Industry Research Fellowships Guidelines - 2020

About the program

Advance Queensland focuses on supporting Queensland and Queenslanders, including through challenging times.

The 2020 Advance Queensland Industry Research Fellowships program will focus on supporting research that addresses the current COVID-19 pandemic and future impacts, including the social, economic and health impacts and solutions to COVID-19, other potential pandemic or similar scale events.

The following fellowship grants are available:

Short-term fellowships:

- early career fellowships of **up to $90,000** (excluding GST) for **up to 18 months**
- mid-career fellowships of **up to $150,000** (excluding GST) for **up to 18 months**.

*Please note: short-term fellowships can be completed in less than 18 months, if practicable. Applicants will be able to nominate the desired duration of the project and the desired Advance Queensland funding sought, up to the maximum durations and amounts listed above. Advance Queensland funding sought that is less than the maximum available amount must be in increments of $5,000.*

Standard fellowships:

- early career fellowships of **$180,000** (excluding GST) over **three years**
- mid-career fellowships of **$300,000** (excluding GST) over **three years**.

The fellowship funding is paid to the applicant organisation (the Fellow’s employer).

The program is managed by the Department of Innovation and Tourism Industry Development (the department).

Program Objectives

The short-term fellowships will target pressing issues that need to be addressed as soon as possible, for example, some of the medical and health issues to manage the virus and protect Queenslanders.
The standard fellowships of three years duration will target issues that prepare Queensland for future crisis events, and assist Queenslanders to recover following the current COVID-19 pandemic.

Due to the serious nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, preference will be given to short-term fellowships delivering impact and outcomes quickly.

Investment Areas

The Advance Queensland Industry Research Fellowships program will support practical, applied research that will assist in:

- managing the health and medical issues associated with COVID-19, including (but not limited to):
  - identifying people infected with COVID-19
  - developing practices for preventing/minimising the spread of COVID-19
  - developing treatments for people infected with COVID-19
  - developing a vaccine for COVID-19
- managing resource issues, including (but not limited to) developing innovative practices for producing more face masks, protective clothing for medical staff, sanitisers etc.
- developing practices to assist businesses to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, including (but not limited to) the retail, hospitality, tourism, transport, sports and entertainment industries
- assisting Queenslanders to cope with the impact of COVID-19 on their lives
- managing future potential pandemic crises, or similar events, that could severely impact Queensland.

Eligibility Criteria

The applicant organisation

- The applicant organisation must be a Queensland-based agency that conducts research, including universities, government agencies, not-for-profit organisations, and companies.
- The applicant organisation must be registered for GST and have an Australian Business Number.

The proposed Fellow

- The Fellow must be an Australian citizen, or have Australian residency for the duration of the proposed fellowship.
- Nominated candidates for short-term fellowships who do not have residency when they submit their application will be deemed ineligible for funding.
Nominated candidates for standard fellowships who do not have residency at the time of application, if successful, will have up to six months from the date of notification to obtain residency covering the duration of the fellowship.

The Fellow must have a PhD research qualification with:
- up to 5 years post-PhD research experience for early-career fellowships
- 5 to 10 years post-PhD research experience for mid-career fellowships

The post PhD duration is calculated from the conferral date of the PhD to the closing date for applications.

Allowances will be made for time taken away from research when determining the number of post-doctoral research years. For example, time away from research for parenting, caring, illness, or time in non-research roles will be considered as gaps in research. Applicants cannot claim standard recreation leave, sick leave or long service leave as a research gap.

A nominated Fellow for a short-term fellowship must have their PhD conferred as at the closing date for applications.

A nominated Fellow for a standard fellowship who is in the process of completing a PhD, must have their thesis submitted by the closing date for applications. In these cases, if successful, the fellowship cannot commence until the PhD has been approved.

The Fellow must be employed by the applicant organisation in a minimum 50 per cent FTE capacity.

The Fellow must spend a minimum 50 per cent FTE on the fellowship. Consequently, a candidate who is employed by the applicant organisation in a 50 per cent FTE capacity must spend all of that time on the proposed fellowship.

The fellowship funding is the same (full amount) irrespective of the Fellow’s FTE on the fellowship.

There can be no more than one nomination of a given researcher for a fellowship in the current funding round.

Allowances will be made for existing Advance Queensland Research Fellows and Industry Research Fellows to suspend their current fellowships and undertake COVID-19 related research on short-term fellowships.

A researcher who has previously completed a Queensland Government fellowship will be considered for a short-term fellowship to undertake COVID-19 related research, provided the application meets the programs eligibility conditions.

Cash co-funding

The fellowship project must have combined cash co-funding from the applicant organisation and/or partner organisation(s) that equals or exceeds the Queensland Government Advance Queensland funding sought.

For the purposes of this program co-funded “cash” is defined as:
- cash directly contributed to the fellowship by the applicant organisation and/or the partner organisation(s)
“salaries as cash”. This includes the standard salary remuneration and salary on-costs of the Fellow and other dedicated fellowship research/technical staff. Salaries as cash can be claimed for the FTE time that staff spend on the fellowship project for applicant and partner organisation staff. The non-fellowship time of these staff cannot be claimed as a cash contribution.

- Queensland Government non-grant funding (new cash and salaries-as-cash) may be used as co-funded cash, but is capped for this purpose at half of the Advance Queensland funding sought. Queensland Government non-grant funding exceeding the capped amount can still be secured, but cannot be claimed as co-funded cash.
- Queensland Government grant funding, including Queensland Government scholarships, fellowships and project grants, cannot be used as co-funded cash.
- In-kind contributions will not be considered as cash, but may assist in demonstrating applicant and/or partner organisation commitment to the fellowship.

The fellowship project

- The fellowship must address an investment area outlined in these guidelines.
- The fellowship must be undertaken in Queensland.
- The nominated Fellow must reside in Queensland for the term of the fellowship.
- Fellowships should commence as soon as possible once funding decisions are communicated. This is particularly important for short-term fellowships.
- Standard fellowships must be completed over three continuous years, irrespective of the Fellow’s FTE commitment to the fellowship (which must be 50 per cent FTE or higher).
- Short-term fellowships must be completed within 18 months (maximum), but projects that can be completed sooner are welcome. Fellow’s must be at least 50 per cent FTE committed to the fellowship.

Partners

- For proposals where a research organisation is the applicant (e.g. a university), the fellowship project must involve at least one industry/end-user organisation, that is, a private, public or not-for-profit organisation that will progress the translation and practical application of the research. Queensland-based industry/end-user partners are preferred, but national or international partners will be considered for projects where Queensland partners are not attainable.
- For proposals where a business or company that conducts research is the application organisation, the fellowship project must involve at least one Queensland-based research agency as a partner (e.g. a university).
- For the purposes of this program the Australian Institute of Marine Science (AIMS) and the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) are regarded as research organisations and cannot be claimed as industry partners.
• Research agency based Fellows **must** maintain regular interaction with their industry/end-user partner organisation(s), either through physical co-location with the partner (if social distancing rules permit it), or via social media, e.g. video conferencing.

• Nominated Fellows must not have vested interests in partnering organisations. Vested interests include being employed by the partner while undertaking the fellowship; having shares or equity in the partner company; or being on a board or committee in the partner organisation.

**Other partners**

• In addition to the required 1) Queensland-based industry partner for research agency applicants, or 2) Queensland-based research partner for company/business applicants, the fellowship may involve collaboration with other partner organisations (industry or non-industry) that can make significant contributions to the project. These partners can be based in Queensland, interstate, or overseas.

**Other conditions**

• The fellowship is not transferable in cases where the approved Fellow cannot complete the fellowship.

• Fellows should actively promote their research; provide broad fellowship information if required; and attend media/promotion events, if requested by the department.

• The Fellow and applicant organisation must acknowledge the Queensland Government’s funding in all relevant published material, media releases and public statements.

• The department must be advised of any changes likely to impact on the fellowship, including changes that may impact on eligibility, research milestones, project funding or reporting. Please also advise the department of any changes to the contact details of the proposed Fellow.

**Using the fellowship funds**

The Queensland Government fellowship payments will be released to the applicant organisation to administer the grant funding.

The Advance Queensland funding is released in instalments. The first instalment is linked to the execution of the Financial Incentive Agreement (FIA), and subsequent instalments are linked to the submission of satisfactory project reports and their associated financial acquittal statements, as outlined in the FIA.

The Advance Queensland fellowships funding is paid in advance. The funding may be partially or completely recovered by the Queensland Government if the Recipient
is subsequently found to not be entitled to the funding, or has not used the funding in accordance with the fellowship Agreement or the program guidelines.

Upon completion of the fellowship (early or full-term) the total fellowship expenditure must be in accordance with that outlined in the fellowship application.

The funding may be used for the following costs:

**Salary costs**

Salary costs, including standard on-costs (leave loading, superannuation contributions, worker’s compensation contributions, and payroll tax) for key research staff, including:

- the Fellow. The Fellow’s claimed salary must be commensurate with the FTE percentage committed to the fellowship. A Fellow is not entitled to a full-time salary unless they spend 100 per cent FTE on the fellowship.
- the FTE fellowship time of other dedicated fellowship research/technical staff, including post-doctoral research staff.

**Other costs**

Project costs directly related to the fellowship, including:

- consumables required specifically for the fellowship project
- equipment required specifically for the fellowship project
- travel to conduct research for the Fellow and dedicated fellowship research/technical staff
- contract research for services that cannot be performed by the applicant organisation, but are integral to the fellowship project
- conference travel for the Fellow where the Fellow presents fellowship findings, or where the conference content directly relates to the fellowship.

Only eligible expenditure incurred on or after the commencement of the fellowship can be claimed.

**Ineligible expenditure and cash contributions**

Items not eligible for funding, or to be regarded as co-funded cash, include:

- institutional salary on-costs above standard salary on-costs
- institutional overheads and operational costs, including general facility and accommodation related costs
- costs associated with non-fellowship projects/programs of the applicant or partner organisation(s)
- conference travel for approved support staff
- salary costs of non-fellowship activities for the Fellow or other dedicated fellowship staff
- salary costs of the Fellow’s supervisor or mentor
- scholarships (including PhD scholarships), or other fellowships, grants or prizes
- costs associated with administrative support and administrative staff
- contract research for services that can be performed by the applicant organisation
- any non-fellowship related activity.

Assessment criteria
The assessment criteria below will have equal weighting in the assessment process.

1. Project relevance and merit
Provide details of the research proposal, demonstrating that the research has scientific merit, and is well designed and achievable, and (a) for short-term fellowships, can contribute to the management of COVID-19 or (b) for standard fellowships, can contribute to the management of other potential pandemic or similar events.

2. Meaningful collaboration
The application must demonstrate that there is meaningful collaboration# on the fellowship, including appropriate co-funding for the Queensland Government funding sought.

# Meaningful collaboration with partner organisations can be demonstrated by:
- explaining why the secured partners are the most appropriate partners for the proposed project
- outlining the complementary skills and expertise that will be provided to progress and translate the research into practical outcomes within the project timeframe
- outlining how regular interaction with the industry/end-user partner organisation(s) will be maintained, e.g. through physical co-location with the partner (if social distancing rules permit it), or via social media, e.g. video conferencing
- cash-contributions from the partner organisation(s)
- access to specialist equipment and supplies owned by the partner organisation(s)
- access to a mentor in a partner organisation.

3. Clear outcomes and benefits for Queensland
The application must demonstrate:
- clear outcomes/benefits for Queensland by project completion
- how the research findings will be translated into the outcomes/benefits for Queensland.
4. Track record

The application should demonstrate that the Fellow has the research skills to undertake and complete the proposed fellowship, and to ensure that the outcomes of the project will assist in managing an aspect of the COVID-19 crisis, or possible future crises.

Assessment process

Applications will be assessed in a competitive, merit based process against the program's assessment criteria by panels comprised of members with appropriate research and industry background.

Applicants may be contacted during the assessment process to clarify information provided in the application and/or to request additional information to enable the appropriate consideration of the application.

There is no implicit guarantee of approval at any stage in the process.

The decision to award funding is at the discretion of the Queensland Government and all decisions are final. There is no appeals process for unsuccessful applicants.

Fellowship Agreement

For successful applications, the applicant organisation will enter into a legally binding Financial Incentive Agreement (FIA) with the Queensland Government. The applicant organisation automatically signs the FIA by submitting a signed declaration page with the application form, but the FIA is not finalised until the authorised departmental representative signs a separate FIA execution page. This occurs after the applications have been assessed, and the successful applicants approved.

Applicant organisations and nominated researchers must read and accept the terms and conditions of the FIA before applying for funding.

The FIA consists of the Advance Queensland Industry Research Fellowships terms and conditions; the Advance Queensland Industry Research Fellowships guidelines; and the application, including supporting information.

The applicant organisation and the nominated Fellow must not enter into any legally binding arrangements with other parties which prevent them from meeting their obligations under the Advance Queensland Industry Research Fellowships FIA.

Reporting

Recipients of fellowship funding are required to complete reports on the progress of their projects annually, as outlined in the FIA.

As part of the reporting process, recipients must also provide financial acquittal statements, in a format notified by the department, which clearly outline details of the receipt and expenditure of each source of project funding.
The reports and financial acquittal statements must be assessed as satisfactory before the associated fellowship payment is released.

Interim reports and financial acquittal statements may be requested if a fellowship ends prior to the scheduled completion date.

**Privacy**

The Queensland Government collects and collates information from the application form to evaluate applications for the program. Only authorised departmental officers and approved grant assessors have access to this information under the *Financial Accountability Act 2009* for the purpose of assessing the application for funding.

Applicants should note that broad details of successful proposals, agreed outcomes, progress and the level of funding awarded may be published by the Queensland Government.

Some information may be used to promote funded projects.

The Fellow’s personal information will not be disclosed to any other third party without their consent, unless required by law or for the purposes of the *Information Privacy Act 2009*.

For audit purposes, the Queensland Government is required to retain the applications and other supplied support material.

The provisions of the *Right to Information Act 2009* apply to documents in the possession of the Queensland Government.

**How to apply**

Applications for the Advance Queensland Industry Research Fellowships close **1:00 pm AEST, Tuesday 12 May 2020**. The application consists of:

- a completed on-line application form
- a scanned (PDF) copy of the proposed Fellow’s PhD
- scanned (PDF) letters of support from the applicant organisation and partner organisation(s)*
- a signed Financial Incentive Agreement terms and conditions declaration page. The template is available on the Advance Queensland website and must be printed, signed by the nominated Fellow and an authorised representative from the applicant organisation, scanned in PDF, and uploaded with the application form.

*If letters of support from industry/end user partners cannot be submitted with the application, they can provided at a later date. However, they must be received before a fellowship can be awarded.*

All scanned documents can be submitted as part of the on-line application process. Applications cannot be revised after submission, but the department must be advised of any changes that are likely to affect funding eligibility.
Letters of support

Letters of support from the applicant and partner organisations should clearly outline:

- their commitment to, and reasons for supporting, the fellowship project
- the likely benefits to be gained by participating in the fellowship
- the cash co-funding and salaries-as-cash contributions to the fellowship.

Further information

If you have specific questions about the program, please contact the department at email: sciencefunding@ditid.qld.gov.au.