Macquarie University Research Fellowships (MQRF) Scheme

**Common reasons why MQRF Expression of Interest (EoI) candidates are not invited to proceed to the Full Proposal stage:**

- EoI template not emailed to grants@mq.edu.au by the deadline (eg only letter expressing interest provided)
- Page limit exceeded
- Formatting altered (eg line spacing, font size and/or margins altered in order to fit more text to a page)
- EoI information incomplete
- Case for Early Career Researcher status is not convincing
- Sponsor is named on more than one EoI
- Sponsor was not confirmed prior to submission of the EoI
- Track record relative to opportunity is not outstanding compared with short-listed EoIs
- Project significance and innovation is not outstanding compared with short-listed EoIs

Of those not highly ranked, the reason is likely to have been either inadequate track record of publications or lack of clarity in the project description, or both.

**Some General Advice:**

- Applicants need to be fully aware that the Fellowships Panel is multi-disciplinary and members assigned to read your EoI may not be experts in your field. Therefore, you must ensure that your project is interesting, understandable and cogent to people from outside your discipline area. Avoid technical and discipline specific language at all costs.

- Tell a story about your research, as you would if you were talking to an intelligent lay person at a social gathering. You should convince the Panel members why the research is interesting, unique, innovative and significant. Why does it matter? Why are you the best person to do the project?

- The lower ranked applications are usually those that
  - are not very intelligible to non-specialists
  - show evidence of having been written in a rush and not thought through; or
  - have not been developed in conjunction with the Sponsor.

- The top-ranked applications are always those where the research project is very clear to all Panel members, backed up by strong track records.

**Further EoI Tips:**

1. **Research record relative to opportunity**
   This is not the place for modesty; don’t hold back (but provide evidence for your claims). Don’t just regurgitate the number of publications: state the highlights; for example, if you changed a paradigm. What impact have your findings had? How has your research moved your field forward?

2. **Publications**
   Don’t assume that each panel member will know the convention for your area. Include an introductory sentence to make this clear. For example, is the person who did most of the work listed first or last? Are papers in your area usually multiple-authored or sole-authored? Are conference papers the norm rather than journal papers?