Macquarie University New Staff Scheme
and
Macquarie University Restart Grant Scheme for Academic Staff Returning from Parental Leave

Funding Rules 2014

Submission: Only electronic copies will be accepted. You must complete the application form and submit it via email to grants@mq.edu.au (and copy to the applicant’s Faculty Research Manager). Hard copies will not be accepted.

Certification: You must also complete a MQ coversheet, which is available at http://www.research.mq.edu.au/for/researchers/applying_for_grants/research_grant_application_cover_sheet

Research Office Contact:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Scheme Contact</th>
<th>Kyle Ratinac</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phone</td>
<td>9850 4462</td>
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<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td><a href="mailto:kyle.ratinac@mq.edu.au">kyle.ratinac@mq.edu.au</a></td>
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Key Dates:

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<tr>
<th>Opening Date</th>
<th>Wednesday 26 March 2014</th>
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<tr>
<td>Eligibility-ruling Deadline</td>
<td>Wednesday 2 April 2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>Closing Date</td>
<td>Wednesday 7 May 2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outcome Notification</td>
<td>Friday 6 June 2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project Management Workshop</td>
<td>Friday 4 July 2014</td>
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Check with your Faculty Research Manager for your faculty’s internal closing date (which will be earlier than the above deadline)
Executive Summary

The New Staff Scheme provides up to $20,000 in research project costs for Level A or Level B academic staff appointed to “teaching and research” positions at Macquarie on or after 1 January 2012. Projects costs can include requests for personnel, teaching relief, equipment, maintenance and/or project-specific travel; however, conference travel is not an allowed expenditure item.

To accept funding under this scheme, recipients of a New Staff Grant must agree to:

- The appointment of a mentor to oversee the project and project reporting;
- Attend a one-day Project Management Workshop;
- Submit a one-page Mid-Term Report at the six-month mark of the project;
- Submit a Final Report two months after the completion of the project; and
- Submit a ‘Follow-Up’ Report approximately one year after the completion of the project.

Please see Section 11 of these Funding Rules for full information about conditions.

Restart Grant Scheme for Academics Returning from Parental Leave provides up to $20,000 in research project costs to Macquarie academics (appointed at any level) after parental leave of at least six months. Applications must be made within twelve months of the staff member’s return to normal duties. Projects costs can include requests for personnel, teaching relief, equipment, maintenance and/or project-specific travel; however, conference travel is not an allowed expenditure item.

To accept funding under this scheme, recipients of a Restart (Returning from Parental Leave) Grant must agree to:

- Submit a Final Report two months after the completion of the project; and
- Submit a ‘Follow-Up’ Report approximately one year after the completion of the project.
1. Purpose of Schemes

1.1 New Staff Scheme
The primary purpose of the MQNS scheme is to assist academic staff recently appointed at Level A or B to establish their research profile at Macquarie and increase their competitiveness in applying for external funding. Applications are evaluated on academic merit and individual need. The scheme is only open to academic staff appointed to “teaching and research” positions. See Section 3 for further details.

1.2 Restart Grants for Staff Returning from Parental Leave
Applications are also invited from academic staff resuming normal duties after an absence of six months or greater. An applicant returning from parental leave may apply only once for any particular period of parental leave, and must apply within twelve months of their return to normal duties.

2. Funding

2.1 For either scheme, the maximum amount that may be applied for is $20,000. The funding allocation period is 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015.

2.2 Applicants for a New Staff Grant may apply prior to their arrival at the University, provided the University’s Human Resources Office has confirmed their appointment (evidence must accompany the application).

2.3 Staff returning from parental leave may submit an application for a Restart Grant during the leave period, for funding to commence upon return to normal duties.

3. Eligibility

3.1 New Staff Grant Scheme

3.1.1 To be eligible for a New Staff Grant, applicants must be new academic staff appointed to “teaching and research” positions at Level A or B only, and must hold a continuing or fixed-term appointment at the time of application and for the duration of the grant. Fixed-term appointments must be for at least two years. Applicants must have commenced their appointment at Macquarie on or after 1 January 2012. The scheme is not open to academic staff appointed to “research” (or “research-only”) positions.

3.1.2 Staff enrolled in a PhD are not eligible to apply for funding under the MQNS Scheme. Level A or B academic staff who commenced a research degree within their first two years of employment at Macquarie University may apply for an MQNS up to two years after having been awarded their degree. Under these circumstances, applicants must have been awarded their degree on or after 1 January 2012 to apply.

3.1.3 MQNS funds may not be used to support research towards a higher degree. Staff enrolled for a PhD should apply instead to the University’s Postgraduate Research Fund Scheme, administered by the Higher Degree Research Office (see http://www.hdr.mq.edu.au/information_for/current_candidates/financial_support).
3.1.4 During their employment at Macquarie University, eligible staff members may submit an application for MQNS support at most two times. If the first application is unsuccessful, they may apply in the next round provided that they improve their re-application on the basis of (1) the feedback on the previous application from the MQNS Panel and (2) substantive guidance from their mentor on the reworking of the application. The application form will require formal endorsement by the mentor as to his/her input to the reworked proposal for the second application.

3.1.5 Applicants may hold only one grant under this scheme; i.e. once an application is successful, a subsequent proposal may not be submitted.

3.1.6 Staff members who are employed to undertake a specific project or projects are ineligible to apply. The Assessment Panel expects that these staff will focus on the project(s) for which they are employed. This exclusion applies irrespective of the proportion of the staff member’s salary that is funded from the grant(s) or other source(s) used to fund the project(s).

3.1.7 Applicants who satisfy Section 1.1 of these Funding Rules must nominate a mentor to oversee the proposed project; the expectations of the mentor are outlined in Section 11.4. If successful, the grant recipient is required to meet with their mentor at the six-month mark and work with their mentor on their project reports, as described in Section 11.5.

3.2 Restart Grant Scheme for Staff Returning from Parental Leave

To be eligible to apply under this category, applicants must satisfy the following criteria:

3.2.1 Applicants may be appointed at any level.

3.2.2 Applicants must be a member of the University’s academic staff, and must hold a continuing or fixed-term appointment at the time of application and for the duration of the grant. Fixed-term appointments must be for at least two years.

3.2.3 Staff members who are employed to undertake a specific project or projects are ineligible to apply. The Assessment Panel expects that these staff will focus on the project(s) for which they are employed. This exclusion applies irrespective of the proportion of the staff member’s salary that is funded from the grant(s) or other sources used to fund the project(s).

3.2.4 Applicants must have been classified as “research active” at the time they commenced parental leave or must be able to justify that they have research potential and deserve to be considered for funding even though they were not classified as “research active” at the time they commenced parental leave (see “research active” definition at http://www.research.mq.edu.au/about/research@macquarie/quality_evaluations/research_active_definition). Applicants must detail how the funding will help them achieve a similar or enhanced level of research activity after the interruption caused by parental leave.

3.2.5 Applicants must have been on parental leave for at least six months full-time, or the equivalent pro-rata amount if the applicants work part-time.

3.2.6 Only one application is permitted for each qualifying ‘return to work’, and must be made within twelve months of the staff member’s return to normal duties.
3.3 Eligibility Rulings for Applications for New Staff Grants and Restart Grants

3.3.1 In the first instance, any queries about eligibility should be directed to the relevant Faculty Research Manager, who will liaise with the Research Office as required.

3.3.2 In the event that the FRM and Research Office are not able to clearly determine eligibility, a request for an eligibility ruling should be submitted to Kyle Ratinac (kyle.ratinac@mq.edu.au) within one week of the opening of the scheme (to allow time for a response). Requests submitted after that time will not be considered.

3.3.3 A request for an eligibility ruling should contain a brief but detailed case explaining: (1) the area(s) in which the applicant is considered potentially ineligible; and (2) any reasons why the applicant feels that s/he is eligible or should be given special consideration. If special consideration is being requested, the applicant should also include documentation indicating support for the request and other relevant details from the Mentor and Head of Department.

4. Application Preparation

4.1 All applicants are encouraged to take advantage of any mentoring or other grant-writing assistance provided within their faculty prior to submitting an application to this (or any other) research grant scheme. Applicants should talk to their Head of Department or Faculty Research Manager for more information.

Applicants for a New Staff Grant must discuss their project with their nominated mentor (see Section 11.4) prior to submission of the application. This requirement is in addition to any further grant-writing support received at department or faculty level.

4.2 Great care should be taken in preparing the Project Summary in the application form. The summary must be informative to non-experts in the field such that readers can understand the research that the applicant is proposing to do, how it will be done, and why it is important.

4.3 The Project Description should clearly explain the following information (with due consideration for the selection criteria):

- the intended aims of the project,
- its significance within the research field,
- the research plan,
- the methods and techniques to be used and
- the expected outcomes of the project.

This outline should be reflected in the Requested Budget and Budget Justification sections.

As with the summary, the information in the Project Description must be set out simply and clearly, in plain English, such that individuals who are not experts in the particular field can understand the proposed research and how it is to be achieved.
5. Selection Criteria

Grants will be ranked and awarded on the basis of the following criteria:

Track record of applicant(s) relative to career stage and opportunity (40%)

The application should demonstrate:

- A strong research publication record, relative to career stage and opportunity.
- An excellent record of attracting resources for support of research, relative to career stage and opportunity.
- Other evidence of capacity and expertise to undertake the proposed research.
- That applicants returning from parental leave were “research active” at the time they commenced the leave, or that they have clear research potential likely to lead to external competitive grant applications.

Project aims, significance and innovation (20%)

The application should demonstrate that:

- The research is significant and addresses an important problem within the research area.
- The research is novel and innovative.
- The anticipated outcomes will advance the knowledge base of the discipline; and/or develop new methodologies or technologies; and/or advance processes or therapies in practice; and/or contribute to public policy and debate, business or industry thinking or practice, or community understanding or behaviour.

Approach, methodology, and role of personnel (20%)

The application should demonstrate that:

- The conceptual framework, design and methods are well developed and are integrated and appropriate to the aims of the project.
- The proposed timeline of activities appears realistic and achievable.
- The role, responsibilities and contributions of each investigator and the roles and levels of involvement of other participants, such as technical staff, are appropriate to the requirements of the project. The mentoring role of any senior researcher(s) should be clearly demonstrated.
- The budget is well justified and appropriate to the project.

National benefit (10%)

The application demonstrates outcomes that will benefit Australia, including contributions to the Commonwealth’s Strategic Research Priorities and to international links.

Strategy and schedule for attracting substantial external funding (10%)

The application demonstrates that there is a clear and achievable strategy and schedule for attracting substantial external funding.
6. Budget

General information

Two basic principles must be used in calculating and justifying budgets. These are:

- accurate costings; and
- a clear explanation of the reasons for all proposed expenditure in relation to the research plan.

A budget justification is not merely stating proposed expenditure. Researchers must provide details of particular grades or types of expenditure and an explanation as to why that particular expenditure is essential in relation to achieving the aims and the research plan of the project.

Personnel

Applicants should indicate the level and duration of assistance required and cost it accordingly. Vague, unspecific requests for assistance will not be supported. All requests for funding of casual research personnel must include allowance for on-costs (workers' compensation, payroll tax and the national superannuation scheme) at the rate of 17% for casual appointments. Applicants should contact their Faculty Finance Manager if they require additional information.

Teaching Relief

Teaching relief will be funded only where researchers have specified and strongly justified exactly why teaching relief is essential for their research project. The applicant must justify why the proposed tasks cannot be undertaken within their current approved workload allocation. Support for teaching relief must be certified by the Head of Department and Executive Dean of the faculty via the MQ Application Coversheet.

All requests for teaching relief must specify the number of hours of teaching for which relief is sought, together with an estimate of the costs involved, calculated at the appropriate academic award (casual or part-time) rate and including statutory on-costs (17% for casual appointments).

Applicants who require additional information should contact their Faculty Finance Manager or go to http://www.ofs.mq.edu.au/budget_process/financial_planning/salary_on_costs.htm.

Equipment

Items of minor equipment may be requested. A descriptive statement of each item of equipment must be included in the justification of the budget. Quotation requirements are as per the Macquarie University purchasing procedure guidelines. Applicants are reminded that all equipment purchased with research grants remains the property of Macquarie University.

Applications for computer equipment will need to provide a particularly strong justification, establishing the specific need for the item in the project. General computer needs will not be supported from the MQNS Scheme. Laptop computers are not eligible budget items unless a particularly strong and convincing case is made for exclusive use of the laptop for the proposed project for purposes such as fieldwork and archival procedures.
Maintenance

Consumables and any equipment costing less than $1000 should be listed in this section. Each of these items must be fully justified.

Travel

Funding for travel may be granted when travel is directly related to the project. Award of funding is based on justification and is awarded at the discretion of the panel.

Conference travel is not an allowed item of expenditure under MQNS.

Any awarded funds to be used for travel are subject to the University’s Travel Policy.

7. Application Process

Please note that hard-copy applications will not be accepted. (See Section 3.3 for details about the deadline and process for eligibility-ruling requests.)

The application form is available electronically via the Research Office Website. Applications must be in the prescribed format using no smaller than 12-point font, and the layout of the form must not be altered. The reference list or bibliography may be in 10-point font size.

The application must be submitted electronically, emailed as PDF attachment (preferably not a scanned version, except for signature pages) to grants@mq.edu.au (c.c. your Faculty Research Manager) by the Research Office deadline of 5pm Wednesday 7 May 2014.

Late applications will not be accepted and incomplete applications will be deemed ineligible.

Please consult your Faculty Research Manager for any faculty deadlines, which will be earlier than the Research Office deadline.

8. Certification

An online MQ Application Coversheet must be submitted through IRIS. Please note that your faculty will have an internal deadline for application review and/or receipt of the coversheet prior to the Research Office deadline; check with your Faculty Research Manager for details.

9. Assessment Process

Applications to MQNS 2014 will be assessed by a panel comprising the four Associate Deans (Research). Following review of the applications, the panel will meet to make recommendations for funding. The final endorsement of the recommendations will be made by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research).

The outcomes are expected on Friday 6 June 2014

10. Appeals

Unsuccessful applicants have the right to seek a review of outcome, on procedural grounds only.
To request a review of outcome, please write a brief letter detailing the basis on which the review is requested. The letter, clearly marked “Confidential Appeal”, should be submitted to Ms Louise Fleck, Director, Research Office, Building C5C East, Room 324.

11. Conditions of Award

11.1 Project Management Workshop

Successful grant recipients who satisfy Condition 1.1 of these Funding Rules are required to attend a one-day Project Management Workshop. Allocated funds will not be released until this condition is satisfied.

11.2 Variation of Expenditure

Requests for variation of expenditure must be submitted on the appropriate form: http://www.research.mq.edu.au/for/researchers/forms,_templates_and_useful_information/grants/variationForm_final.rtf

A request is required only when a change to the budget category is necessary; for example, when using the funds for travel instead of personnel, where travel was not included as a budget item in the application. Requests must be fully explained and justified, and they must be accompanied by a letter of support from the Head of Department, or an equivalent endorsement such as an annotation and dated signature on the request form. Please submit requests for variation of expenditure to grants@mq.edu.au.

Questions relating to variations should be directed to the Research Grants Management Team. Please see the Research Office website for more information: http://www.research.mq.edu.au/about/research_office/research_grants.

11.3 Carry-Forward

Successful grant recipients are expected to manage their research projects to completion within the twelve-month duration of the grant, and therefore funds must be fully expended within that period.

Carry-forward of funding beyond the twelve-month funding period is strongly discouraged, and will be approved only in exceptional circumstances that were beyond the control of the researcher. Grant recipients who need to apply for a carry-forward must contact the Research Grants Management Coordinator, Phyllis Heggie (Phyllis.Heggie@mq.edu.au).

11.4 Mentors (New Staff Grants Only)

Being a mentor to an applicant for a New Staff Grant is an important responsibility and, although it should not be burdensome, does require some effort and genuine engagement on the part of the mentor. During the development of the grant, the minimum expectation of the mentor is to discuss and provide feedback on the MQNS application at least once prior to submission. If the grant is awarded, further involvement is needed. At the minimum, this will be (1) to read the draft Mid-Term Report six months through the grant and meet with the grant recipient to help them finalise their report (see Section 11.5) and (2) to read the draft Final Report approximately one month after the end date of the grant and help the recipient formulate a high-quality report.
Mentors are welcome, and encouraged, to provide further discipline-specific expertise throughout the course of the project where appropriate.

11.5 Reporting

11.5.1 Mid-Term Report and Meeting with Mentor (New Staff Grants only)

The aim of this report is to ensure that the grant recipients are making appropriate progress with their project and to provide a framework for discussion with their mentor.

Six months after the start of the project, grant recipients must meet with their nominated mentor to discuss the progress of the project. The grant holder must draft their one-page Mid-Term Report and submit it to her/his mentor one week before the meeting. This draft should outline progress on the project, changes to the project, and/or any problems with the project, along with proposed solutions.

After the draft has been discussed with her/his mentor, the grant recipient should finalise the Mid-Term Report and submit it to the Research Office (grants@mq.edu.au) within two weeks of that meeting. The template for this report is available on the Research Office website at: http://www.research.mq.edu.au/for/researchers/managing_grants_and_projects/reports_milestones/mq_new_staff_grant_reporting

11.5.2 Final Report

This report should describe outputs and outcomes relating to the original aims outlined in the application. The Final Report template may be downloaded from: http://www.research.mq.edu.au/for/researchers/managing_grants_and_projects/reports_milestones/mq_new_staff_grant_reporting

The procedure for preparing the final report differs for New Staff Grants and Restart (Returning from Parental Leave) Grants, as is outlined below.

MQNS Grants. One month after the end date of the grant, recipients must submit their draft (unsigned) Final Report to their mentor to receive advice on the formulation of the report. After discussion of the draft with their mentor, the grant holder should complete the Final Report, and this must be submitted to the Research Office (grants@mq.edu.au) no later than two months after the end date of the grant.

Restart Grants. After the completion of their project, recipients should complete their Final Report, which must be submitted to the Research Office (grants@mq.edu.au) no later than two months after the end date of the project.

11.5.3 Follow-Up Report

The ‘Follow-Up’ Report is intended to capture longer term outcomes and outputs from awarded grants. The report should be submitted to the Research Office (grants@mq.edu.au) within nine months to one year of the end date of the grant. For simplicity, the report should simply be an updated version of the previous Final Report, with additional information shown as bold text (or otherwise clearly indicated) for ease of identification.
Questions relating to reporting should be directed to the Research Grants Management Team. Please see the Research Office website for more information:  
http://www.research.mq.edu.au/about/research_office/research_grants

11.6 Additional Conditions of Award
The assessment panel, in recommending the award of a MQNS Grant, may stipulate other conditions of award for approval of the DVC (Research). Conditions of the award will be contained in the letter of offer to the applicant.

11.7 Website Publication
Summary information about successful applicants and their grants may be published on the Research Office website.

12. Privacy policy
The conduct of research projects supported under all internal Macquarie University Schemes is subject to the provisions of the Commonwealth Government’s National Privacy Principles and other statutory provisions relating to ethics and biosafety.

As part of the assessment process, the Research Office may provide the assessment panel with its record of the details of the applicant’s funding and publications history. This action is consistent with the provisions of the National Privacy Principles.

13. Ethics
The University maintains strict control over all research activities involving human or animal subjects, and work in which issues of biosafety are involved. Such research must meet the ethical and safety requirements of the relevant government legislation, and satisfy the guidelines of external funding agencies such as the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC). Prior to commencing, research in which such issues are relevant must first be approved by the relevant ethics or biosafety committee. Researchers are expected to be scrupulous in avoiding conflicts of interest (especially where commercial issues are involved) when engaged in the peer-review process. In addition, by encouraging public scrutiny of research results by publication and other means, the University also wishes to help combat fraud and misconduct.

All researchers, research coordinators and supervisors of postgraduate students should be familiar with the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, and relevant external and internal ethical guidelines. These conditions include compliance with Macquarie University’s Responsible Conduct of Research (currently under review; see Policy Central).

University Animal Ethics, Human Ethics and Biosafety Committees
Researchers should consult the Animal Ethics Committee, Human Ethics Committee and Biosafety Committee web pages to determine whether their research is subject to the respective guidelines and review processes.
If the proposed research requires human, animal or biosafety ethical clearance, the grant will not commence until approval has been obtained. Please contact the Ethics Secretariat (email: ethics.secretariat@mq.edu.au or phone: (02) 9850 6848) for further information.

14. Faculty Research Contacts

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