Research Fellowships
Guidelines for completing applications

Closing Date: Midnight, Sunday 30 August 2015
Submit your Application to: jobs@usc.edu.au

www.usc.edu.au
Guidelines for completing Research Fellowship Expressions of Interest

The following guidelines have been developed to assist applicants in preparing their Expressions of Interest for Research Fellowships.

1. Introduction

The University of the Sunshine Coast (USC) is regionally relevant and recognised, nationally and internationally, for excellence in teaching, research and engagement. The University is committed to building research excellence and international standards in teaching, delivering high quality teaching, learning and graduate outcomes.

The University Research Fellowship Scheme aims to enhance the research capabilities of existing and emerging areas of research strength through the recruitment, development and retention of high quality researchers through early career and senior research fellowship appointments. The scheme aims to promote the nexus between excellent research and high quality teaching.

The University Research Fellowship Scheme represents an opportunity for researchers looking to fast track their careers by making contributions to the enhancement of internationally competitive research programs at USC. These Fellows will work in collaboration with senior USC researchers. A key expectation is that Fellows will be engaged in the production of high quality research outputs that deliver impact to the regional community and beyond. Applicants must establish contact with a prospective supervisor to discuss research opportunities, priorities and alignment with existing research strengths.

Information about current research at USC is available from the research page on the USC website.

Applicants must prepare an application using the Application Form provided and should refer to these guidelines. Each application is assessed by a Fellowship Selection Panel chaired by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research). A research plan provided by each candidate is assessed as part of the selection process. Assessors will also consider each applicant’s publishing, grant income and research linkages record of the past five years.

In this round (2015), new fellows will be appointed as either Early Career Fellows (Level B) or Senior Research Fellows (Level C). The distribution of fellowships across these classifications and eventual research alignment within the University is at the discretion of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research). University Fellowships are engaged on a five-year contract, with a three-year probationary period.

Ongoing appointments may be offered to Fellows with an outstanding record of performance during their Fellowship appointment.

2. Position overview

Fellows are appointed as a staff member within a Faculty and the scheme provides two entry points: Early Career Research Fellow and Senior Research Fellow.

The scheme provides for the progressive integration of Fellows into a research, teaching and service role. During the first two years, the Fellow will have a limited teaching commitment to facilitate the establishment of a productive research program.

Fellows are expected to prioritise the publication of results in journals and other scholarly media appropriate to the research discipline and encouraged to undertake supervision of Higher Degree Research students associated with their research project.
3. **Eligibility**

Applicants will be considered and ranked according to quality and trajectory of their track record, relative to opportunity. Project proposals will also be ranked according to quality and degree of alignment with existing research priorities.

**Qualifications and Experience:**

To be appointed as an Early Career Research Fellow (Level B), applicants:

- are within five years since the award of their doctoral qualification at the time of the closing date of applications, or
- have submitted a PhD (or equivalent) thesis and expect to be awarded a PhD (or equivalent research doctorate) within three months from the closing date of applications. If these conditions are not met, the offer of a Research Fellowship may be revoked
- the proposed project aligns with an identified University research priority

To be appointed as a Senior Research Fellow (Level C), applicants:

- are an established researcher with over five years of research experience since the award of their PhD or equivalent research doctorate
- have an excellent research track record in an identified area of strength, with a proven capacity for research leadership, and
- the proposed project aligns with an identified University research priority

Prior to commencing their Application Form, applicants should make contact with the relevant Faculty and Academic Supervisor to discuss their proposed application and alignment with existing research focus areas.

Applicants can expect that the top ranked Expressions of Interest will be those with evidence of excellent track records relative to opportunity accompanied by a well-designed and presented research project that is aligned to an existing research focus and is made accessible to all the Fellowship Selection Panel members.

4. **Quality and trajectory of the applicant’s track record relative to opportunity:**

Applicants are expected to demonstrate their personal achievement in relation to:

- refereed publications (over the last five years) and other acknowledged research outputs that are discipline specific. Applicants must clearly identify their contribution as distinct from other contributors and provide evidence of the quality of the output (impact factor, citations, etc)
- external funding (internal and external) awarded over the last five years. Applicants must clearly identify their contribution as distinct from other contributors
- esteem measures (key note addresses or invitations to present, prizes and awards, committee/board membership, etc.)
- technology transfer activities
- outreach activities (including engagement with external partners)
- supervision of research students. In the case of all applicants, supervision of higher degree research students and number of completions will also be taken into consideration.
Guidelines

Applicants for Senior Research Fellowships are also expected to demonstrate their experience and capacity to:

- provide research leadership
- establish new linkages with local, domestic and international research groups and manage existing collaborations
- manage and mentor other research staff
- contribute to the research agenda of the host Faculty and University more broadly.

5. Remuneration

Early Career Research Fellows are remunerated on the Level B salary scale, commencing on the first step of the scale. Senior Research Fellows are remunerated at Level C, commencing on the first step of the scale. Annual increments are awarded subject to satisfactory performance.

Salaries above these scales will not be supported by the Fellowship. However, subject to successful negotiation with the appropriate Faculty Executive Dean, supplementation within the level by the host Faculty may be negotiated at the time of appointment where a Fellow is currently remunerated at a higher increment within the level, or where their track record is such that a higher level of remuneration is deemed appropriate.

The current salary schedule is available from the USC link – salary schedule

6. Research Support

Fellows may apply for a research support grant associated with the proposed project. Full justification is required. Two basic principles are used in determining award of research support grants. These are (i) accurate estimates of costs and (ii) a clear explanation of the reasons for all proposed expenditure in relation to the research plan.

Up to $50,000 may be awarded over three years subject to funding available. The continuation of funding in years two and three of the Fellowship to support project related costs are conditional upon the approval of the annual progress reports.

Fellows may also be eligible to apply for Internal Research Grants offered through the Office of Research. Fellows will be encouraged and given institutional support through the Office of Research to apply for external funding.

7. Work Allocations

All Research Fellows will be provided with a comprehensive Position Description on appointment.

Fellows are progressively integrated into a quality research and teaching role within a Faculty so that by completion of the Fellowship, they are effectively engaged in a role entailing 40% research, 40% teaching and 20% engagement.

This progression is negotiated through formal Performance Planning and Review discussions. The allocation and distribution of annual teaching hours is subject to negotiation with the Head of School and will be linked to appropriate program offerings, which may be based on semester or session delivery.
8. **Performance Planning and Review (PPR)**

Fellows participate in annual formal PPR discussion, conducted in accordance with the University’s *Performance Planning and Review (PPR) - Managerial Policy*.

Appointments are on a five-year fixed-term basis with a probationary period of three years. Six months prior to the completion of the fifth year of the Fellowship period the Fellow may apply for an ongoing appointment within the relevant Faculty. The Fellow will provide an evidence based portfolio to the relevant Executive Dean. The Executive Dean will consider the evidence based portfolio with the assistance of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research) and the relevant Head of School/Centre Director. After that consideration, should the Executive Dean consider that the Fellow is suitable for ongoing appointment such an appointment will be offered for commencement on the expiration of the Fellowship period.

9. **Fellowship Reporting**

Fellows are required to submit an annual progress report that includes a budget acquittal of any research support funding received.

Fellows are also required to submit a final report to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research) one month prior to the conclusion of a Fellowship.

10. **Completing the Application Form**

   a. **Cover Sheet**

      All sections of the cover sheet must be completed.

   b. **Track record**

      - Academic record and previous employment are to be listed on the Application Form at B1 and B2
      - Research outputs over the last five years are to be provided at B3. Where your output is collaborative, provide details of your role and contribution.
      - A summary of Grant and Research Income is to be provided at B4.
      - Details of Research Grants is to be provided at B5.
      - Details of Research Supervision is to be provided at B6.
      - Use your Curriculum Vitae to underline your research career highlights – including your best four publications; evidence of your capacity for research leadership; your

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<th>Fellowship Year</th>
<th>Research</th>
<th>Teaching</th>
<th>Engagement</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
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ability to mentor and supervise higher degree researchers; awards or prizes linked to your research; collaborations and linkages that you have established; and any contributions that you have made to the development of research agendas.

c. **Project Proposal**

Your project proposal is a key part of the Application Form and you should keep your audience in mind when writing your proposal. Each application is assessed by a panel of highly qualified researchers however; they may not all be experts in the discipline area of your application. Where necessary the advice of external experts can be used as part of the assessment process.

Keep to the word and page limits for each section.

It is essential that you link your research to future developments and you identify visible outputs, i.e. the number of journal articles expected and the journals to which you anticipate submitting these to (other outputs might include books, conference papers or creative works).

You will also need to provide a statement regarding the potential scope and development of the project and include the details of any future funding opportunities you expect to pursue as a direct result of the work.

d. **Budget**

It is important that your budget and methodology align and link to the research question. Use the table provided to detail your costs and it is essential that the budget is clear, well-argued and justified.

If items in the budget appear to be “add-ons,” and unjustified the project may only be partially funded.

e. **Academic Research Referees**

Referees will be contacted and asked to provide a statement for all shortlisted applications and where further information is needed during the assessment process.

f. **Academic Supervisor Statement Form**

Each applicant must discuss their research plans with a proposed Academic Supervisor. Only Expressions of Interest which have the certified support of a supervisor and Faculty will be considered.

Applicants will complete section A of the Academic Supervisor Statement and give this to their proposed supervisor. Applicants should notify their proposed supervisor when they have submitted their application so that the supervisor can complete the form and submit by the closing date of Sunday 30 August, 2015.

If the prospective supervisor is willing to host the applicant for the term of the fellowship they will complete Section B and seek the required certification from the Head of School/Centre Director and the Faculty Executive Dean. The completed form is to be sent to Human Resources by the closing date of the applications, Sunday, 30 August, 2015.

If the prospective Academic Supervisor is not willing to act as a host they must inform the applicant during initial discussions and before the closing date for applications.
11. **Submitting your Application Form**

Only electronic Application Forms will be accepted, with a maximum of four attachments. Make sure your Application Form reaches Human Resources by 5pm on the advertised closing date as late Application Forms may not be accepted.

Your Application Form is to be submitted to jobs@usc.edu.au

Contact Human Resources for further information regarding submission of applications.

12. **How Applications are processed**

Acknowledgment of your application will be made as soon as possible after the application closing date. Shortlisting usually takes place within four weeks of the closing date for applications.

Your Application Form will be read by all members of Fellowship Selection Panel and assessed. The Selection Panel will rank the applications and decide which applicants are placed on a shortlist. Statements from prospective Academic Supervisors will be taken into consideration during the shortlisting process.

Shortlisted applicants will be invited by telephone or email to attend an interview for the position. Interviews will be scheduled within six to eight weeks of the closing date of applications.

Shortlisted applicants should advise the person arranging the interview of any access or support requirements they need addressed for them to attend the interview (eg accessible parking or adaptive equipment).

13. **The Selection Process**

The University is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Selection to advertised positions is based on merit, which means that the person judged most able to perform the duties of the position will be appointed to the position. The principle of ‘equity’ is also applied to the University’s recruitment and selection practices, which means that the University will seek to create conditions under which all persons will have an equal opportunity to seek and obtain employment.

The panel is under no obligation to recommend the award of a Fellowship if the quality of applicants is not rated highly enough.

14. **Notification of appointment**

If successful, you will be contacted by the Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research) and will receive a letter of offer in the mail. Successful applicants should not make any decisions regarding the offer of employment until the written letter of offer is received, read and understood. If you have been interviewed and are unsuccessful, you will receive notification in writing, usually within two to three weeks of interview.

Key Contacts:

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<tr>
<th>Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research)</th>
<th>Faculty of Arts and Business</th>
<th>Faculty of Science, Health, Education and Engineering</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tel: +61 7 5430 2867</td>
<td>Tel: +61 7 5456 5752</td>
<td>Tel: +61 7 5430 2840</td>
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<td>Email: <a href="mailto:PVCResearch@usc.edu.au">PVCResearch@usc.edu.au</a></td>
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