
CLRF	Consolidated List Review Form
CRA	Coordinator Research Administration
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
DVCR	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research)
ECR	Early Career Researcher
ECURMS	Edith Cowan University Research Management System
E&I	Engagement and Impact (ARC)
EOI	Expression of Interest
ERA	Excellence in Research in Australia (ARC)
FBSC	Finance and Business Service Centre FBS: Foundation Business Support RBS: Research Business Support RSBS: Research Scholarships Business Support SFT: School Finance Teams
HERDC	Higher Education Research Data Collection
HDR	Higher Degree by Research
ICR	International Compliance Review
ICR-FE	International Compliance Review – Foreign Engagement
MRA	Manager, Research Administration
NHMRC	National Health and Medical Research Council
ODAR	Office of Development and Alumni Relations
PRC	Proportional Review Checklist
RAO	Research Administration Officer
RCFT	Research Contracts and Funding Team
REMS	Research Ethics Management System
RET	Research Ethics Team
SFC	School Finance Coordinators
STREAM	System for Tracking Research Ethics Applications and Monitoring
USC	University Services Charge

8 Codes, National Statements and Guidelines

[Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#)

[National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research](#)

[Values and Ethics - Guidelines for Ethical Conduct in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Research](#)

[Australian Code for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Research Purposes](#)

9 Policies

[Accumulated Operating Surpluses Policy](#)

[Asset and Tracked Non-capital Items](#)

[Code of Conduct](#)

[Conducting Research with Integrity Policy](#)

[Conflicts of Interest Policy and Guidelines](#)

[Fraud and Misconduct Prevention and Management Policy](#)

[Intellectual Property Policy](#)

[Integrated Risk Management Policy](#)

[Joint Arrangements Policy](#)

[University Services Charge](#)

10 Useful contacts

CONTACT	EMAIL
Pre-Award Team	<u>research-preaward@ecu.edu.au</u>
Research Contracts and Funding Team	<u>research-grants@ecu.edu.au</u>
Research Ethics Team	<u>research.ethics@ecu.edu.au</u>
Finance and Business Services Centre	<u>researchbusinesssupport@ecu.edu.au</u> <u>researchscholarshipsbusinesssupport@ecu.edu.au</u>
School Finance Coordinators	<u>https://secure.ecu.edu.au/service-centres/staffonly/FBSC/More-Information-Contacts-and-Useful-Documents/-/Finance-Team-Contacts.pdf</u>