

The UNIVERSITY of NEWCASTLE

UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE EQUITY RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS

Information for Applicants – 2009 round

Applications close 5pm Monday 14 July 2008

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EQUITY RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS

Information for Applicants – 2009 round

CLOSING DATE is 5.00 pm MONDAY 14 JULY 2008

Applications must be delivered to the Research Office by 5pm.

PART A - GENERAL INFORMATION

A1 GENERAL

Applicants for University of Newcastle Equity Research Fellowships (ERF) are urged to read these guidelines carefully before applying. Care should be taken in the preparation of the application, ensuring that all questions are fully answered and that the application is professionally presented.

The Equity Research Fellowship Assessment Committee (ERFAC) consists of members from diverse disciplines, so it is critical that the application be clearly written, using a minimum of jargon so that it can be understood and judged by all members of the Panel. Technical terms should be defined within the application if they are not in common usage. However, it is also important that the application contains sufficient technical detail to permit an informed evaluation of the research in terms of its objectives and feasibility.

Research projects conducted within the University or in the name of the University must comply with the NHMRC/AVCC Guidelines for Responsible Practice in Research and must have the relevant human/animal/safety approvals.

A2 INTRODUCTION

A2.1 Rationale

The Vice-Chancellor, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) have considered a number of integrated strategies to enhance equity support for women and Indigenous academic staff. This is in response to the findings of a working group of the Research Committee in 2003. The group reviewed University data which clearly demonstrated that women and Indigenous academic staff are under-represented in research and encounter more barriers to accessing research development opportunities. University profiling data also reflects under-representation of women in senior academic positions, a fact identified in the *Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA) Report of the Audit of the University of Newcastle, January 2003*.

The introduction of the Equity Research Fellowship scheme is one of the strategies being implemented and is intended to provide eligible staff with time and resources to progress their research or Research Higher Degree (RHD).

From 2004, up to 5 Equity Research Fellowships of 6 months duration were available to Level A, B or C women and Indigenous staff each year, until 2007. The Fellowship scheme was reviewed in 2008 by the Research Grants Sub-Committee, which agreed to continue this initiative in 2009.

The Fellowships will be funded centrally and provide for a maximum of \$25,000 to allow for “time relief” from teaching, administrative and other non-research duties. An additional Equity Research Grant of up to \$10,000 will also be available to cover research expenses, with the School required to provide a minimum 25% of this funding component.

A2.2 Assessment Criteria

Applicants for Equity Research Fellowships will be assessed relative to the opportunities and barriers to research they have experienced.

Preference will be given to applicants who can demonstrate how progress towards submitting the RHD or progressing research track record has been substantially affected by one or more of the following:

- Demanding carer responsibilities
- Sustained insecure employment in the tertiary sector
- Personal circumstances (eg extended illness, substantial Indigenous community/cultural responsibilities).

Barriers due to confidential personal circumstances should not be outlined within the application. Where they are confidential, please contact Ms Belinda Munn in the Equity and Diversity Unit prior to submitting your application. If requested by the committee, Ms Munn can report to the committee on the circumstances.

Please note that teaching workload alone is not an acceptable criterion for an Equity Research Fellowship.

A2.3 Selection Committee

The Equity Research Fellowship Assessment Committee consists of the following members:

- Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) (Chair);
- Manager, Equity and Diversity;
- at least one nominee from Assistant Deans (Research);
- one nominee from Head of School, Wollotuka;
- at least one senior female academic representative.

A3 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To be eligible for an Equity Research Fellowship the Applicant must be a **female or Australian Indigenous Academic (Level A, B or C)** who has been employed in an Academic position at the University of Newcastle for a **minimum of 2 years** and, at the time of Application deadline, has one of the following:

- a full-time or part-time (at least 50% FTE) on-going appointment;
- a full-time or part-time (at least 50% FTE) fixed term appointment for an additional period of at least two years;

Fellowships should be completed within the duration of the applicant's appointment with the University.

Those who meet the above criteria, but are employed full-time on a research grant or other Fellowship are not eligible for an Equity Research Fellowship.

Academic staff employed by the UoN Singapore Pte Ltd, holding a conjoint appointment at the University of Newcastle are also eligible to apply for an Equity Research Fellowship.

Conjoint staff members, not employed by UoN Singapore Pte Ltd, are not eligible to apply for an Equity Research Fellowship.

Holders of an Equity Fellowship are not precluded from applying for any other internal grant, for example Research Grants and Infrastructure Sub-Committee Early Career Researcher.

A4 CONDITIONS

A4.1 Funding

The maximum level of funding of an Equity Research Fellowship will be up to \$25,000 which is transferred to the applicant's School to provide for relief from non-research activities (eg teaching, administrative duties) for 6 months (or longer if part-time pro rata).

In addition, an Equity Research Grant of up to \$10,000 is available to the applicant to cover research expenses.

A4.2 Duration of the Award

Equity Research Fellowships are tenable for a period of 6 months (or longer for part-time applicants on a pro rata basis), and are not renewable.

A4.3 Valid Application Period

Successful applicants are to nominate, with the agreement of the School, the proposed start date of the Fellowship. Should Fellowship recipients be unable to begin by the proposed date, they may re-negotiate a new start date with the School and forward a letter requesting a change to the Research Office.

A4.4 Maximum Number of Fellowships

A researcher may be awarded a maximum of one Equity Research Fellowship during their employment at the University of Newcastle.

A4.5 Role of the School/Faculty

Equity Research Fellowships require support from the applicant's School/Faculty by arranging full relief from teaching, administrative and other non-research duties for the period of the award (6 months, or longer if part-time pro rata).

The School will be required to account for the expenditure of the \$25,000 provided.

The School is required to provide 25% of the Research Equity Grant funding (up to \$10,000).

The School/Faculty is also responsible to provide appropriate facilities for Fellowship recipients to conduct their research and to fund any running/maintenance costs associated with equipment purchased through the Equity Research Grant.

A5 APPLICATION PROCEDURE

A5.1 Application Process for 2009 Fellowships

Applicants should complete the Equity Research Fellowship Application Form and attach the documentation requested on that form. Application forms are available on the Research web site at <http://www.newcastle.edu.au/research/grants/equity-research-fellowships.html> .

Each application should contain all the information necessary to assess the project without the need for further written or oral explanation or reference to further documentation. The application should be completed with reference to "**Part B - Instructions to Applicants**".

Applicants must work with a mentor/supervisor in the planning and preparation of the research project component prior to seeking Head of School approval.

The application must be signed by the applicant, mentor/supervisor and the Head of School (and PVC if Faculty resources are committed) prior to submission to the Research Office.

Separate application must be made for research projects, if appropriate, for **Ethics or Safety approval** from the relevant Committee. Approval must be obtained before the project commences.

The **original plus 7 copies** of the application are to be submitted to the Research Office.

A5.2 2009 Application Dates

Application due at Research Office	Notification of Results by
5pm Monday 14 July 2008	September 2008

A5.3 Outcomes and Access to Funds Awarded

Applications will be considered by ERFAC and recommendations put forward to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) (DVC (Research)). The outcome of the application will be made known to the applicant as soon as possible following the decision by the DVC (Research).

Once approved, the applicant will be formally advised in writing of the outcome. Up to \$25,000 will then be made available to the applicant's School to be used for relief of teaching, administrative and other non-research duties.

If there are no outstanding ethics/safety clearances the Applicant will be advised of the Cost Collector, from which up to \$10,000 of an Equity Research Grant can be accessed. Researchers should consult their Faculty Financial Service Manager or Head of School for advice on procedures for ordering materials, equipment, etc.

A5.4 Appeals

An appeals mechanism exists for unsuccessful applicants. Applicants wishing to appeal against a decision may do so by lodging a written appeal with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) within 14 days of the advice of the outcome of the application. Appeals will only be considered on the basis that proper procedures have not been followed.

A5.5 Change of Circumstances

Fellowships are awarded based on the information provided in the application. If the Fellowship recipient's circumstances change so that the program stated in the application needs to be varied a request providing full details must be submitted to ERFAC for consideration. ERFAC does not guarantee that funding will be available for the revised program, and, in such a case, the Fellowship recipient would forfeit the original Fellowship.

A6 REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

A **Final Report** is an important component of the Fellowship procedure. It allows ERFAC to judge whether the Equity Research Fellowship and Equity Research Grant have been used effectively and whether there were tangible outcomes.

Final Reports must be lodged with the Research Office **within 3 months of completion** of the Fellowship.

Final Reports should be submitted on the form available from the Research Office website.

Equity Research Fellowships and Equity Research Grants not spent by the completion date will normally revert to the funding sources so that unspent balances can be re-allocated.

A7 OTHER UNIVERSITY RESEARCH GRANT SCHEMES

The Research Office website contains information regarding other University Research Grants, including Early Career Researcher Grants, New Staff Grants, Collaborative Research Grants, Conference Travel Grants and University Strategic Research Grants.

The website address is: <http://www.newcastle.edu.au/research/grants/int/university-grants.html>.

PART B - INSTRUCTIONS TO APPLICANTS

The following information is provided to assist applicants to complete the application as fully as possible. Where a question is self-explanatory, no additional comment has been made here.

B1 Question 1: Applicant Information

Where an applicant is enrolled in a Research Higher Degree (RHD) a brief comment from the candidate's supervisor must be attached to the application and should address progress made in the RHD program and the relevance of this Fellowship application.

B2 Question 5: Reasons for Request of Equity Research Fellowship

Address the Assessment Criteria in no more than 3 x A4 pages, minimum font size 11.

B3 Question 6: Budgets

B3.1.1 Budget for Teaching/Administrative Relief

Indicate how the School will utilise the funding to provide relief from teaching, administrative and other non-research duties.

You may need to consult your Head of School/Faculty Financial Service Manager/Human Resources Manager to complete this budget.

Show all budget items that need to be funded for this project and provide the following information in each column:

- Column 1 A list of the items for which you are seeking funding (eg teaching relief)
- Column 2 Amounts of funding requested
- Column 3 Additional support to be provided by the School/Faculty (optional)

Do not include GST in your costs. All personnel costs should include the salary-related on-costs. Further information on on-costs and salary rates can be obtained from the following web site: <http://www.newcastle.edu.au/services/payroll/index.html>

While these Fellowships are mainly awarded as one-line Fellowships ERFAC expects that expenditure would be directed to the stated project objectives and limited to those items identified in the budget of the application.

B3.1.2 Budget Justification

Explain how amounts were derived and provide justification for each item in the budget above. Include details of School/Faculty support if applicable.

B3.2.1 Budget for Equity Research Grant (up to \$10,000)

Show all budget items that need to be funded and provide the following information in each column:

- Column 1 List the items for which you are seeking funding
- Column 2 Amounts of funding sought

Do not include GST in your costs. All personnel costs should include the salary-related on-costs. Further information on the on-costs and salary rates can be obtained from the following web site: <http://www.newcastle.edu.au/services/payroll/index.html>

While these grants are mainly awarded as one-line grants ERFAC expects that expenditure would be directed to the stated project objectives and limited to those items identified in the budget of the application. Any subsequent requests for changes in the use of the grant budget should be directed to the Research Office.

The following sections give an indication of appropriate budget items.

B3.2.1.1 Personnel

If the applicant believes that Research Assistant/s are essential for the project to proceed then a clear argument must be presented as part of the budget justification.

B3.2.1.2 Equipment

Equipment should include hardware and software items individually costing \$1,000 or more.

ERFAC does not accept responsibility for the prime provision of general equipment and facilities: this is the responsibility of PVC and Heads of School, utilising Faculty funding, applications for infrastructure funds and support from external sources.

ERFAC will consider requests for the purchase of **specialised** equipment essential for the initiation or development of a research project if there is strong evidence that the normal equipment allocation procedure cannot give it a satisfactory priority and so will lead to significant loss of research momentum. ERFAC will also consider requests for the replacement of equipment, where the circumstances meet the above criteria. Faculties/Schools are encouraged to provide a contribution to projects where there is a substantial equipment request.

ERFAC accepts no obligation to provide PCs, Macs or notebooks to new staff members, nor to provide upgrades of IT equipment.

Faculties/Schools are responsible for the ongoing running and maintenance costs of equipment funded by the Equity Research Grant.

Each request for equipment of any sort will be considered on the merit of the research project for which the equipment is required.

B3.2.1.3 Maintenance

This category includes other items essential to the project e.g. consumables (over and above normal School provisions such as stationery, telephone, postage) and equipment items costing less than \$1,000. It would normally be expected that library materials would be catalogued as part of the University Library collection. A request for such materials must be strongly justified.

Prior to seeking funding for such items as tape recorders and transcribers, applicants are requested to look into equipment currently held by the School/Faculty. A request for such items is capped. After consulting with their School/Faculty, applicants will need to contact the Research Office for costing limits.

B3.2.1.4 Research and Fieldwork Expenses

ERFAC will consider applications to enable research or fieldwork at locations away from the University - e.g. library work at major collections of material not available from The University of Newcastle; the use of major research equipment away from Newcastle/Central Coast when such equipment is not available locally; or field excursions to gather data pertinent to a given project. Support may be given for travel within Australia or overseas, but in the latter case it must be clearly demonstrated that the work cannot be done within Australia. The Equity Research Grant will be as a grant-in-aid of expenses.

ERFAC will support requests from applicants whom are employed at the University of Newcastle, but are currently enrolled in a non University of Newcastle study program for travel expenses to visit their supervisors.

B3.2.1.5 Items which will not be funded by an Equity Research Grant

ERFAC *will not* fund the following as part of an Equity Research Grant (alternative funding sources are given in brackets):

- Reference material to be held in places other than the University of Newcastle Library, except by special arrangement with the Library.
- Ongoing subscriptions to learned journals, trade journals, popular magazines, computing journals or similar material.
- Publication charges or similar support for outcomes - eg staging of concerts; framing of artworks; reprints from journals.
- Commissioned works.
- Ongoing running and maintenance costs of equipment (School/Faculty).
- IT equipment, including the purchase/lease of PC's, Macs and Notebooks (School/Faculty).

B3.2.1.6 Budget Justification (Equity Research Grant)

The Budget Justification must explain why each item listed is required for the project. Include details of School/Faculty support if applicable.

ERFAC appreciates that in respect of some costs, it is only possible to give approximate figures. It expects, however, that a reasonable justification of these figures can be given in terms of past experience and/or standard rates.

B4 Question 10: Project Description

The Project Description must, briefly, clearly and comprehensively, explain the aims and plan of this project. This section of the application should be completed with the consultation of your mentor/supervisor. The mentor/supervisor is required to sign-off on the application prior to submission (see Question 15 of the application form).

The following sections give an indication of appropriate information to be included under each heading.

B4.1.1 Aims and Background

- Describe the specific aims of the project, including a clear statement of the hypothesis to be tested.
- Describe the background to the project.
- Include information about recent progress in the field of the research and the relationship of this proposal to work in the field generally.
- Refer only to refereed papers that are widely available.

B4.1.2 Research Plan

- Describe how this project fits in with your overall long-term program of research.

B4.1.3 Approach and Methodology

- Outline the conceptual framework, design and methods, and demonstrate that these are adequately developed, well integrated and appropriate to the aims of the project.

B4.1.4 Timetable

- Provide a timetable for the project including the application for any required Animal/Human Ethics and/or Safety Clearances, data collection and analysis, etc.

B4.1.5 Expected Outcomes

- Outline your plans for communicating the research results eg journal publications and conference presentations.
- Outline your plans for applying for future research funding (internal and external) to continue the research.
- Outline any plans for supporting future Research Higher Degree students with your research.

B4.1.6 References

- Include a list of all references cited in Question 10.

***Research Office
3 June 2008***