

2026 Macquarie University Lighthouse Fellowship (MQLF) Funding Guidelines

Key Dates:

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

Type of Grant Opportunity: Macquarie University Lighthouse Fellowship

Key Contact: MQLF@mq.edu.au

I, Sakkie Pretorius, Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research, having satisfied myself of the matters set out in the guidelines, and approve these funding scheme guidelines.

Dated: 10 February 2025

Professor Sakkie Pretorius
Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research

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1 Overview

The [Macquarie University Lighthouse Fellowships \(MQLF\)](#) Scheme has three main objectives:

- 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.
- To provide seed funding for early career researchers, allowing them to increase their competitiveness for securing research funding from non-University sources.
- To accelerate and increase the pipeline of research expertise within Macquarie University Strategic Research Initiatives, existing and emerging.

2 Macquarie University Strategic Research Initiatives

Macquarie University is committed to world-leading research with world-changing impact. As part of this commitment, the MQLF scheme is designed to accelerate and advance research within the below list of Macquarie University Strategic Research Initiatives.

Applicants must be firmly aligned with the research environment and ambitions of at least one of the Strategic Research Initiatives.

| STRATEGIC RESEARCH INITIATIVE | |
|---|---|
| The BioInnovation Initiative | |
| The Macquarie University Research Centres: | |
| | Astrophysics and Space Technologies Research Centre |
| | Data Horizons Research Centre |
| | Ethics and Agency Research Centre |
| | Future Communications Research Centre |
| | Hearing Research Centre |
| | Lifespan Health and Wellbeing Research Centre |
| | Motor Neuron Disease Research Centre |
| | Performance and Expertise Research Centre |
| | Smart Green Cities Research Centre |
| | Transforming Energy Markets Research Centre |
| The Faculty Research Centres: | |
| | Australian Lymphoedema Education, Research and Treatment (ALERT) Centre |
| | Spinal Pain Research Centre |
| | The Centre for Housing and Urban Research |
| | The Centre for Research in Early Childhood Education |
| | The Centre for Environmental Law |
| | The Centre for Global Indigenous Futures |
| | Future Ecosystems Research Network |
| | FSE Research Centre in Multi-omics |
| | FSE Research Centre for Pollinator Health and Security |

| | |
|--|--|
| | FSE Research Centre in Applied AI |
| | FSE Research Centre in Advanced Drone Systems Research |
| | FSE Research Centre for Frontier AI Research |
| | Macquarie Minds and Intelligences Initiative |
| | MQBS Research Centres – to be announced |

3 Funding and Fellowships Available

Macquarie University will offer up to 10 MQLF positions commencing in 2026. Positions will be awarded on a competitive basis and are offered in two formats:

- 100% research over 3 years
- 75% research and 25% teaching over 4 years.

If you wish to opt for the second option, the Host Department/School is responsible for salary to cover the 25% teaching component. The relevant Head of School/Department must provide written confirmation asserting that the School/Department will provide funding for the 25% teaching component for the duration of the fellowship.

If you are shortlisted by Faculty to proceed to Stage 2 (see Section 5), you will be required to seek this confirmation from the Head of your proposed Department/School, with the support of your Sponsor.

Written confirmation of the Head of Department/Head of School that they approve appointment to a 4-year MQLF must be submitted to the MQLF Team at Stage 2. If approval is not obtained, you can only be offered a 3-year 100% research Fellowship. Ensure you discuss your options early with your Sponsor to allow them time to consider and assist with the process of negotiating approval from the Head of your proposed Department/School. Negotiation does not guarantee approval.

3.1 Fellowship Salary

The Fellowship will be remunerated at Level A Step 6, 7 or 8 of the Macquarie University Academic Salary Scale, plus annual leave loading and 17% employer superannuation.

It is possible to be awarded an MQLF at a salary above Academic Level A. In this instance, the host Department/School will be required to fund the cost of salaries above Academic Level A Step 8. **If you are shortlisted to Stage 2 (University assessment), you must obtain written confirmation of appointment above Level A Step 6 from the Head of Department/School, through your Sponsor. Appointment above Level A Step 8 must also be approved by the Faculty Executive Dean.**

Sponsors must seek approval from their host Department/School and Faculty Executive Dean for salaries above A8 and written evidence of this approval must be provided to the MQLF team once applicants are shortlisted to Stage 2.

It is the responsibility of applicants to discuss salary expectations with their Sponsor early in the application process to enable them to have sufficient time to assist with the process of obtaining the necessary approvals.

The appropriate starting Academic Level and Step of the fellow should take into consideration the fellow's current Academic Level and their track record. Such supplementation may be considered

appropriate where a Fellow is currently occupying a position above Level A, or where their track record is such that a higher level of appointment is deemed appropriate.

The salary will be adjusted annually in line with Step progression in the Academic Salary Scale (see the [Academic Staff Agreement](#)).

Fellows will be paid on a fortnightly basis through the University's payroll system.

3.2 Project Funding

Applicants may request up to \$50,000 over the length of the project for research costs associated with the proposed project (up to a maximum of \$20,000 in any one year). See the Project Budget for more information (Section 7).

4 Eligibility

The MQLF is open to early career researchers from any country within 3 years of their PhD conferral.

You are eligible to apply only if:

- your PhD was conferred on or after 1 March 2022; **or**
- you can substantiate an allowable period of career interruption that would be commensurate with conferral of your PhD on or after 1 March 2022; **or**
- your PhD thesis was submitted on or before 31 December 2024. The Fellowship cannot commence until the PhD has been conferred (Fellowships must commence no later than 30 June 2026).

If you are not an Australian or New Zealand permanent resident or citizen, it is your responsibility to obtain the appropriate Visa before commencement of your Fellowship and ensure you meet the terms and conditions set forth by your Visa. See section 9.2 for further information on Visas. All applicants from overseas who do not have an existing right to work in Australia via either Permanent Residency or Citizenship must email the MQLF Team prior to applying. Macquarie University reserves the right to refuse consideration of applications from individuals who do not have permissions to work in Australia and who have not contacted the MQLF Team prior to submission of their application.

Applicants from Macquarie University who have been awarded 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. Overdue reports for internal funding awards will impact eligibility.

4.1 Career interruption

If your PhD was conferred before 1 March 2022, you must provide evidence of allowable career interruptions that demonstrate you have had no more than 3 years' research employment since conferral of your PhD.

Allowable career interruptions include (see [Appendix 1](#) for the complete list):

- Disruption due to international relocation
- Caring responsibilities
- Disability
- Medical conditions

- Disaster management and recovery
- Limited or no access to facilities and resources—such as through workplace interruptions
- Non-research positions, not concurrent with research employment
- Unemployment
- Parental leave
- Being the primary carer of a dependent child

Each period of career interruption must be significant, a minimum of 30 calendar days, and not overlapping.

- You must provide accurate details of your allowable career interruptions in Section 5 of the *CV and Research Opportunity and Performance Evidence Form* and provide evidence substantiating your case if you are shortlisted to Stage 2. See [Appendix 1](#) for details of acceptable evidence.
- You should have your documentation prepared in advance. If you are unable to provide acceptable evidence of career interruptions within the timeframe you will be given at Stage 2, you will be deemed ineligible, and your application will not proceed further.

5 Application and Assessment

Applications, including all required forms, must be submitted electronically in the Macquarie University HR portal, Workday, into the 'Resume and Cover Letter' section. Note that there is no additional resume or cover letter required; only the documents listed below should be uploaded. Applications not submitted through Workday will be deemed ineligible.

The application **must** consist of the following three documents:

- 1) Completed 2026 MQLF Application Form and Project Description (combined as a single PDF)
- 2) Completed 2026 MQLF CV and Research Opportunity and Performance Evidence Form
- 3) Evidence of PhD conferral (if awarded) or thesis submission date.

An application that is missing any of these documents will be deemed ineligible.

Your Project Description must adhere to the formatting and content guidelines in Appendix 2.

Note that in Workday you will be asked to complete some of the same information as is contained in the CV and Research Opportunity Form. This is to pre-populate data in the Macquarie HR system that will be retained if you are appointed as an MQLF, or if you apply to Macquarie in future for other appointments.

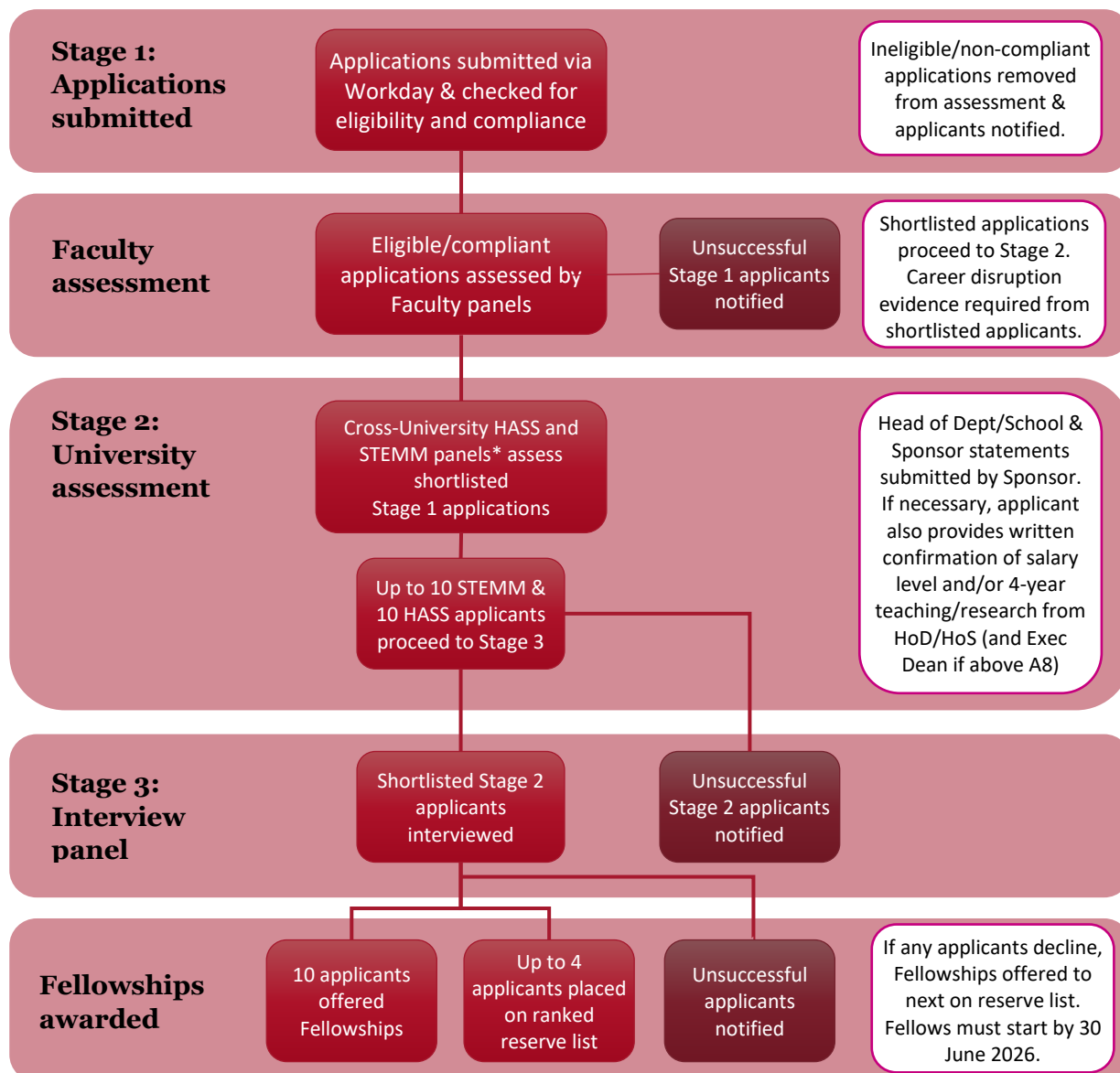
Once submitted, applications will be screened for eligibility and compliance. Compliant applications from eligible applicants will be assessed in a multi-stage process:

- a) **Stage One Assessment**, by a panel of Faculty-based discipline experts who will recommend applications for the second round of assessment;
- b) **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) Evidence to support career interruptions claimed in your application (if applicable); note that if evidence is not in English, you will need to provide the original document with a translation from a certified translation service
 - ii) With support from your Sponsor, you will need to provide HoD/HoS approval for appointment to a 4-year Fellowship (if applicable)
 - iii) With support from your Sponsor, you will need to provide HoD/HoS approval for a starting salary above Level A Step 6 (if applicable)
 - (1) If a starting salary **above** Level A Step 8 is requested, you will need to provide approval from both the HoD/HoS and Faculty Executive Dean
 - iv) Sponsors will be required to submit Sponsor and Head of Department/School Statements of support.
- c) **Stage Three Assessment**, twenty applicants will be invited to interview. Interviewees will be required to give a 5-minute presentation to the interview panel (slide templates will be provided) as well as undertake a broader interview with research leaders and discipline experts.
- d) Of the twenty applicants who undertake an interview, up to ten applicants will be offered an MQLF at Macquarie University. Up to four applicants will be placed on a ranked reserve list. If any successful applicants decline their Fellowship offer, places will be offered to those on the reserve list in order of rank.

5.1 Application Process



*HASS assesses Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences; STEMM assesses Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics and Medicine

Applications will only be accepted on the MQLF Application Template Forms via Workday.

- You must submit the MQLF Forms and evidence of PhD award date (if awarded) or thesis submission by the scheme closing date.
- Incomplete applications will be deemed ineligible and not assessed by the panel.
- Extensions of submission date or changes to the application following the scheme closing date will not be accepted.
- Hard copy applications will not be accepted.
- Emailed applications will not be accepted.

Applications not complying with these guidelines will be ruled ineligible and will not be considered for funding.

By submitting the application and associated documents, you confirm that you:

- have read and agreed to the policy terms (see Section 10.1 of these Guidelines) in relation to:
 - [MQ Privacy Policy](#)
 - [MQ Human Ethics, Animal Ethics and Biosafety Committees](#)
 - [MQ Academic Integrity](#)
 - [MQ Intellectual Property](#)
 - [MQ Generative Artificial Intelligence in Research Guidance Note](#)
- will work with your Sponsor to obtain any necessary approvals from the Head of your prospective Department or School and (if necessary) Faculty Executive Dean with regard to your appointment (see Section 3).

Unsuccessful applicants have the right to seek a review of their outcome, on procedural grounds only. Applicants should discuss their appeal with their Sponsor prior to submitting an appeal to Research Services. To request a review of your outcome, please write a brief email detailing the basis on which the review is requested. The email should be clearly marked “MQLF - Confidential Appeal” and submitted to Dr Erin Semon (erin.semon@mq.edu.au), Director, Research Grants and Awards, Research Services.

Individual feedback and scores will not be provided to applicants at any stages during the MQLF assessment processes.

6 Application Development

6.1 General

Great care should be taken in preparing the application. All information must be set out simply and clearly, written in plain English, and **avoiding technical terminology**. The application must be informative and **accessible to non-discipline experts**, such that assessors outside your field can understand what you are proposing to do, why the research is important, and how impactful results will be achieved. Unexplained jargon or acronyms and/or overuse of discipline-specific language is strongly discouraged.

Avoid copying and pasting publicly available text, particularly in relation to Sponsor fit and environment. These sections should demonstrate real engagement between you and your Sponsor, clearly describe alignment between the proposed project and Macquarie University Strategic Research Initiatives (detailed in Section 2) and provide a detailed description and analysis of Macquarie University’s appropriateness as the project location.

If you were/are a PhD candidate at Macquarie University, or have had full-time, part-time, or casual employment at Macquarie University since the beginning of 2022, you must make a case (in Section 7 of the *Application Form*) for why it is appropriate for you to continue or recommence your research career at Macquarie University.

Further advice on points to consider under each heading of the project description can be found in [Appendix 2](#).

6.2 Fellowship Sponsor/s

You must nominate a Primary Sponsor from within the Host Department/School at Macquarie University. You may also nominate a Co-Sponsor, who can be from a different Department/School or Faculty. **It is *your responsibility to identify and secure the support of an appropriate Fellowship Sponsor.***

- You and your proposed Sponsor(s) must consult closely with one another in developing the MQLF application and throughout the assessment process and doing so is strongly encouraged.
- **A Sponsor may sponsor only one Fellowship per round of the MQLF Scheme. This limit applies to both Primary Sponsors and Co-Sponsors (i.e., it is not possible to be a Primary Sponsor for one Fellow, and a Co-Sponsor for another).**
- An application without a Sponsor will be deemed ineligible.
- It is the responsibility of the Sponsor/Co-Sponsor to ensure they are listed on only one MQLF application. Failure to do so could make applications ineligible.
- Adjunct staff members and those holding honorary positions are eligible to act as Sponsors provided their ongoing research is primarily carried out at Macquarie University and their affiliation on published work is given as Macquarie University.
- A Sponsor's employment contract must cover the whole period of the Fellowship.
- Your Sponsor's research profile should align with your Fellowship project.
- Your Sponsor's association with a Strategic Research Initiative of the University is essential. You must work with your Sponsor to identify how the proposed research aligns with existing strategic research initiatives of Macquarie University.
- Sponsors should only agree to sponsor applicants who they believe unreservedly have the capacity to undertake the MQLF.
- Your Sponsor must confirm with your prospective Head of Department/School that:
 - Macquarie University has the required resources, systems, facilities (including animal facilities) and core research infrastructure in place to complete the proposed Fellowship project
 - If applicable, the Head of the host Department/School approves appointment to a 4-year Fellowship and/or above Level A Step 6 and, if appointment is to be above Level A Step 8, the Faculty Executive Dean approves this appointment. (See section 3 of these Guidelines).

6.3 Sponsor and Head of Department/School Statements

If you are shortlisted to Stage 2, your Sponsor will be notified and provided with a copy of the *Sponsor and Head of Department/School Statement Form*:

- Your Sponsor must complete their own statement of support and obtain a statement of support from the Head of your proposed Department/School
- Your Sponsor must email the completed and signed *Sponsor and Head of Department/School Statement form* to MQLF@mq.edu.au.

- **The Sponsor and Head of Department/School Statement Form is to be completed without any input from you.**

7 Project Budget

MQLFs will receive up to \$50,000 over the length of the project for direct research costs (up to a maximum of \$20,000 in any one year).

A full budget is not required in the application form. However, you must indicate the anticipated expenditure for each year of the project. If your application is successful, you will be required to work with your Sponsor to develop a fully itemised budget prior to commencement of the Fellowship. Your final budget should, as far as possible, remain close to the annual expenditure you indicate in the application, so ensure your estimates are realistic.

If you do not require direct research costs (i.e., your Fellowship funding will be for your salary only) you should explain in Section 8.2 of the Application Form why you do not need project funding and present a convincing case for the feasibility of the research project.

7.1 Budget justification

Expenditure can only be made on eligible budget items directly related to the project.

You should provide a short, clear explanation in your Project Description of how you will spend your budget in relation to your research plan. For example, if you will be employing a Research Assistant, explain which activities they will assist with; if you will travel for fieldwork or conferences, indicate the proposed year and location.

In the Feasibility section of the Project Description, you should also make a case for the overall cost-effectiveness of the project.

7.2 Eligible expenditure

Personnel

Eligible personnel may be Research Assistants or professional specialists such as programmers or videographers. Their time must be spent directly on project activities.

- Consider the role of any assistants or specialists, and the length of their employment.
- Use the [current Macquarie University Salary Scales document](#) when estimating the cost of personnel who will be employed by Macquarie. Salary levels must be commensurate with the duties of the role and be costed to include salary on-costs.

Equipment

Items of minor equipment may be requested if they are essential to, and will be used exclusively for, the project.

- Ensure there is a specific need for the item in the proposed project (e.g. it would not be feasible use third party services).
- Review the Macquarie University [Strategic Procurement](#) process to ensure you will be able to abide by the University's procurement policies and procedures
- Speak to your Sponsor about procuring any equipment to ensure that the equipment is not already available to you and that any new equipment can be supported in the Department/School. Your Sponsor must confirm with the local laboratory or facilities

manager that the equipment can be accommodated and that the required services, such as data storage, would be available.

- General computer purchases will not be supported, as Macquarie University issues laptops to all staff and provides secure cloud storage for data. If you require IT equipment of higher specification than Macquarie provides, you will be required to make a particularly strong and convincing case for exclusive use of the equipment for purposes such as fieldwork and archival procedures specific to the project.
- All equipment purchased with MQLF funding remains the property of Macquarie University.

Travel

Travel must be directly related to the project, and can include fieldwork, archive visits and conference attendance.

- Decide where and when you will travel. If your destination (for example a conference location) is not known at the time of application, estimate your expenditure to the best of your ability (e.g., the conference is usually held somewhere in Europe, estimating the average cost of flights and accommodation in the most likely European countries is appropriate).
- Review the [University Travel Policy](#) as all travel will be subject to this policy.

Carer Costs

If you have carer responsibilities, you may include costs that you need to cover in order to complete the project, such as childcare while you are away on fieldwork.

Other

Other allowable items include consumables, publication costs, consumer payments, interview transcriptions or conference registration fees.

7.3 Ineligible expenditure

Fellowship funds cannot be spent on:

- HDR stipends, tuition or other related HDR costs;
- teaching relief;
- teaching materials;
- basic facilities that should normally be funded by Macquarie University;
- capital works and general infrastructure costs;
- costs not directly related to the project, including but not limited to: professional membership fees, professional development courses, fees for patent application or visas, relocation costs, entertainment costs (other than reasonable hospitality costs), purchase of alcohol, insurance, gifts, mobile phones (purchase or call charges) and other costs not specifically incurred for project activities;
- fees for international students or the Higher Education Loan Program (HELP).

8 Assessment Criteria

Applications will be evaluated on the following criteria:

APPLICANT (35%)

- Track record of the applicant relative to opportunity and career stage.
- Research performance and potential.
- Capability of the applicant to build collaborations both within the relevant Strategic Research Initiative and the wider Macquarie University research community.
- *All applicants must be able to demonstrate a promising track record based on high-quality publications, generation of research funding, and other achievements such as scholarships, awards and prizes. See Discipline Norms guide, available on the [MQLF26 webpage](#).*

ALIGNMENT WITH MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY'S STRATEGIC RESEARCH INITIATIVES (20%)

- How will the applicant and the project be integrated into and contribute to the relevant Strategic Research Initiative at Macquarie University?
- How does your research fit within the current priorities and research plan of the relevant Strategic Research Initiative?

BENEFIT (10%)

- How will the University benefit from the conduct of this project, including tangible benefits (such as publications, research, commercialisation, other income, capacity building and research impact), and intangible benefits (such as an enriched research culture and enhanced research reputation)?
- What are the potential economic, commercial, environmental, social and or/cultural benefits for Australia and/or international communities of the research?

PROJECT (TOTAL 35%)

- **Project Quality and Innovation (15%)**
 - Does the research address an important problem within the discipline?
 - Will the anticipated outcomes advance the knowledge base within the discipline?
 - Are the project aims and concepts significant and innovative?
 - Are the research questions clear and appropriate for the project being proposed?
 - Will new methodologies or technologies be developed?
 - Are the conceptual framework, design, methods and analysis adequately developed, well integrated and appropriate to the aims of the project?

- How might you promote your research outcomes beyond academia to maximise understanding, translation, use, and adoption of the research in the future?
- ***If the project involves Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander research additional criteria include the below and must be responded to (additional ½ page will be allowed if these criteria are needed/required in the application):***
 - the project's level of collaboration, engagement, relationship building and benefit sharing with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, and First Nations Organisations and Communities;
 - the project's strategy and mechanisms for Indigenous research capacity building within the project;
 - the project's level of internal leadership of Indigenous research;
 - The project's adherence to the Australian Indigenous Data Sovereignty Principles (2018); and
 - The project's understanding of, and proposed strategies to adhere to, the AIATSIS Code of Ethics for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research (2020) and NHMRC's guidelines on Ethical conduct in research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and communities (2018).
- **Feasibility (10%)**
 - Are there sufficient and appropriate resources (infrastructure and/or financial) available for the project?
 - Are the project outputs and outcomes appropriate and achievable within the Fellowship timeframe and budget (\$50,000 over the life of the Fellowship, to a maximum expenditure of \$20,000 in any one year)?
 - Is the project cost-effective and does it represent good value for money?
 - Is the project timetable realistic and achievable?
 - Have issues such as research ethics and workplace safety been addressed where appropriate?
- **Sponsor relationship and research environment (10%)**
 - In Stage 1 of the application process, the applicant must include details of their proposed Sponsor and the appropriateness of this Sponsor to mentor the applicant through the fellowship. If shortlisted to Stage 2, the Sponsor and Head of Department/School will, without input from the applicant, complete a statement of support form for review by the Stage 2 Panel.
 - Is the intellectual environment appropriate to foster a successful outcome for the project and provide a strong foundation for the Fellow's career?
 - Does the Sponsor have the appropriate track record and the capacity to provide mentoring and intellectual leadership in the subject area of the proposed project?

9 Conditions of Award

9.1 Acceptance of Fellowship

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 is received by Research Services at Macquarie University.

Fellowships must commence between 1 January 2026 and 30 June 2026, or risk forfeiture of the fellowship.

The MQLF Scheme aims to increase the number of externally funded research fellowships held by researchers working at Macquarie University, such as those provided under the Australian Research Council (ARC) and National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) schemes.

To this end, 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.

9.2 Time and attendance commitment

Macquarie University Lighthouse Fellows must be in full-time attendance at Macquarie University. The Fellow may, during the term of the Fellowship, request approval from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) for conversion of the Fellowship to part-time status for periods of time, based on caring needs or other personal commitments.

If the Fellow is not an Australian or New Zealand permanent resident or citizen, it is their responsibility to obtain the appropriate Visa and ensure they meet the terms and conditions set forth by the Visa. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure they have the appropriate right to work in Australia and to discuss any visa requirements early in the application process with their Sponsor. Macquarie University reserves the right to not award a Fellowship or revoke a Fellowship award should there not be appropriate working rights or visas in place or in instances where applicants have failed to disclose their immigration and visa requirements and/or circumstances. Applicants must discuss their working rights and Visa requirements with their proposed Sponsor very early in the application process.

Macquarie University Lighthouse Fellows appointed at 100% research must spend a minimum of 80% of their time on research activities related to their project. This allows them to commit up to 20% of their time for other research activities, such as being named as an investigator on other grants. Macquarie University Lighthouse Fellows appointed at 75% research and 25% teaching must spend 75% of their time on research activities related to their project.

Macquarie University Lighthouse Fellows cannot concurrently hold another fellowship. If an externally funded fellowship is awarded to a Macquarie University Lighthouse Fellow, they must relinquish their MQLF.

The MQLF appointment will carry University-standard [academic appointment benefits and restrictions](#). This includes the normal provisions for relocation expenses, etc. Please note that relocation costs are not covered by the MQLF scheme; they are the responsibility of the Host Department or Faculty.

9.3 Expenditure of funds

Successful applicants will be required to provide a complete, itemised budget prior to the commencement of their Fellowship.

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.

Any request to re-allocate unspent funds must reach Research Services at least one month prior to the end of the funding period and must be submitted via a ServiceNow Variation Request.

Re-allocation requests must include written support from the Sponsor and the Head of Department/School.

9.4 Reporting

Progress Report: At the commencement of the second year, the Macquarie University Lighthouse Fellow must provide Research Services with a progress report and a plan for securing external research funding. Additional progress reports may be requested throughout the Fellowship. After the first year, annual funds awarded to support project costs are indicative, and conditional upon the approval of progress reports.

10 Responsibilities

10.1 Policies

All Macquarie University research is subject to University policies. All Macquarie University policies can be found in the [Policy Central](#) pages of the Macquarie University website.

Privacy Policy

The conduct of research projects supported under all internal Macquarie University Schemes is subject to the provisions of the [Privacy Act 1988 \(Cth\)](#).

Information contained in applications will be received and treated as confidential by Macquarie University, and assessors will be required to treat applications in confidence.

Research Ethics

All researchers are expected to uphold an honest, ethical and conscientious research culture and apply the principles articulated in the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#).

Macquarie 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 or guidelines and satisfy the requirements of external funding agencies such as the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC). Any research in which such issues are relevant must first be approved by the relevant ethics or biosafety committee.

Researchers should consult Macquarie University's Human Research Ethics Committee, Animal Ethics Committee, Biosafety Committee and Defence Trade Controls web pages to determine whether their research is subject to the respective guidelines and review processes.

If the proposed research requires human ethics, animal ethics, biosafety and/or export controls approval, the grant will not commence until approval has been obtained. Please contact the relevant Ethics Secretariat (Human or Animal), Biosafety Secretariat, Gene Technology & Biosafety Secretariat and/or the Export Controls Secretariat for further information.

For more information refer to the Macquarie University [Ethics, Integrity and policies website](#).

Research Integrity

All researchers, research coordinators and supervisors of research students should be familiar with the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#) and must comply with the standards encompassed in the [Macquarie University Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#).

Researchers are expected to be transparent in declaring and managing conflicts of interest when engaged in research, including in the peer review process.

You may be subject to review under the Autonomous Sanctions Act 2011 (Cth) and the Act restricts Australian organisations (including Macquarie University) from interacting with people or organisations associated with countries on the sanctions list. See the Macquarie [Export Controls and Sanctions Policy](#).

Intellectual Property

In advance of submission of an application, you should take steps to protect any intellectual property embodied in the proposed research. Upon a successful applicant taking up employment as a MQLF at Macquarie University, all IP developed during the period of employment will become the property of Macquarie University under the normal terms of employment of Macquarie University. For more information, see the University's [Intellectual Property Policy](#).

MQ Generative Artificial Intelligence in Research Guidance Note

All applications must adhere to the [MQ Generative Artificial Intelligence in Research Guidance Note](#). Particular attention should be paid to section 3.2 of the Guidance Note on the use of generative AI in grant applications.

APPENDIX 1 – Eligible Career interruptions

Each period of career interruption must be significant and not overlapping, and for a period of **30 days** (continuous) or more, and have occurred after conferral of your PhD.

The following career interruptions can be included*:

| Eligible career interruptions | Period of time that can be claimed | Examples of evidence required** |
|---|--|---|
| Disruption due to international relocation | A period of time commensurate with the interruption not exceeding 3 months per international relocation. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HR records showing employment at both institutions e.g. copy of employment contracts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ from the previous location and ○ for the new location • OR evidence of flights/work VISA in conjunction with an employment contract at the new institution <p>NOTE: If you have the required evidence, you may claim the full 3 months regardless of the time it took to move.</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caring responsibilities • Disability • Medical conditions | A period of time commensurate with the interruption. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HR records showing reduced FTE/interruption • OR Email/letter from your manager confirming the period of interruption • OR a statement from medical practitioner confirming amount of time taken off work during the claim period <p>NOTE in this category, interruptions for an ongoing disability/medical condition/care responsibility may be non-continuous but must total more than 30 days minimum.</p> |
| Disaster management and recovery | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A letter/email from your HOS/HOD explaining the situation and time disruption |
| Limited or no access to facilities and resources—such as through workplace interruptions | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmation email/letter from your HOS/HOD confirming the period of interruption • OR where there was no access to research facilities a copy of an email from head researcher/lab director confirming the periods that the lab was closed |
| Non-research positions, not concurrent with research employment | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment contracts or position descriptions clearly stating the role requirements and responsibilities • OR a letter from HR stating the employment dates and role descriptions (e.g. teaching only) • OR a letter/email from supervisor in that role, confirming role and time period |
| Unemployment | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centrelink documentation • OR a Commonwealth Statutory Declaration |

| Eligible career interruptions | Period of time that can be claimed | Examples of evidence required** |
|--|--|--|
| Parental leave | Up to two years, inclusive of parental leave, for each dependent child. If required, an additional period commensurate with the interruption. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HR letter/email/record confirming leave period • OR birth certificate of child |
| Being the primary carer of a dependent child | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HR records showing reduced FTE/interruption <p>NOTE: career disruptions cannot overlap, so you cannot claim any other disruption during the two years you are claiming for parental leave or as a primary carer</p> |

* For the purposes of the MQLF, Macquarie University applies the Australian Research Council’s definitions of eligible career disruptions. However, allowable disruptions vary from funder to funder and scheme to scheme. Career interruptions deemed eligible for the MQLF may not be considered allowable by other funders or schemes.

** If evidence is not in English, you will need to provide the original document with a translation from a certified translation service.

APPENDIX 2 – Project Description

The Project Description must be a maximum of 4 pages inclusive of any tables, images, diagrams, and references. If information on Indigenous research is required under the heading, FEASIBILITY, BUDGET JUSTIFICATION AND TIMELINE, an additional 0.5 pages will be allowed.

Your Project Description must be formatted as follows:

- Black type, or occasional coloured type for highlighting purposes (bearing in mind that the application may be printed in black and white).
- Single column.
- White A4 size paper with at least a 2 cm margin on each side and at top and bottom. Ensure all table or diagram borders are within these margins.
- Single line spacing, Times New Roman size 12 point font
- References, captions and diagram text only can be 10 point Times New Roman.
- Comply strictly with page and word limits prescribed for each section of the application. Assessors are advised to stop reading text that is beyond the word limit.
- The inclusion of webpage addresses/URLs and hyperlinks should only be used under certain circumstances such as publications that are only available online. Webpage addresses/URLs and hyperlinks should not be used to circumvent page limits, nor should they provide information that is not contained in the application.
- All information relevant to the application must be contained within the application.
- Remember that the panel is made up of assessors from multiple disciplines. It is vital to avoid or explain discipline-specific terms and jargon. Make clear what you propose to achieve, why it is worth doing, and how you will do it in a way that academics outside your research area can understand. Applications with unclear methodology and project design generally receive lower scores and are less likely to progress.

You must use the following headings, in this order:

- PROJECT TITLE
- PROJECT AIMS AND BACKGROUND
- PROJECT QUALITY AND INNOVATION
- FEASIBILITY, BUDGET JUSTIFICATION AND TIMELINE
- COMMUNICATION OF RESULTS
- SPONSOR ALIGNMENT
- REFERENCES

PROJECT TITLE

Use the same project title as that given on your Application Form

PROJECT AIMS AND BACKGROUND

- Describe the project aims and provide the background of this application.
- Include information about recent national/international progress in this field of research and its relationship to this application.

PROJECT QUALITY AND INNOVATION

- Describe the project's contribution to an important gap in knowledge or significant problem.
- Explain the novelty/originality and innovation of the proposed research (including any new methods, technologies, theories or ideas that will be developed).
- Clearly state the of the hypothesis, theories and research questions.
- Present a cohesive project design and implementation plan and explain how these will deliver the aims of your project/answer your research questions.
- Outline and justify the conceptual framework, method, data and/or analyses to be used. Provide clear information on why these were chosen over others, how they will be employed, and their importance to the project outcomes.

FEASIBILITY, BUDGET JUSTIFICATION AND TIMELINE

Describe how the project design, budget, participants and resources will contribute to the timely completion of the project and achievement of its outcomes.

Describe or explain:

- the equipment, facilities, infrastructure and resources needed for this project and their availability (if required)
- how the intellectual research environment will support the successful completion of the project
- the cost-effectiveness of the research and its value for money
- how the project's design and use of resources represents an efficient and realistic use of the funding and timeframe
- how your capability and experience of managing and completing projects will ensure successful completion of the project and future funding prospects.

Provide a timeline for the completion of the project (e.g. a Gantt chart).

If the project involves research pertaining to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities describe:

- the strategies for enabling collaboration with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities (for example, dialogue/collaboration with an Indigenous cultural mentor);
- any existing or developing, supportive and high-quality relationships with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities; and

- any personal affiliations with local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities that can facilitate the proposed research.

COMMUNICATION OF RESULTS

Outline your plans for communicating your research results to other researchers and the broader community; include both scholarly and public communication and dissemination.

SPONSOR ALIGNMENT

Describe the:

- intellectual environment that will foster a successful outcome for the project and provide a strong foundation for the Fellow's career.
- Sponsor's relevant track record and their capacity to provide mentoring and intellectual leadership in the subject area of the proposed project.

REFERENCES

Include a list of all works cited in the Project Description.

The font size of the References may be 10 point Times New Roman.