

GUIDELINES ON STRATEGIC RESEARCH FUNDING SUPPORT
AVAILABLE FOR CATEGORY ONE GRANTS
(As of September 2023)

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1. Aim and Purpose

The Strategic Research Fund (SRF) provides the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) (DVCR) with the resources to strategically support ECU's research community in its endeavours to contribute to the research excellence goals of the ECU Strategic Plan. It must be noted, however, that the availability of SRF resources is dependent on the University's financial forecast and cannot be guaranteed at any given time.

National Category 1 grant schemes, specifically those provided by the ARC, NHMRC and MRFF are highly competitive. Success in these schemes reflects research and research teams of the highest quality and is to be celebrated. For this reason, success in the ARC, NHMRC, MRFF grants, and selected Category 1 or prestigious competitive grants, **will** be considered for support by the SRF.

These guidelines apply to awarded grants in the following categories:

- an ARC, NHMRC or MRFF Fellowship; approved prestigious competitive Fellowships; or competitive Fellowship schemes formally requiring matching university contribution in their terms and conditions.
- ARC, NHMRC or MRFF grants providing funding for project costs, such as ARC Discovery Projects, ARC Linkage, NHMRC Ideas Grants and NHMRC Partnership Grants.
- Competitive Strategic Research Initiatives, such as ARC LIEF, ARC Centres of Excellence or NHMRC Centres of Research Excellence.

These guidelines outline the:

- support that may be available through the SRF, as well as support expected to be provided by the Schools and/or ECU Strategic Research Institutes and Centres (ECUSRICs) where the researchers are based; and
- process for seeking SRF support.

2. SRF Support for Fellowships

2.1 ARC, NHMRC and MRFF Fellowships

2.1.1 Newly commencing ARC, NHMRC or MRFF Fellowships^{1, 2}

ARC, NHMRC and MRFF Fellowship schemes, namely ARC DECRA, ARC Future Fellowship, NHMRC Investigator and MRFF Early to Mid-Career Researcher grants, **may** be considered for supplemental support through the SRF. The ARC, NHMRC and MRFF Fellowship Schemes cover the majority, but not all, of the full salary costs for the named Fellow and may also provide some project cost

¹ Applies to researchers awarded ARC or NHMRC Fellowships with a formal commencement date in 2024, or later. Does not apply retrospectively and the ECU conditions in place at the time of commencement prior to 2024 will still apply.

² The Fellowship Scheme must provide for a full-time Fellowship, with a commensurate full-time Fellowship salary. Support for part-time Fellowships, or those shared across institutions, will only be considered for SRF support on a case-by-case basis and only where the Fellowship Scheme Guidelines provide support for a part time Fellowship. The full Fellowship Award (whether on a fulltime or part time basis) must be administered by ECU. If SRF support is provided for a part time Fellowship, it will be on a pro rata basis.

support. This means that there can be a shortfall between the salary support provided by the Fellowship Scheme and the substantive salary of the Fellow. This salary shortfall needs to be borne by the University.

2.1.1.1 Support from the SRF

For eligible successful ARC, NHMRC and MRFF Fellowship applicants, the SRF **will** provide the following support:

- 100% of the difference between the funding body awarded amount for salary and the ECU salary level that the Fellow is appointed at for the duration of the Fellowship. SRF Salary support will be relative to the FTE level of the Fellowship.
- Where a Fellow is promoted by ECU within the period of the Fellowship, the SRF will continue to fund the extra salary gap.
- 100% of any loadings associated with the salary shortfall that is directly related to the appointment as a researcher in the Fellowship scheme (e.g., medical loadings for NHMRC Fellows, but not ECU position loadings).
- One PhD stipend, see **4. SRF supported PhD Stipends conditions**, below, for more details on the conditions of PhD stipend support.

For NHMRC Investigator and MRFF Early to Mid-Career Fellowships, SRF Salary support will only be provided for the CI-A (aka the Fellow) who is seeking funding of the Personnel Support Package (PSP) commensurate with their employment level and closest to CI-A's actual salary.

2.1.1.2 School/ECUSRIC support

Successful ARC, NHMRC and MRFF Fellowship Award applicants will require School and/or ECUSRIC funding support³ for the following items:

- All loadings related to higher duties or other non-Fellowship/non-research related duties at ECU (e.g., teaching, management, etc.).
- All other research and project support costs if not provided for through external funding. School and/or ECUSRIC agreement to support research and projects costs will be required prior to submission of the Fellowship application.
- Research support costs for enrolled HDR students, supported through any SRF-supported or other HDR scholarship⁴.
- Full tuition fee-waiver for any international HDR students receiving an SRF-supported HDR scholarship.

2.1.1.3 Formal approval process for SRF support for ARC and NHMRC Fellowships

Approval of SRF support for ARC, NHMRC and MRFF Fellowships will be provided as a result of an application progressing through ECU's internal review processes **and** the ECU internal review panel

³ The split, if any, is to be negotiated by the ECUSRIC researchers with their School.

⁴ Please note the name of the scholarship provided by ECU may vary.

recommending the Fellowship applicant can develop a full application before submission to the funding body.

School contribution (cash, including any additional HDR scholarships and in-kind) to support the Fellowship application will need to be confirmed by the relevant Associate Dean Research (ADR) via email to research-preaward@ecu.edu.au before final submission. Similarly, any cash or in-kind support provided by an ECUSRIC will need to be confirmed by the relevant Director via email to research-preaward@ecu.edu.au.

ECU applicants who do not engage with ECU's internal review processes for ARC, NHMRC or MRFF Fellowship **will not** have their salary shortfall funded from the SRF. In these cases, the School/ECUSRIC⁵ will need to cover the salary shortfall.

2.1.2 Researchers with ARC, NHMRC or MRFF Fellowship awards transferring employment to ECU

Fellows holding an ARC, NHMRC or MRFF Fellowship award at another university and who move their employment to ECU **may** receive supplemental salary support as outlined above on a *pro rata* basis with the DVCR's prior approval.

ECU must become the administering institution for the Fellowship Award to be considered for SRF support and this will only be available from the approval date of the Fellowship transfer to ECU.

All other eligibility conditions outlined in these guidelines also apply. Any SRF-funded HDR scholarship support is conditional on the Fellow's appointment being sufficient to cover the expected supervisory period. Consideration may be given to providing HDR scholarship support to any HDR student who also transfers to ECU at the same time as the Fellow and will be commensurate with their stage of candidature length.

2.1.3 Previously approved SRF support for ARC and NHMRC Fellowship applications awaiting a funding outcome

Researchers with an application to an ARC or NHMRC Fellowship Scheme under consideration by the funding body, at the time of the revised guidelines, will receive the level of SRF support approved at the time of submission of their Fellowship application.

2.1.4 Renewing/expiring ARC or NHMRC Fellowships

Applying for renewal of an ARC or NHMRC Fellowship can be just as competitive as initially applying for one. It is not uncommon for people who are applying for renewal of Fellowship support to be unsuccessful in their first attempt, but to be successful in a subsequent attempt. Whilst Fellowship holders are expected to apply for subsequent Fellowship funding before their final year (e.g., in

⁵ The split, if any, is to be negotiated by the ECUSRIC researchers with their School.

Year 4 of a 5-year Fellowship) to minimise the risk of having no salary funding, there are instances where there may be a gap between Fellowship support.

The DVCR **may** provide, through the SRF, **up to 12 months** (maximum) of interim salary support including any loading required (for research only- roles), subject to:

- The judgement of the DVCR that the research performance whilst on the current Fellowship has been of the highest world-class standard, relative to discipline and externally benchmarked, and there is a good likelihood of further Fellowship support success.
- Being continually and currently funded from an ARC or NHMRC Fellowship, i.e. the Fellowship must still be paying the Fellow's salary at the time of requesting the interim salary support from the SRF.
- An application for a new Fellowship to an ARC or NHMRC scheme being submitted before, or in, the final year of a current Fellowship, but not being successful.
- The new Fellowship application being fully administered through ECU.
- The applicant engaging with the ECU Category 1 Preassessment Processes through Research Services.
- The Fellow continuing to apply for other competitive external funding (Categories 1-4) and submitting publications to Q1 peer-review journals in their final current Fellowship year.

SRF interim salary support will finish either at the end of 12 months or on the commencement of a new Fellowship being awarded, whichever is earlier. Any SRF support for a new Fellowship will be governed by SRF guidelines relevant to the Fellowship Scheme and subject to the DVCR's approval.

Any interim SRF provided salary support is conditional upon:

- The Fellow providing an email to research-preaward@ecu.edu.au outlining their request for ongoing salary support during the last 12 months (**maximum**) of the Fellowship. After review by Research Services the request will be considered by the DVCR.
- The Fellow also continuing to apply for other competitive external funding and submitting publications to Q1 peer-review journals during these 12 months (**maximum**).

Over this 12-month (**maximum**) interim period, the SRF will **NOT** cover the costs of:

- Higher-duties or other workload related loadings or salary for teaching or non-research duties.⁶
- Research conduct costs – including staffing, consumables, or other project related expenses.
- The extension of any funding beyond 12 months from cessation of the initial expiring Fellowship.

These costs are the responsibility of the School/ECUSRIC⁷ or will need to be covered through additional external funding sources. The Fellowship holder should negotiate these up-front with their School Executive Dean/ADR/ECUSRIC Director.

⁶ For Fellows who also hold leadership roles within a designated ECUSRIC, that has an associated loading applicable to that role must be funded out of the existing ECUSRIC budget.

⁷ The split, if any, is to be negotiated by the ECUSRIC researchers with their School.

2.2 *Prestigious Competitive Fellowships*

2.2.1 Newly commencing Prestigious Competitive Fellowships

Prestigious competitive Fellowships Schemes, listed in **Appendix A**, **will** be considered for supplemental support through the SRF. These prestigious competitive Fellowship Schemes generally cover the majority (typically 70% or more), but not all, of the full salary costs for the salary for the named Fellow, and (depending on the Scheme) some project costs. This means that there can be a shortfall between the salary support provided by the prestigious competitive Fellowship Scheme and the substantive salary of the Fellow. This salary shortfall needs to be borne by the University. The DVCR may provide SRF support for salary shortfall of a Fellow awarded a prestigious competitive Fellowship, as outlined below.

2.2.1 Salary Support from the SRF

For eligible successful prestigious competitive Fellowship applicants, the SRF **will** provide the following:

- 50% of the difference between the funding body awarded amount for salary and the ECU salary level that the Fellow is appointed at for the duration of the Fellowship (relative to the FTE level of the Fellowship).
- 50% of any loadings associated with this top-up that is directly related to the appointment as a researcher in the fellowship scheme (e.g., medical loadings).
- One PhD stipend, see **4. SRF supported PhD Stipends conditions**, below, for more details on the conditions of PhD stipend support.

2.2.2 School/ECUSRIC support⁸

Prestigious competitive Fellowship applicants will require School support for the following:

- 50% of the difference between the funding body awarded amount for salary and the ECU salary level that the Fellow is appointed at for the duration of the Fellowship (relative to the FTE level of the Fellowship).
- 50% of any loadings associated with this top-up where it is directly related to the appointment as a researcher in the fellowship scheme (e.g., medical loadings).
- All loadings related to higher duties or other non-Fellowship/non-research related duties at ECU (e.g., teaching, management, etc.).
- All other research and project support costs are to be covered through external funding or the School. School agreement to support research and projects costs will be required prior to submission of the Fellowship application.

⁸ The split between School/ECUSRIC is to be negotiated by the ECUSRIC researchers directly with their School.

2.2.3 Formal approval process of SRF support for Prestigious Competitive Fellowships

Applicants applying for an approved prestigious competitive Fellowships (listed on **Appendix A**) will be provided with the above SRF support at the time of submitting their application on the condition they follow all relevant ECU internal grant submission processes.

School contributions (cash, including any additional HDR stipends, and in-kind) to support the Fellowship application will need to be confirmed by the relevant Associate Dean Research via email to research-preaward@ecu.edu.au prior to the grant submission.

2.3 Competitive Fellowships Schemes requiring matching University contribution

Some Nationally Competitive Fellowship Schemes guidelines **require** the University to provide matching or set cash and/or in-kind contributions (such as, salary support, research costs or infrastructure, HDR stipends) for the Fellowship application to be eligible for consideration by the funding body. The DVCR **may** approve SRF co-funding (up to 50%) support for salary shortfalls for the named CI-A **only**. Whilst requests may be considered, please note, there is no guarantee that the DVCR will approve SRF co-funding support for salary shortfalls for these types of Fellowships.

If the DVCR does approve SRF co-funding for salary shortfalls, the School/ECUSRIC⁹ will be required to contribute 50% of the total salary shortfall. The School/ECUSRIC will also need to cover all other research conduct costs required to support the Fellowship, such as HDR stipends, equipment, and consumables.

If the DVCR does not approve SRF co-funding support for the salary shortfall the University's contribution will need to be met entirely by the relevant School(s)/ECUSRIC.

All requests for SRF co-funding support for Fellowship applications requiring University matching contribution are required to be submitted as a Business Case, **see Appendix B**. The Business Case should be submitted to the Director, Research Services, who will seek the DVCR's consideration. Business cases must have the support of the School Executive Dean, ECUSRIC Director (if relevant) and ADR; and be submitted to Research Services (research@ecu.edu.au) **at least 15 working days prior to the closing date** of the Fellowship scheme.

2.4 Fellowships - General eligibility and conditions

- Fellowship applications must be fully administered by ECU.
- The Fellowship holder must be appointed full-time at ECU. Part-time Fellowships may be considered where the Fellowship Scheme provides for part-time Fellowships. Any SRF support for part-time Fellowships will be provided on a pro rata basis.
- To be eligible for consideration for SRF funding, ECU researchers applying for an ARC or NHMRC Fellowship are required to engage with the ECU's internal assessments and processes before submission of the grant application. This includes meeting the internal peer-review timelines set

⁹ The split, if any, is to be negotiated by the ECUSRIC researchers with their School.

by Research Services. Failure to meet these timelines may make the Fellowship ineligible for SRF support.

- Due to limited funding available from the SRF, strong preference will be given to research that very clearly and directly aligns with one of ECU's Research Focus Areas or a School Strategic Research Priority area, linked to specified and targeted 6-digit Field of Research codes.
- Funding from the SRF must be requested and agreed to before the application is submitted to the funding body. Funding **will not** be provided to requests for funding received post-submission or post-award. Re-submission of previous SRF approved fellowship applications from previous rounds will require re-approval as per the relevant circumstances outlined above.
- If the Fellowship Award amount or period is for an amount less than that which was applied for, the SRF support **will** be reduced proportionally in the funding amount and/or time period.
- Funding from the SRF will not be available if the Fellowship application is unsuccessful. Nor will it apply to any instances in which a researcher receives a "near-miss" grant, or similar funding, from a different funding body.
- Any salary funding provided from the SRF will only be for the duration of the Fellowship term and is contingent on supported researchers retaining their employment at ECU during this Fellowship.
- Any extensions to SRF funding will only be provided in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the DVCR.

2.5 Expectations of all ECU Researchers

All ECU researchers are expected to:

- Actively engage with, and support, ECU's research culture.
- Have an ECU-linked [ORCID id](#) for their research outputs.
- Actively participate in university-wide and school-based research initiatives including both internal and public research forums.
- Contribute to HDR supervision/co-supervision and maintain current [HDR-supervisor requirements](#).
- Mentor junior researchers.
- Participate in the ECR/MCR Network or Research Professoriate, as appropriate to career stage.
- Actively promote their research through links with the Corporate Relations team, including writing for The Conversation, supporting social media research promotion, etc.
- Have an ECU-linked social media presence (further information is available [here](#)).
- Lodge ECU publications with [Research Online](#) and Research Activity System ([RAS](#)) within the university's timelines.
- Ensure they have undertaken ECU's required [Research Integrity Professional Learning](#) training and practice high standards of research integrity for themselves and with all their team members.
- Obtain research [ethics](#) and [data management plan](#) approvals, as appropriate for the research project.

2.6 Additional Expectations of ECU Supported Fellowship holders

In addition to the above, SRF-supported Fellows are expected to:

- Make a significant and visible contribution to ECU's research culture, through their School/ECUSRIC.
- Contribute, where appropriate, to research leadership opportunities to further grow ECU's research reputation, standing and culture.
- Actively participate in ECU's internal Category 1 Preassessment processes by reviewing grant submissions and providing feedback and mentorship to applicants, as appropriate.
- Provide a profile of themselves and their research for ECU's public promotion purposes. This may be edited by the Corporate Relations team and distributed widely by the University.

3. SRF Support for ARC, NHMRC and MRFF Grants funding projects

3.1 ARC, NHMRC and MRFF Project Grants administered by ECU

3.1.1 ARC Discovery Projects and ARC Linkage Projects

The DVCR will consider on a case-by-case basis providing an SRF support package for all successful ARC Discovery and Linkage Project grants which will include one SRF funded PhD stipend, provided the project is of 3+ years duration. Post successful award, the DVCR may also approve and provide cash support up to one quarter of the funding awarded to or remaining at ECU, whichever is the lower amount. See **4. SRF supported PhD Stipends conditions**, below, for more details on the conditions of PhD stipend support.

As the ARC requires detailed explanation of non-ARC contributions in their applications, researchers are encouraged to include one ECU funded PhD Stipend in their budget.

3.1.2 NHMRC Ideas and Partnership grants and MRFF funded projects

The DVCR will consider on a case-by-case basis providing an SRF support package for all successful NHMRC Ideas grants, NHMRC Partnership grants and MRFF funded project, which will include one SRF funded PhD stipend, provided the project is of 3+ years duration. Post successful award, the DVCR may also approve and provide cash support up to one quarter of the funding awarded to or remaining at ECU, whichever is the lower amount. See **4. SRF supported PhD Stipends conditions**, below, for more details on the conditions of PhD stipend support.

3.1.3 Determination of SRF support for ARC, NHMRC and MRFF Project Grants administered by ECU

Research Services will assess the final amounts and conditions of all awarded ARC, NHMRC and MRFF project grants, and the DVCR will determine the quantum of SRF cash support, if any, to be provided to the successful applicants. The conditions for the assessment will include:

- ECU has a Chief Investigator (CI) on the project. Associate Investigators (AIs) will not be provided with SRF support.
- Amount of funding awarded and to be retained at ECU has an ROI of 3:1¹⁰

¹⁰ ROI = Return on investment. The amount of grant funding awarded to (and remains at ECU) is 3x the cash contribution ECU contributes to the grant.

3.2 ARC, NHMRC and MRFF Grants NOT administered by ECU

The DVCR will consider on a case-by-case basis providing an SRF support package of up to one quarter of the funding received by ECU. Research Services will assess all ARC, NHMRC and MRFF project grants, and in consultation with the DVCR, determine the quantum of SRF cash support, if any, to be provided to the successful applicants. The conditions for the assessment will include:

- ECU has a Chief Investigator (CI) on the project. Associate Investigators (AIs) will not be provided with SRF support.
- Amount of funding awarded and to be retained at ECU has an ROI of 3:1¹¹

4. SRF supported PhD Stipends conditions

Where the above guidelines include the provision of an SRF funded PhD Stipend, the following conditions also apply:

- ECU must be the Administering Institution. Grants administered by other institutions will be considered only under exceptional circumstances and where there is significant financial return to ECU, which meets the minimum ROI.
- The funding for the project must be 3+ years in duration.
- Cash awarded to and retained by, or received by ECU has a ROI of at least 3:1¹².
- If the ROI is less than 3:1, the Director, Research Services and Dean, Graduate Research, will determine if a scholarship is to be awarded¹³.
- An ECU researcher, who is a named investigator on the grant, must be the Principal Supervisor of the HDR candidate awarded the scholarship and is required to meet ECU guidelines as a compliant HDR Principal Supervisor. The research team must negotiate, agree and nominate who will be the Principal Supervisor before the stipend will be awarded.
- The scholarship must be taken up by a candidate **within the first 6 months** of the project opening¹⁴ or it may be forfeited.
- The scholarship is awarded to a program of research. Multiple successful grants that fund the program of research will not be awarded multiple scholarships.

Before a scholarship is awarded, other important factors will also be considered. This includes current supervisory load, any research integrity matters linked to the proposed Supervisor, history of timely HDR completions, direct match of expertise/skillset to the HDR research area; the number

¹¹ ROI = Return on investment. The amount of grant funding awarded to (and remains at ECU) is 3x the cash contribution ECU contributes to the grant

¹² In 2023 a 3.5 year PhD scholarship is valued at \$115,500, therefore it is expected that the income to ECU would be at least \$346,500. Scholarship stipends change annually so the stipend amount for the year of submission should be used for calculation purposes.

¹³ There may be times when the amount of funding awarded is less than what was requested, sometimes significantly so. In those cases, the Director, Research Services and Dean Graduate Research, will determine if a scholarship is to be awarded.

¹⁴ The purpose of this starting timeframe is to endeavour to have the candidate's completion date align as closely as possible with the duration of the grant. Exceptions may be made by only under exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Director, Research Services and Dean Graduate Research.

of other SRF-funded HDR scholarships already awarded to the proposed Supervisor (currently capped at three per Supervisor).

On those occasions when a research project is funded to significant levels, more than one PhD scholarship may be awarded. This will be determined by the Director, Research Services and Dean, Graduate Research.

These scholarships can be used to support a Masters by Research Degree candidate instead of a Doctoral candidate (but only one scholarship per grant).

Occasionally ECU researchers may be part of a national collaborative project which is led by another organisation, for example, an **ARC Centre of Excellence** or **NHMRC Centre of Research Excellence**. In these instances, consideration **may** be given to providing a scholarship, depending on the quantum of funding coming to ECU¹⁵.

Successful grants in prestigious Category 1 schemes other than the ARC, NHMRC and MRFF schemes listed above may also be awarded a PhD scholarship if they meet the above criteria but will be required to submit a standard SRF business case prior to submitting their application.

With this program of recognising researcher excellence in place, researchers will no longer be required to submit a business case to the SRF for approval to include a PhD scholarship in their ARC, NHMRC or MRFF application. If a grant is successful, Research Services will review it to ensure the above conditions are met before a PhD scholarship is awarded to the research team.

It should be noted that if scholarships are awarded to international students¹⁶, tuition fee sponsorship, visa costs and health insurance will be the responsibility of the relevant School.

5. SRF Support for Competitive Strategic Initiatives

5.1 ARC LINKAGE INFRASTRUCTURE, EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES (LIEF)

ARC LIEF seeks to support research and research training through the acquisition of research equipment and infrastructure and access to national and international research facilities. Funding can be sought for:

- infrastructure, equipment, and facility purchases, construction, and installation
- salaries directly associated with creating and installing infrastructure, equipment or facilities.
- leasing of infrastructure, equipment, or facilities
- consortium membership costs, in the case of Australia's participation in the use of significant international-scale or national research facilities
- specialised computing facilities and software compilations, catalogues, clearing houses or bibliographies.

¹⁵ Minimum ROI 3:1.

¹⁶ Pursuant to any conditions or restrictions by the funding agency.

ARC LIEF applications require universities and industry partners to collectively contribute a minimum of 25% of the total direct cost of the research infrastructure sought to be funded. It is common practice for the university and industry partner cash contribution to be shared across the collaborators based on the anticipated use by each collaborator.

ECU cash support for ARC LIEF applications will be shared 50:50 across the SRF and all relevant schools/ECUSRICs¹⁷. SRF co-funding will only be approved when there is a strong benefit ideally to at least two Schools

To ensure WA universities strategically benefit from the ARC LIEF scheme the WA-based universities run a separate LIEF business case EOI process and collective support approval process. Details of the requirements for seeking support for LIEF applications are released approximately 6 months before LIEF Scheme is anticipated to close. Please contact research-preaward@ecu.edu.au if you are interested in applying for or being involved in a LIEF application, either with a WA or interstate university.

5.2 Category 1 Competitive Strategic Grants Schemes

The ARC, NHRMC and MRFF fund several schemes, such as the Centres of Excellence and Centres of Research Excellence, that involve significance national collaboration to lead a broad research program and require all collaborators to contribute cash and in-kind support to the research program.

The DVCR **may** provide SRF support for these types of initiatives on a case-by-case basis. If approved, ECU's cash support for the initiative will be shared 50:50 from the SRF and all relevant schools. The research income received by ECU will need to be a minimum of three times the cash support provided by ECU (i.e. ROI of 3:1).

Requests for SRF support for Category 1 Competitive Strategic Initiatives can sought by submitting a business case to the Director, Research Services for review and consideration by the DVCR. Business cases should be submitted a **minimum of 15 days** prior to the grant closing date and approved prior to the submission of the grant. The business case template can be found at **Appendix B**.

5.3 Other Nationally Competitive Strategic Initiatives

Researchers may wish to apply for research funding to develop other strategic initiatives, such as Cooperative Research Centres, that require all collaborators to provide extensive cash and in-kind contributions.

The DVCR **may** provide SRF support for these types of initiatives on a case-by-case basis. ECU's cash support for the initiative will be shared 50:50 SRF and all relevant schools. The DVCR will require

¹⁷ The split, if any, is to be negotiated by the ECUSRIC researchers with their School.

that the research income received by ECU will be minimum of four times the cash support provided by ECU (i.e. ROI of 4:1).

Requests for SRF support for Category 1 Competitive Strategic Initiatives can sought by submitting a business case to the Director, Research Services for review and consideration by the DVCR. Business cases should be submitted a **minimum of 15 days** prior to the grant closing date and approved prior to the submission of the grant. The business case template can be found at **Appendix B**.

6. SRF will NOT fund

The SRF will not provide funding for any of the following:

- Fellowships not administered at ECU
- Project conduct or management costs, including research project staff costs
- Equipment for individual research projects
- Administrative assistance
- Catering costs for focus groups, community engagement, workshops, or seminars.
- Conference registration or attendance
- Publication related costs
- Teaching related activities, including teaching buy-out or marking
- Membership of organisations or subscriptions
- Travel related or entertainment related expenses
- Near-miss grant top-ups
- HDR stipends when the initial project duration is less than the standard candidature period (3+ years).

7. Enquiries

If you have any queries about the SRF Guidelines please contact Research Administration via research-preaward@ecu.edu.au and Ms Sharon York, Manager Research Administration s.york@ecu.edu.au.

Appendix A: Prestigious Competitive Fellowships

Strategic Research Fund – Approved Prestigious Competitive Fellowship Schemes	
Funding Body	Funding Scheme
Prestigious Nationally Competitive	
Dementia Australia Research Foundation	Postdoctoral Fellowships: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Race Against Dementia Post Doc Fellowship Dementia Australia Research Foundation Post Doc Fellowship
National Heart Foundation of Australia	Future Leader Fellowships
WA based Category 1 –Competitive	
Cancer Council of WA Inc	Research Fellowships where award is used entirely for salary
Forrest Research Foundation	Forrest Research Fellowships
Forrest Research Foundation	Forrest Research Early Career Creative and Performance Leadership Fellowship

Please note:

- This list is subject to ongoing review.
- Addition of Fellowship Schemes to this list will only be made with the DVCR’s prior approval.
- SRF support for Internationally Competitive Fellowships will be considered by the DVCR on a case-by-case basis.

Appendix B: Business Case Template

BUSINESS CASE: STRATEGIC RESEARCH FUNDING REQUEST

This Business Case must be used to request Strategic Research Funding (SRF) funding support for Competitive Strategy Initiatives.

*Email to the completed business case to Research Services at research@ecu.edu.au a **minimum of 15 working days prior to the closing date** of the funding scheme for consideration by the DVCR.*

For further detail please refer to the “Guidelines on Strategic Research Funding Support available for Category One Grants”.

PROJECT SUMMARY

Project Title:																
Grant Scheme:																
Grant closing date:																
Administering Organisation:																
Lead CI:																
ECU School/Institute/ Centre of the Lead CI:																
Other ECU Researchers:																
Participant/Collaborator Summary:	<p>Copy and paste Investigator and Partner details from application or complete below table:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Name</th> <th>Role</th> <th>Organisation</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Name	Role	Organisation												
Name	Role	Organisation														
Summary of Proposal/Abstract:																

Will the research involve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities or participants?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <i>If YES, you must consult with the relevant researchers at Kurongkurl Katitjin prior to submission of Fellowship application.</i> Have you consulted with relevant researchers at Kurongkurl Katitjin; or do you or one of your research team identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <i>Refer to ECU's Research Integrity resources on Working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples</i>
Which Research Theme(s) does the proposal relate to?	<input type="checkbox"/> Health <input type="checkbox"/> Natural and Built Environment <input type="checkbox"/> Securing Digital Futures <input type="checkbox"/> Society and Culture
Field of Research Codes (2020) – <i>list up to 3 at the 6 digit level</i>	
Provide a statement as to how the planned research relates to the identified research strengths of ECU and School/ECUSRIC	
Outline what the exceptional circumstances are surrounding the Category 1 Project Grant application which support this request for SRF co-funding	

FUNDING REQUEST

Total grant funding being requested:	\$ over X years.
Amount of grant funding coming to ECU:	\$ over X years.
Collaborators' cash contribution and anticipated grant funding distribution per year of the grant:	<i>e.g. University of Babel Fish; will received \$42,000 per year for Research Assistant and be contributing \$10,000 cash towards the project per year</i>
Purpose of request for SRF support:	<i>e.g.: SRF funding will co-fund salary shortfall for a Postdoc, which will be co-funded from the NHMRC grant with PSP 4 salary.</i>

In the table below indicate the funding being sought to be co-funded from grant funding, School and SRF, by year.

Year	Item	Total Annual Cost of Item	Grant Funding Requested for Item	School contribution	SRF Co-funding request
TOTAL					

Grant Budget

Either copy and paste the budget from the application or complete the below table:

Total Grant Funding Requested = \$ over years				
Item	Cost	Funding Requested	Cash contribution*	In-Kind Contribution Value*

* If cash or in-kind contribution is being contributed by a collaborator indicate the organisation name in parenthesis ().

HDR COMPLETIONS

What plans, if any, are there for HDR completions at ECU linked to this grant funding?

HDR SUPERVISION DETAILS - if HDR Scholarship is to be SRF co-funded.

NOTE: Confirmation of the supervisory teams' eligibility (at the time of award of the Fellowship) will be required prior to SRF support being provided for HDR Scholarships.

Supervisor 1

Title:	Name:
ORCID ID (must be linked to ECU if an ECU staff member):	
School/Research Institute or Centre:	
Email:	
Phone Number:	
Principal supervisor <input type="checkbox"/>	Co-supervisor <input type="checkbox"/>
PhD completions to date:	

Supervisor 2

Title:	Name:
ORCID ID (must be linked to ECU if an ECU staff member):	
School/Research Institute or Centre/Industry Partner:	
Email:	
Phone Number:	
Principal supervisor <input type="checkbox"/>	Co-supervisor <input type="checkbox"/>
PhD completions to date:	

RETURN ON INVESTMENT

NOTE: minimum ROI of 3:1 for Category 1 funding and 4:1 for all other funding sources. i.e. for each ECU \$ co-funding contributed (SRF + School) \$4 in research income is to be received by ECU.

Total Grant Funding to be received by ECU (A)	Total ECU Cash Contribution (B)	Return on Investment (A:B)
\$	\$	

SIGNATURES

ECU Researcher: Name: Date:
Associate Dean Research: Name: Date:

Complete if Fellow applicant is in an ECUSRIC.

Name of ECUSRIC:

Director:

Name:

Date:

Executive Dean:

Name:

Date:

Director, Research Services, or nominee, **endorses / does not endorse** this request for SRF Co-funding for the following reasons:

.....

Name: Prof Margaret Jones
Director, Research Services

Date:

DVCR **approves / does not approve** this request for SRF Co-funding for the following reasons:

.....

Name: Prof Caroline Finch
Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research

Date: