

**(YOU)<sup>us</sup>**

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**MACQUARIE**  
University  
SYDNEY · AUSTRALIA

**Macquarie University Lighthouse Fellowships**

**For Funding Commencing in 2026**

# Macquarie University Lighthouse Fellowships



## ABOUT THE FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

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The MQLF scheme supports ***outstanding early career researchers*** (ECRs) who have ***strong alignment with Macquarie University Strategic Research Initiatives***

MQLFs will give ECRs the opportunity to become highly competitive for ***externally-funded research fellowships***

Up to 10 full-time MQLFs will be awarded

MQLFs include salary and project costs of up to \$50,000 for ***3 or 4 years***:

- 3-year 100% research full-time fellowship
- 4-year 75% research and 25% teaching full-time fellowship

MQLFs must commence between ***1 January 2026 and 30 June 2026***

See: <https://www.goto.mq.edu.au/MQLF>

## SCHEME OBJECTIVES

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The Macquarie University Lighthouse Fellowships (MQLF) scheme has three main objectives:

1. To provide support to researchers ***within three years of the award of their PhD*** who have an ***outstanding track record (relative to opportunity)*** and/or who show evidence of excellent research potential
2. To provide ***seed funding*** for early career researchers, allowing them to ***increase their competitiveness for securing research funding from non-University sources***
3. To accelerate and increase the pipeline of research expertise within ***Macquarie University Strategic Research Initiatives***, existing and emerging
  - BioInnovation Initiative
  - Macquarie University Research Centres
  - Faculty Research Centres

# Macquarie University Lighthouse Fellowships



## ELIGIBILITY

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- Applicants are eligible only if their PhD has been **conferred on or after 1 March 2022**; or their **thesis was submitted on or before 31 December 2024**. The Fellowship cannot commence until the PhD has been conferred, which must be by 30 June 2026.
- Applicants whose PhD was awarded before 1 March 2022 must provide evidence of **allowable career interruptions** that demonstrate they have had no more than 3 years' research employment since conferral of their PhD, due to non-research employment, debilitating illness, childbirth, international relocation, disaster management, unemployment, misadventure or carer responsibilities. Each period of career interruption must be significant, extending for a period of 30 calendar days or more, and not overlapping.
- Applicants who were/are PhD candidates at Macquarie University, or who have had full-time, part-time, or casual employment at Macquarie University since the beginning of 2022 must make a case (in Section 7 of the Application Form) for why it is appropriate for them to continue or recommence their research career at Macquarie University.
- Applicants who are not an Australian or New Zealand permanent resident or citizen, **must obtain the appropriate Visa** before commencement of their Fellowship and ensure they meet the terms and conditions set forth by the Visa.
- Applicants may be subject to review under the **Autonomous Sanctions Act 2011 (Cth)**. This Act restricts Australian organisations (including Macquarie University) from interacting with people or organisations associated with countries on the **sanctions list**.
- Applicants for any Macquarie University internal grant scheme must not have any overdue reports for internal grants on which they are a current or past lead investigator.

# Macquarie University Lighthouse Fellowships



## ELIGIBILITY – CONDITIONS OF AWARD (SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS)

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- Macquarie University Lighthouse Fellows must be in ***full-time attendance at Macquarie University*** except for approved field work and travel
- The appointments will carry University-standard academic appointment benefits and restrictions. Generally appointed at an Academic Salary Level A Step 6
- Fellowships must commence between ***1 January 2026 and 30 June 2026***
- Successful candidates who have not been awarded their PhD at the time of MQLF application submission cannot take up the Fellowship until formal advice that their PhD has been awarded
- It is a condition of award that MQLF recipients will ***apply during the second year of their MQLF tenure to the ARC, NHMRC or any other external agency*** for a Research Fellowship to be based at Macquarie University
- Successful applicants are expected to manage their research project funds to completion within the grant allocation period, therefore funds must be fully expended within the funded period
- Must complete all reporting requirements

# Macquarie University Lighthouse Fellowships



## CHANGES FROM THE MQRF SCHEME

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- This Macquarie University Lighthouse Fellowship (MQLF) scheme **replaces** the previous Macquarie University Research Fellowships (MQRF) scheme
- Compared to the MQRF scheme, **MQLF candidates must** align with at least one Macquarie University strategic research initiative to score highly
- The assessment criteria and weightings have changed from the previous MQRF round
- The MQLF scheme will follow the same application and assessment process as the previous MQRF round

# Macquarie University Lighthouse Fellowships



## ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

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- Applicant (35%)
- Alignment with Macquarie University's Strategic Research Initiatives (20%)
- Benefit (10%)
- Project (35%)
  - Project quality and innovation (15%)
  - Feasibility (10%)
  - Sponsor relationship and research environment (10%)

**See Funding Guidelines for further details regarding assessment criteria**

# Macquarie University Lighthouse Fellowships



## KEY DATES

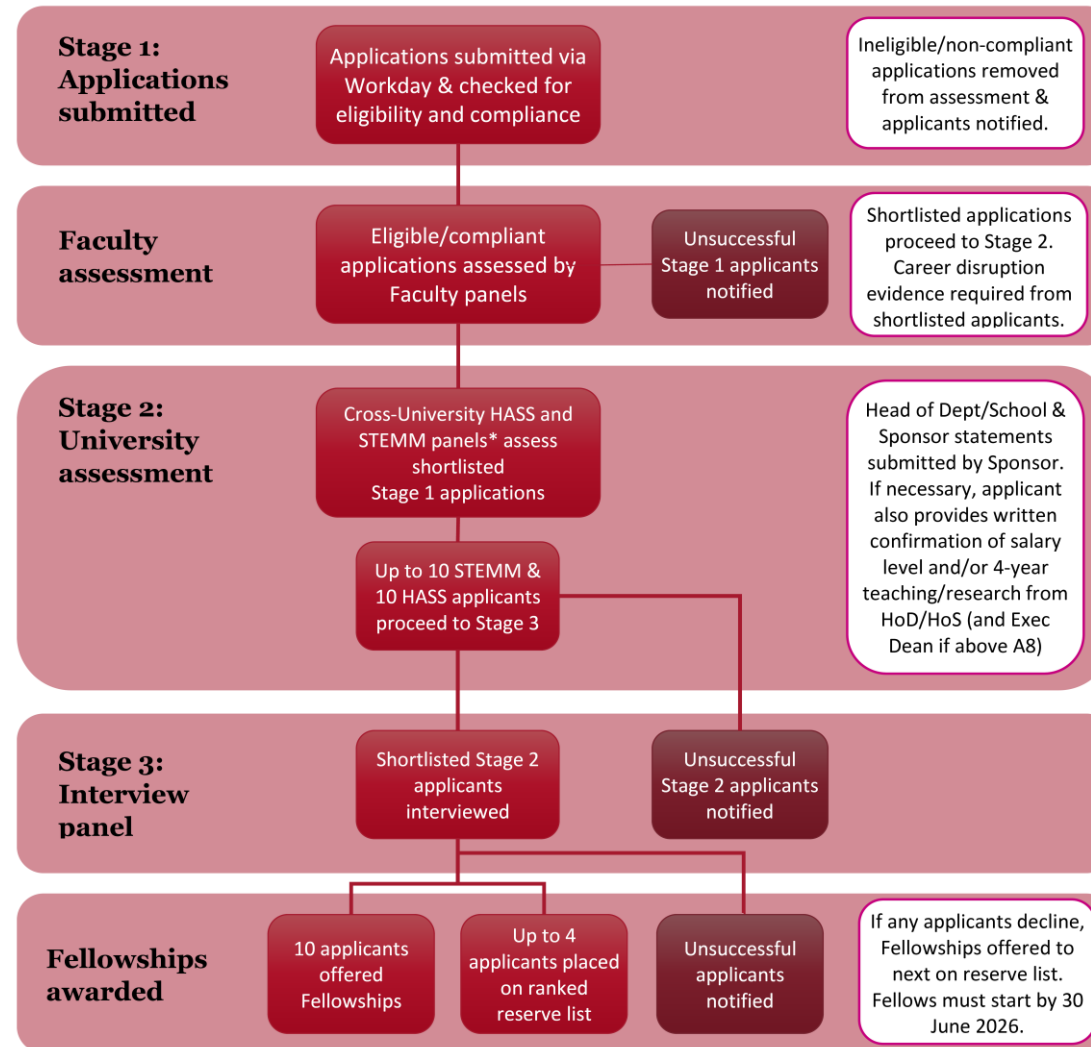
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<b>PhD award date for eligibility</b>	On or after 1 March 2022
<b>PhD Submission date if PhD not yet awarded</b>	On or before 31 December 2024
<b>Release of Funding Guidelines</b>	Monday 10 February 2025
<b>Scheme opens</b>	Tuesday 25 February 2025
<b>Scheme closes</b>	Monday 31 March 2025, 11:59pm (AEDT)
<b>Stage 1: Faculty assessments</b>	April 2025
<b>Stage 2: University assessment announced</b>	May 2025
<b>Stage 3: Invitations to interview announced</b>	June 2025
<b>Interview period</b>	30 June to 4 July 2025
<b>Anticipated outcomes announced</b>	Late July/early August 2025
<b>Commencement of successful 2026 MQLF applicants</b>	Between 1 January and 30 June 2026



# Macquarie University Lighthouse Fellowships

## APPLICATION PROCESS AND STAGES



# Macquarie University Lighthouse Fellowships



## APPLICANT RESPONSIBILITIES

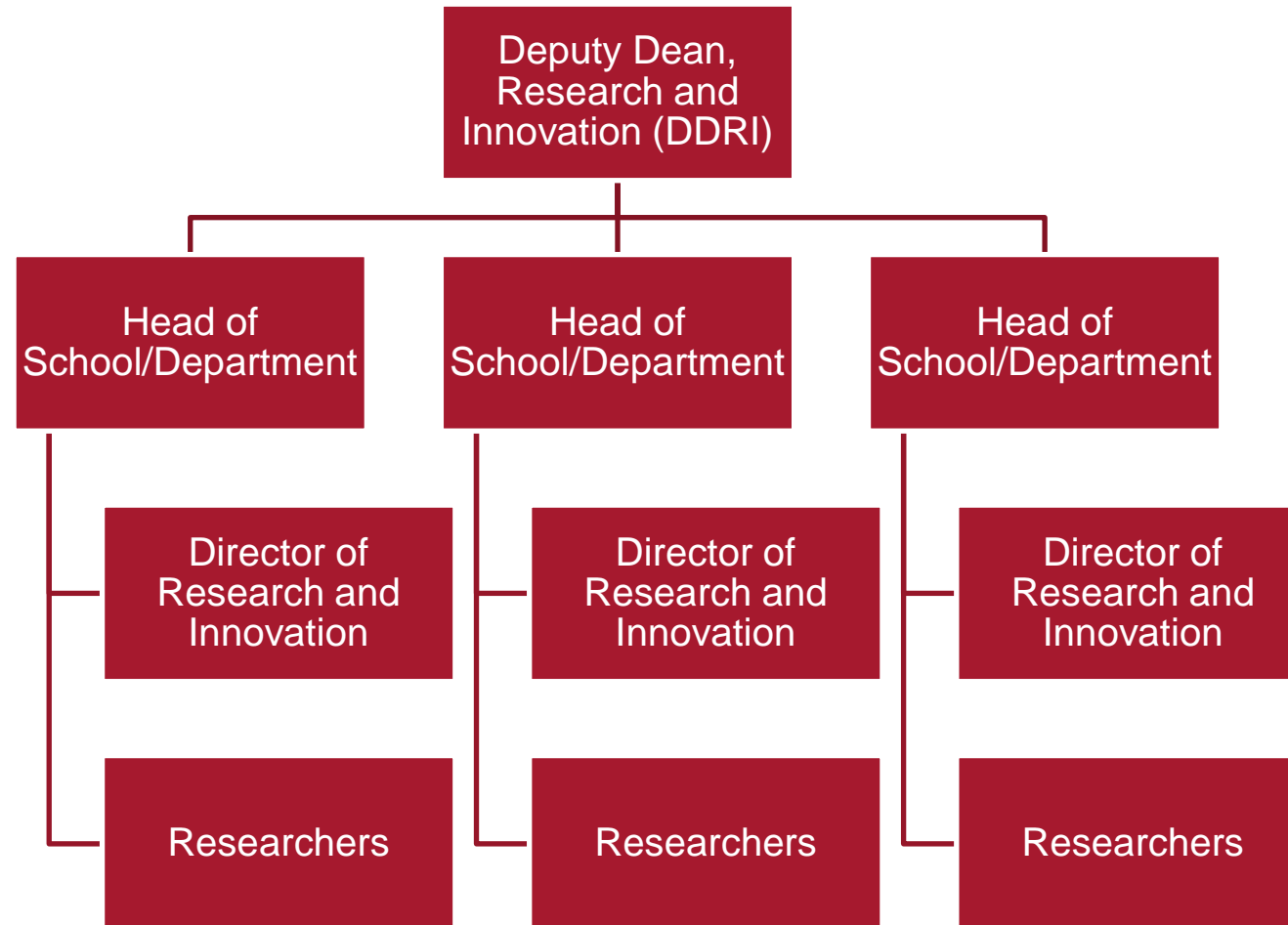
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- You must have read the funding guidelines, fact sheets, FAQs, discipline norms and attended a webinar. If you have a question after consulting all materials, you can email [MQLF@mq.edu.au](mailto:MQLF@mq.edu.au)
- Ensure you are eligible to submit an MQLF application
- Identify and secure the support of an appropriate sponsor (*see section 6.2 of the Funding Guidelines*)
  - You must make contact with the sponsor to seek their endorsement
  - You must consult with the sponsor and seek input during the application process
  - Your sponsor must complete and submit a Sponsor and Head of Department/School Statement (without your input) if you are shortlisted to Stage 2
- Ensure Macquarie University has the required equipment, infrastructure and expertise for your research (in consultation with your sponsor)
- Apply through Workday by submitting the application forms and all required attachments by the submission deadline

# Macquarie University Lighthouse Fellowships

## SIMPLIFIED FACULTY RESEARCH STRUCTURE

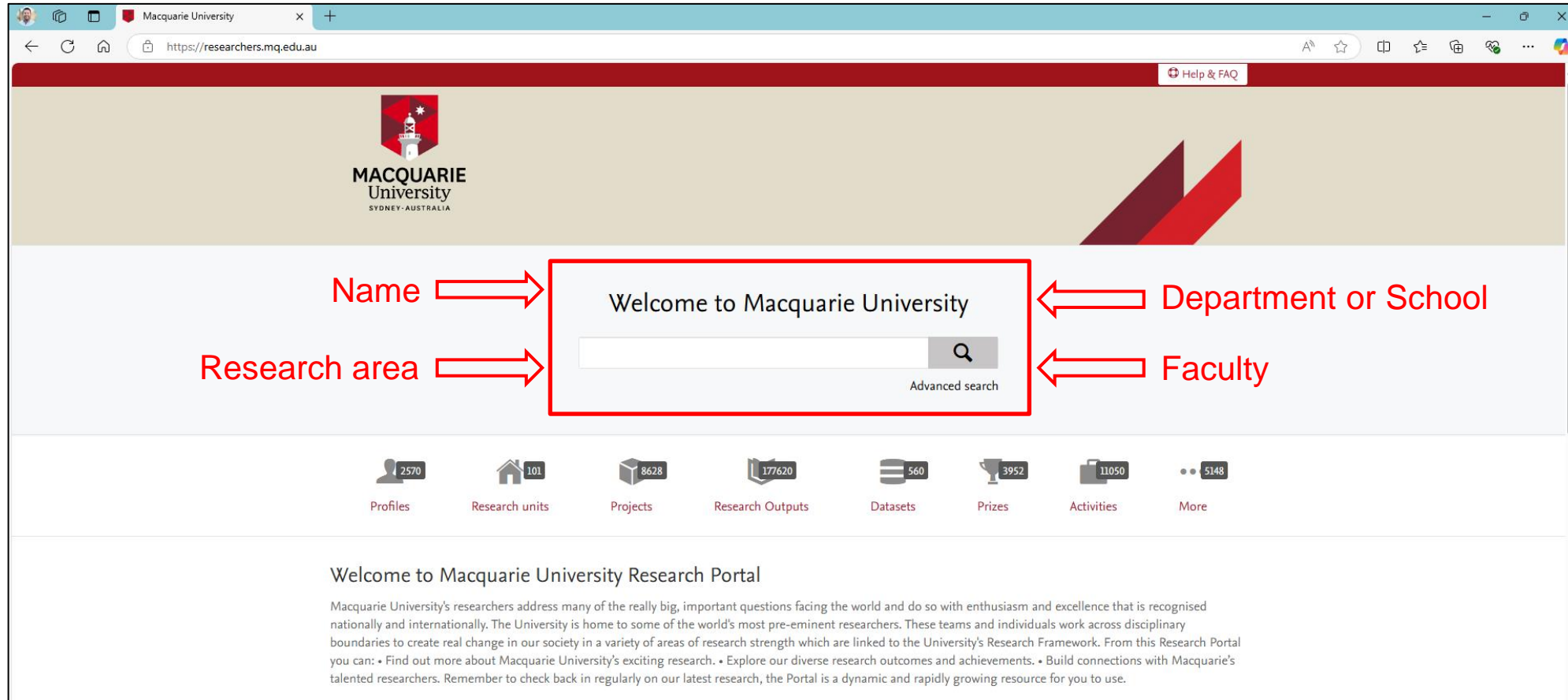
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# Macquarie University Lighthouse Fellowships

## FINDING A SPONSOR

<https://researchers.mq.edu.au>



The screenshot shows the Macquarie University Research Portal website. The browser address bar displays <https://researchers.mq.edu.au>. The page features the Macquarie University logo and a search bar. The search bar is highlighted with a red box, and red arrows point to it from the labels "Name", "Research area", "Department or School", and "Faculty". The search bar contains the text "Welcome to Macquarie University" and a search icon. Below the search bar, there is a navigation bar with icons and counts for various categories: Profiles (2570), Research units (101), Projects (8628), Research Outputs (177620), Datasets (560), Prizes (3952), Activities (11050), and More (5148). The main content area displays the heading "Welcome to Macquarie University Research Portal" and a paragraph of text describing the portal's purpose and features.

## SPONSOR RESPONSIBILITIES

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- Must ensure they are only accepting sponsorship of 1 applicant per MQLF round. This limit applies to both Primary Sponsors and Co-Sponsors (i.e. it is not possible to be a Sponsor on one application and a Co-Sponsor on another)
- Must consult and support applicant through the application process
- Sponsor's contract should cover the whole period of the Fellowship
- Advocate for and facilitate the applicant's negotiations with their Department/School. The sponsor is responsible for consulting early with their HoD/HoS on:
  - the resources, systems, facilities (including animal facilities) and core infrastructure the applicant requires
  - the Level/Step the applicant is to be appointed at (if higher than Academic Salary Level A6)
  - appointment to a 75:25% research:teaching Fellowship over 4 years (if requested)
- If the applicant is shortlisted by the Faculty to proceed to full panel assessment (Stage 2), the Sponsor is responsible for:
  - Helping the applicant to obtain written confirmation from the HoD/HoS of a starting salary higher than Academic Salary Level A6 (and, if applicable, the approval of the Faculty Executive Dean if a case can be made for a salary above Academic Salary Level A8) and/or a 4-year research and teaching appointment
  - Preparing and submitting a Sponsor/HoS Statement (form will be provided)

## WORKDAY KEY INFORMATION

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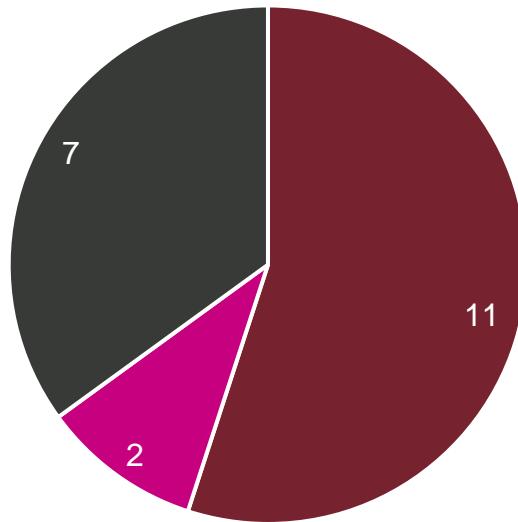
- The application consists of the following three documents:
  - Completed 2026 MQLF Application Form and Project Description (combined as a single PDF)
  - Completed 2026 MQLF CV and Research Opportunity and Performance Evidence Form
  - Evidence of PhD conferral (if awarded) or thesis submission date
- Applications, including all requested forms, must be submitted electronically in the Macquarie University HR portal, Workday, into the ***‘Resume and Cover letter’*** section **only**.
- Do not upload these forms elsewhere in Workday
- **Note that there is no additional resume or cover letter required**; only the three documents listed above should be uploaded
- Submit via the Workday advertisement for the Faculty where your Sponsor is employed
- Applications not submitted through Workday or missing any of the three above documents will be deemed ineligible

# Allocation at Stage 2

## HASS AND STEMM

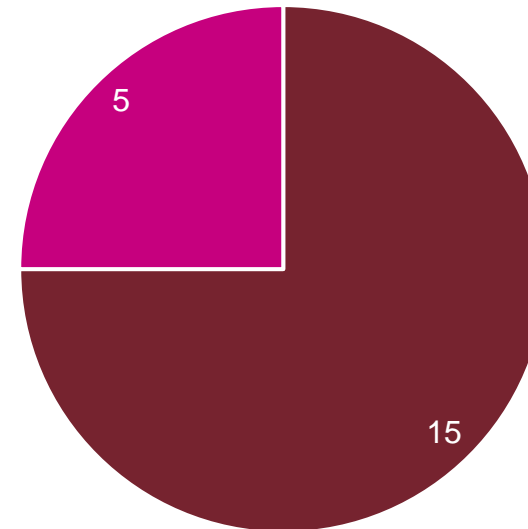
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### HASS



- Faculty of Arts
- Macquarie Business School
- Faculty of Medicine, Health and Human Sciences

### STEMM



- Faculty of Science and Engineering
- Faculty of Medicine, Health and Human Sciences

## **STAGE 2 PROCESSES**

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**Stage Two Assessment**, if shortlisted for consideration by the Faculty-based panel (stage one), applications will be assessed by either a HASS (Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences) or STEMM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics and Medicine) University panel, which will shortlist applicants for interview. At this stage, the following documentation will be required:

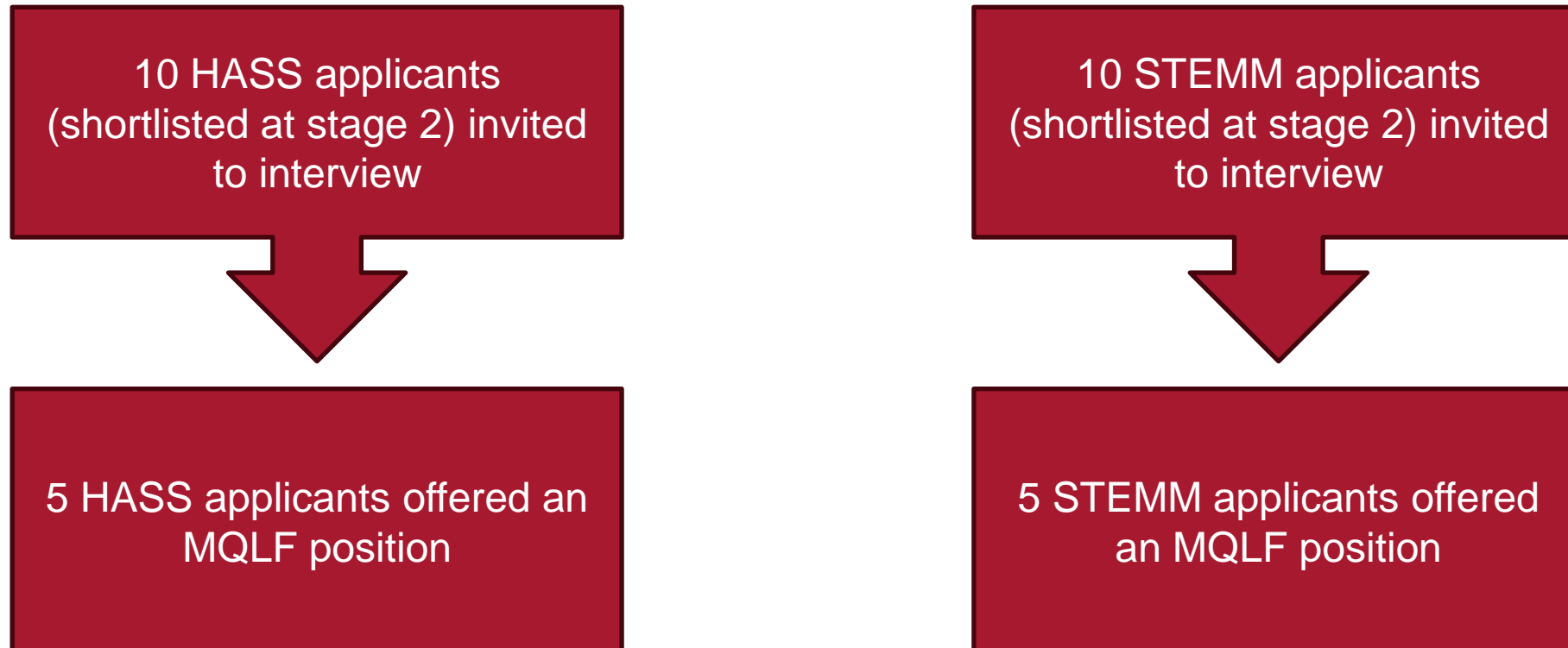
- i) you will need to provide evidence to support career interruptions claimed in your application (if applicable)
- ii) with support of your Sponsor, you will need to provide HoD/HoS approval for appointment to a 4-year Fellowship and/or above Level A Step 6, or of HoD/HoS and Faculty Executive Dean if above Level A Step 8 (if applicable)
- iii) Sponsors will be required to submit Sponsor and Head of Department/School Statements of support



# Allocation at Stage 3 (Interview)

## HASS AND STEMM

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# Macquarie University Lighthouse Fellowships



## APPLICATION SUPPORT

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- [\*Funding Guidelines\*](#)
- [\*Applicant Guide\*](#)
- [\*Sponsor Guide\*](#)
- [\*MQLF Application Form\*](#)
- [\*MQLF CV and ROPE Form\*](#)
- [\*Career Disruption Calculator\*](#)
- [\*FAQs\*](#)
- [\*Discipline Norms\*](#)
- [\*Webinar Slides\*](#)
- [\*Webinar Recording\*](#)

Webpage: <https://www.goto.mq.edu.au/MQLF>

Contact: [MQLF@mq.edu.au](mailto:MQLF@mq.edu.au)

# What does success look like?

FIRST MQLF ROUND IN 2026

2025 INTRODUCED THE NEW THREE STAGE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Last 8 rounds of Macquarie University Research Fellowships			
Commencement year	Number submitted	Number funded after full application (5 x HASS; 5 x STEMM)	Success rate from application to funded
2018	143	10	7.0%
2019	140	10	7.1%
2020	147	10	6.8%
2021	105	10	9.5%
2022	129	10	7.8%
2023*	88	10	11.4%
2024*	67	10	14.9%
2025	97	10	10.3%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>916</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>8.7%</b>

\* *Visa restrictions in place*

# Macquarie University Lighthouse Fellowships



## DISCIPLINE NORMS

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- Examples/guides of what success looks like per discipline
  - See Discipline Norms doc for further information
- HASS and STEMM examples
- Following data based on previously successful Macquarie University Research Fellowships
- Expected to be consistent with the MQLF scheme

## TRACK RECORDS OF AWARDESS IN SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, MATHEMATICS AND MEDICINE

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In previous MQRF rounds, the success rate was less than that of nationally-competitive funding opportunities, such as the ARC DECRA scheme and the NHMRC Investigator Grant scheme. On average, successful applicants:

- Had PhD award dates between the range of the three years
- Average 25 publications, with an average of 11 as first author, in high-quality (and often exceptional) journals
- The publications attracted on average 400 citations, resulting in an average h-index of 11
- Average of 25 conference presentations
- Awarded an average of \$900,000 in competitive grants
- Received up to 9 external and internal prizes or awards

## TRACK RECORDS OF AWARDEES IN HUMANITIES, ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

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In previous MQRF rounds, the success rate was less than that of nationally-competitive funding opportunities, such as the ARC DECRA scheme and the NHMRC Investigator Grant scheme. On average, successful applicants:

- Had PhD award dates between the range of the three years
- Average 17 publications, with an average of 9 as first author, in high-quality journals or with high-quality publishers
- Average of 21 conference presentations
- Awarded an average of over \$450,000 in competitive grants
- Received up to 8 external and internal prizes or awards



EMPOWERING  
**(YOU)** *us*

TO ACHIEVE YOUR  
RESEARCH GOALS  
WITH INTEGRITY

EXCELLENCE. QUALITY. INTEGRITY.



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