Purpose

To advise of University policy pertaining to the application for, acceptance of and management of designated research funds at Federation University Australia.

Scope

The policy covers all categories of external competitive research funding, including funding awarded by national and international bodies, such as the ARC and NHMRC and all levels of government, as well as private industry, philanthropic and the community sector. This policy applies to all those within the University or any controlled entity, applying for or expending research funding, including:

- All staff, including sessional staff, employed by the University or controlled entity;
- All persons, including Honorary and Adjunct appointees of the University or any controlled entity;
- Higher Degree by Research candidates who applies for or has been awarded external research funding or an external scholarship stipend as part of their Candidature.

Legislative Context

Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2007 (the Code)

Definitions
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research</td>
<td>Research is defined as the creation of new knowledge and/or the use of existing knowledge in a new and creative way so as to generate new concepts, methodologies and understandings. This could include synthesis and analysis of previous research to the extent that it leads to new and creative outcomes. (2015 HERDC Specifications, Pg 7, Section 3)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Funding</td>
<td>Funding awarded to a staff member or HDR candidate to support their research activities.</td>
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<td>Contract Research</td>
<td>Research undertaken with an agreement to provide research services under specific negotiated conditions in exchange for specific deliverables.</td>
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<td>Controlled Entity</td>
<td>A company over which the University has control within the meaning of section 3 of the Audit Act 1994 (Vic) and which has adopted this policy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category 1 Income: Australian Competitive Grants</td>
<td>Consists only of income from those research schemes and programs registered on the Australian Competitive Grants Register (ACGR) for the current year.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Category 2 Income: Other Public Sector Research Income | Consists of income received from other government sources, including:  
  • Federal Government schemes and business enterprises NOT listed on the ACGR  
  • State and local governments and partly government owned or funded bodies  
  • Research income from CRCs in which the University was not a core participant or signatory |
| Category 3 Income: Industry and Other Research Income | Any research income not meeting the definition of category 1, 2 or 4.  
  • Research grants or contract research with Australian or international industry or non-Australian Government agencies.  
  • Funding through donations, bequests and foundations (both Australian and international) |
| Category 4: CRC Research Income                  | A Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) is created through a Commonwealth Agreement with a Higher Education Provider (HEP). Category 4 income consists of research income received from a CRC in which they were a core participant (i.e. a signatory to the CRC's Commonwealth Agreement.) If the University is hosting or is a core participant of the CRC (i.e. a signatory to the CRC's Commonwealth Agreement), the income is classified as Category 4. Income received from a CRC that is hosted by another institution is classified as Category 2. |
| ACGR                                            | Australian Competitive Grants Register                                                                                                                                                                 |
| ARC                                             | Australian Research Council                                                                                                                                                                             |
| NHMRC                                           | National Health and Medical Research Council                                                                                                                                                             |
| Variation                                       | Any formal change to a project that is agreed upon by all parties via an approved signed agreement or correspondence. This may include changes to project budget, timeframe or milestones. |
| Carry-over                                      | A request to the Finance Office to retain project funds beyond the original end date of an agreement. Carry–Over requests must be supported with variation documentation. This term may also be used to describe the retainment of project funds beyond the current fiscal year. |
Term | Definition
--- | ---
Research Contract/Agreement | This is an agreement to provide research activities under specified negotiated conditions in exchange for specific deliverables as defined by the HERDC definition of research. For University purposes, research contracts include formal contractual agreements, letters of agreement including terms and conditions, signed by both parties, and including those requiring execution under seal.

### Policy Statement

Federation University Australia aims to actively support researchers who seek external funding to support their research endeavours. Further to this, the University will be fiscally accountable and transparent in the way in which it allocates, manages, monitors and reports its activities and outcomes.

### Funding categories

All external research funding sits under one of four categories as per the Higher Education Research Data Collection (HERDC) definitions:

#### Category 1 Income: Australian Competitive Grants

Category 1 funding consists only of income from those research schemes and programs registered on the Australian Competitive Grants Register (ACGR) for the current year.

#### Category 2 Income: Other Public Sector Research Income

Category 2 funding consists of income received from other government sources, including:

- Federal Government schemes and business enterprises NOT listed on the ACGR
- State and local governments and partly government owned or funded bodies
- Research income from CRCs in which the University was not a core participant or signatory

#### Category 3 Income: Industry and Other Research Income

Category 3 funding is research income not meeting the definition of category 1, 2 or 4. This can include

- Research grants or contract research with Australian or international industry or non-Australian Government agencies.
- Funding through donations, bequests and foundations (both Australian and international)

#### Category 4: CRC Research Income

A Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) is created through a Commonwealth Agreement with a Higher Education Provider (HEP).

Category 4 income consists of research income received from a CRC in which they were a core participant (i.e. a signatory to the CRC’s Commonwealth Agreement.) If the University is hosting or is a core participant of the CRC (i.e. a signatory to the CRC’s Commonwealth Agreement), the income is classified as Category 4. Income received from a CRC that is hosted by another institution is classified as Category 2.

### Applications for funding (pre-award)
All applications for external funding must comply with University policies and procedures, and follow the relevant guidelines and funding rules of the funding body. Proposals for research funding must be approved by the relevant Executive Dean/Research Centre Director within the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research & Innovation) portfolio prior to lodgement with Research Services. Where the application is the Executive Dean/Director approval must be sought from a senior signatory i.e. DVC R&I. The Executive Dean/Director is responsible for ensuring the project is academically and financially acceptable to the budget unit. All applications are required to undergo a full compliance and budget check, coordinated by Research Services, prior to submission to the Funding body.

All applications for external research funding must be lodged through Research Services.

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research & Innovation) retains the right to defer submission of any application if it is deemed the application is not up to a competitive standard or is harmful to the University in any way, including potential damage to the integrity or reputation of Federation University Australia, within the bounds of academic freedom and freedom of enquiry.

Acceptance of research funding (post-award)

Contracts, agreements and variations

The Chief Investigator will work with Research Services to formally accept an offer of research funding. Research Services will coordinate the establishment of a research funding contract/agreement. For compliance, audit and legal reasons, all research related contract/agreement and variation negotiations must be documented in writing, either by a fully executed contract or agreement, or signed correspondence.

All contracts, agreements and variations must be reviewed and approved by the Legal Office. Where appropriate the Legal Office will draft, negotiate and modify these documents. The Legal Office will then arrange sign off by the relevant university delegate i.e. DVC (R&I), Vice Chancellor or the University Council, as dictated by funding agreement. The establishment and execution of a research funding contract or agreement will be guided by University policy, specifically the Delegations – Contract, Financial, Staffing and Tender Policy.

Management of research funds

The Chief Investigator must ensure that their research activities fit within the parameters of the project contract/agreement. Contracts and agreements specify how research funds are to be spent, including distribution of funds amongst collaborators, and expenditure against approved budget headings. Any changes to a research contract/agreement must be documented in a revised contract or variation following a formal request either from the Chief Investigator, Funding Body or Partner Organisation. Chief Investigators are responsible for implementing funded projects according to the terms of funding contracts, including meeting project milestones, outputs and conforming to project budgets.

Research Services, or their delegate, will also coordinate compliance monitoring of each research project to ensure that it meets contractual agreements. It is the responsibility of the Chief Investigator to inform Research Services of any changes to the project that deviate from those previously agreed to with the funding body.

Completion

Chief investigators are responsible for preparing progress and final project reports.

All research funds must be expended in accordance with the funding agreement and the Fraud & Corrupt Conduct Control Policy.

Where specified within the funding agreement/contract completed projects will go through an acquittal process, and any unspent funds must be distributed as per the contractual specifications. If the contract is silent on remaining...
funds at the completion of the project, the remaining funds may be used at the discretion of the Executive Dean/ Director.

Depending on the grant income category, the Finance Office, Research Services or the Faculty are responsible for invoicing funding bodies for grant monies and ensuring project accounts are credited accordingly.

**Supporting Documents**

- Applying for Research Funding Procedure
- Management of Research Funds Procedure
- Delegations – Contract, Financial, Staffing and Tender Policy
- Delegations – Contract, Financial, Staffing and Tender Procedure
- Fraud & Corrupt Conduct Control Policy
- Research Development and Grant Manual
- NHMRC Funding Rules for the relevant schemes and programs
- ARC Funding Rules for the relevant schemes and programs
- Australian Competitive Grants Register (ACGR)
- Higher Education Research Data Collection (HERDC) specifications

**Responsibility**

**Chief Investigator**

- Responsible for the funding application, including the budget, adhering to external funding guidelines and following University policy and procedure;
- Responsible for liaising with their Executive Dean and Associate Dean Research or Centre Director, as well as others on their research team, including any internal or external mentor;
- Responsible for meeting all designated internal and external funding application deadlines;
- Takes the lead in managing the project, including monitoring all expenditure against the approved research project budget/account to ensure compliance with contracts/agreements;
- Notifies Research Services of any actual or proposed changes to the executed contract/agreement, including, but not limited to, expenditure of funds, project extensions, etc; and
- Submits milestone and final project reports to the funding body, as per requirements outlined in the funding agreement. Provides Research Services with a copy of all reports.

**Executive Dean/Centre Director**

- Through the Grant Expression of Interest Form (GEOI) and the Grant Approval Coversheet (GAC), the Executive Dean/Centre Director, in consultation with the ADR recommends further progression of the proposed funding application.
- Has primary responsibility for approving the time release of a research team, budgetary implications and infrastructure requirements should the grant application be successful.
- Responsible for all Faculty related matters as they relate to the proposed project.

**Research Services**

- Coordinates all Category 1,2,3 and 4 research applications and contracts/agreements;
- Liaises with the Finance Office and the Legal Office as required;
- Liaises with the Finance Office, who will monitor expenditure against approved research project budgets/accounts, to ensure expenditure is compliant with contracts/agreements and funding guidelines;
• Works with Finance Office to ensure that financial reporting is submitted as obligated in the contract/agreement;
• Coordinates negotiations pertaining to variations, extensions and carry-overs;
• Provides oversight and support for final (non-financial) reporting.

Legal Office
• Reviews, Drafts, negotiates, modifies and/or approves all research funding contracts, agreements and variations.

Finance Office
• Processes requests from Research Services to set up research project codes;
• On request from Research Services, monitors all expenditure against the approved research project budget/accounts to ensure compliance with the contract/agreement;
• Ensures that financial reporting is submitted as obligated in the contract/agreement;
• Provides oversight and support for final (financial) reporting;
• Produce financial acquittals and ad hoc financial reports in consultation with the Chief Investigator and Research Services: and
• Arrange external audits as per funding body requirements.

Vice Chancellor (or delegate)
• The Vice Chancellor or delegate (as per Delegations – Contract, Financial, Staffing and Tender Policy) is responsible for signing off on all research funding contracts/agreements and variations.

Promulgation
The Research Funding Policy will be communicated throughout the University via:
1. an Announcement Notice under ‘FedNews’ website and through the University Policy - ‘Recently Approved Documents’ webpage to alert the University-wide community of the approved Policy;
2. inclusion on the University Policy, Procedure and Forms website; and/or
3. distribution of e-mails to Head of School / Head of Department / University staff; and/or
4. documentation distribution, eg. posters, brochures.
5. Other - please describe

Implementation
The Research Funding Policy will be implemented throughout the University via:
1. Information Sessions; and/or
2. Training Sessions; and/or
3. Other - please describe

Records Management
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Responsible Officer</th>
<th>Minimum Retention Period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contract/Agreement</td>
<td>Legal Office</td>
<td>University Solicitor</td>
<td>7 years after contract has expired.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>