

Bonn-Melbourne Research Excellence Fund 2022 Guidelines for Applicants

Purpose

The Bonn-Melbourne Research Excellence Fund fosters the development of high-quality research activities that include Early Career Researchers (ECRs) in a significant role. Applications from all schools and disciplines are encouraged that propose innovative and sustainable projects built around collaborative research linking researchers from the University of Bonn and the University of Melbourne. The research may take place in any country as long as it is done collaboratively. The expectation is that these initial projects will lead to long-term collaborations, institutional and research relations, and when applicable, generate publications, exhibitions, and/or external funding for ongoing collaboration.

Applications that encourage broad collaborations across schools, disciplines, and units and/or seek to develop new joint PhD opportunities in the future are encouraged. Projects developing digital research links between both institutions are also welcome.

In 2022, up to three applications will be funded (each with two Principal Investigators: one from the University of Bonn and one from the University of Melbourne). Each application will receive up to 10,000 € or \$16,000 AUD from their respective institution. These funds must be used for research (broadly defined) and follow the budget guidelines below. Proposals may include targeted research support such as joint workshops, researcher exchanges, and the formation or development of a collaborative network.

Mutual external collaborators (including researchers from other universities internationally, or those working in non-academic contexts such as industry or government) cannot lead an application but can be involved in the proposed activities at their own expense, where the benefit of their involvement to the collaboration is justified in the proposal.

Key Dates

- **Call opens:** **12 May, 2022**
- **Applications close:** **19 September, 2022**
- **Outcomes announced:** **By mid-November, 2022**
- **Projects commence:** **01 January, 2023**

Application Eligibility

All proposals must be led by, or include in a significant role, ECRs. For the purposes of the fund, an ECR is within 10 years of the conferral date of their PhD, excluding periods of career interruptions.

- **University of Bonn:** Principal investigators from the University of Bonn must be research staff who have completed a doctorate and be able to show proof of their employment at least until the end of the collaborative research project. Previous recipients may not currently reapply to the scheme but may participate as a co-investigator.

- **University of Melbourne:** Principal investigators from the University of Melbourne must hold an appointment at Academic Level A (6) or higher and 0.5 FTE or higher at the time of application and for the duration of the award. Honorary employees whose primary academic affiliation is the University of Melbourne are eligible to lead the application if their primary employer has entered into an agreement with the University for the support of the Australian component of the collaborative activity; or may participate at their own expense if they are otherwise unaffiliated (for example, they hold an emeritus position). Previous recipients may not currently reapply to the scheme but may participate as a co-investigator. The relevant Heads of Department/School must endorse applications.

Proposals should focus on new research areas that have not yet received funding from Bonn or Melbourne or through third-party funding before, unless their application seeks to significantly expand the number of researchers in their collaboration. Questions about eligibility should be directed to the respective institution.

Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI)

Adherence to respective equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) policies are an important feature of this program to ensure that all participants can do their best work, thrive and succeed. Applicant teams should consider how they can take meaningful steps in their future collaborations to foster an environment that values, supports and respects a diverse range of views, knowledge and experiences. Applicants should consider EDI as it applies to gender, indigenous peoples, nationalities, disabilities, and career stages.

Guidelines for budgets

The budget for each project should not exceed 10,000 € or \$16,000 AUD for each side. The maximum allowable expenses for airfares, accommodation and meals/per diems should correspond to the guidelines of the University of Bonn (i.e., NRW Travel Expenses Act/LRKG) and the University of Melbourne. Any activities not addressed below are subject to the rules and regulations of the University of Bonn and the University of Melbourne.

Allowable expenses:

- travel expenses (e.g., economy airfare, train, etc.)
- accommodation
- per diems for faculty or full-time enrolled students/graduate researchers
- costs towards hosting a seminar, conference, workshop, or exhibition
- costs associated with the preparation of joint grant proposals to respective national funders, agencies, international bodies, philanthropic sponsors or foundations
- for University of Bonn only: student assistance by full-time enrolled students (SHK/WHF)

Non-allowable expenses:

- salaries or salary supplementation
- scholarships for PhD candidates
- publication costs
- course/tuition fees
- honoraria
- conference attendance
- equipment
- indirect costs/estates costs

Duration and Funding Limits

Grants should be spent within the period indicated in the project submission or, at a maximum, within 12 months of receipt of funding. The maximum amount that applicants can apply for one project is up to approx. 20,000 € or approx. 32,000 AUD (up to 10,000 € from the University of Bonn and up to \$16,000 AUD from the University of Melbourne). Applications with a smaller budget are also encouraged.

Application Submission

Completed proposals should be submitted as a **joint submission** via the University of Bonn's [program website](#). University of Melbourne PIs are also asked to submit a [Themis Workbench submission](#).

Each proposal must include the following items in the order listed below as **ONE** single PDF.

- a. Names, titles, faculty, school/departments and emails of the University of Melbourne and the University of Bonn applicants
- b. Project title and layperson's abstract of the proposed project (up to 250 words)
- c. Names of other University of Melbourne researchers involved, including name, title, department, role in project
- d. Names of other University of Bonn researchers involved, including name, title, department, role in project
- e. Narrative description of the proposed project for a multi-school, multi-disciplinary audience using the following sub-headings (four-page limit, 12 font, single spaced)
 - i. Project objectives
 - ii. Background and previous work as appropriate
 - iii. Research approach and methods
 - iv. Explanation of how you will evaluate the success of your project
 - v. Plans for future collaboration/funding
 - vi. Anticipated schedule
 - vii. Adherence to equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) policies
- f. Budget and budget justification, with one section for University of Melbourne budget and one section for University of Bonn budget, explaining in detail all anticipated expenditures
 - i. Description of other funds secured or applied for overlapping projects
- g. For the University of Melbourne: Brief letter from the primary PI's Head of Department/School endorsing the application
- h. Curriculum vitae: 2-page maximum, current, for each PI
- i. Curriculum vitae: 1-page maximum, current, for additional team members

Please indicate if internal or external funding for this project has been received in the past and if so, provide the name and date of the award.

Applicants should start preparing their applications well ahead of the closing date to provide time for review and endorsement from the University of Melbourne PI's respective Head of Department/School.

Complete applications must be received by the deadline of 19 September 2022. No extensions will be granted.

Assessment Criteria

- **Academic quality:** What is the academic merit of the proposed work? How will the project contribute to novel thinking and creative outcomes? If applicable, how does the proposal incorporate interdisciplinarity?
- **Project design and rationale:** How clearly presented and justified is the basis for, and design of, the project? How do the proposed activities assist with establishing new and growing emerging research collaborations? What are the anticipated benefits of involving ECRs and/or graduate researchers? Will the project use appropriate research methods to achieve its intended outcomes?
- **Collaborator complementarity:** What is the added value of the new or emerging collaboration? How do the proposed activities combine mutual areas of interest and strength?
- **Potential impact:** What desired outcomes do the planned activities set out to achieve? For example, publications, grant proposals, clinical interventions, technological innovations, exhibitions, performance, enhanced networks and/or research-based seminars, conferences or workshops? What are the anticipated benefits of the activities to local or international communities?
- **Capacity for future collaboration/funding:** What is the potential for this project to foster ongoing collaboration, and through what mechanism(s)? How well does the proposed collaboration plan to access external funding?

A multi-disciplinary selection committee will assess, comment on and score each application, based on the criteria above. Applicants must outline the aims, methods and expected outcomes of the project and should ensure that they address all criteria.

Results

Applicants will be advised of the outcome of their application by mid-November, 2022. Projects will commence on 1 January 2023.

Successful applicants will receive a joint letter of award offer. The offer of award must be accepted in writing, by signing and returning an Acceptance of Award letter by the due date to the International Office at University of Bonn; and by completing and returning a Research Grant Acceptance Form to Research, Innovation and Commercialisation at the University of Melbourne.

Payment

Successful applicants will be awarded up to 10,000 € by the University of Bonn and up to \$16,000 AUD by the University of Melbourne. Awardees will be responsible for managing project funds and for facilitating the sharing of funds with team members where required. Upon submitting complete award agreement documents, successful applicants will receive the funds within one month.

Change of Investigator

If circumstances change – for example, the principal investigator or a team member leaves the project – awardees must provide notification to Research, Innovation and Commercialisation at the University of Melbourne and the International Office at University of Bonn. All changes must be approved in writing.

Extensions

Under exceptional circumstances, no-cost extensions will be approved for a maximum period of 6 months. Applicants seeking an extension must submit a written request at least one month before the end of the grant, along with a revised budget and timeline of activities to Research, Innovation and Commercialisation at the University of Melbourne and the International Office at University of Bonn for approval prior to expiry of the grant.

Publications

Any publications (e.g., abstracts, articles) or dissemination (e.g., public presentations) arising from activities supported by this Grant should acknowledge financial assistance received from the Bonn-Melbourne Research Excellence Fund. Copies of publications or presentations or notification of presentations should be submitted to the International Office at the University of Bonn and Research, Innovation and Commercialisation at the University of Melbourne. The name for the said acknowledgment is “Bonn-Melbourne Research Excellence Fund provided by the University of Melbourne and the University of Bonn.”

Forfeiture of grants

Grants not spent by the due date will be transferred back either to the University of Melbourne or the University of Bonn as applicable so that unspent balances can be re-allocated.

Financial and Reporting Obligations

Recipients will be required to submit a final report to each institution within one month of completion of the project. The report should include an outline of the outcomes of the project, an indication of the project’s sustainability, a summary of lessons learned in undertaking the project and a detailed accounting of funds as required by University policy. University of Bonn recipients who fail to submit a final report will not be permitted to submit future applications for internal funding programs.

Further information and contacts

Any queries about this joint call should be directed to:

University of Bonn

Dr. Christian Klöckner, Partnership and Network Management

E: c.kloeckner@uni-bonn.de

University of Melbourne

Kim Turner, Researcher Development Schemes

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