

The University of Divinity provides three rounds of funds to support certain research activities of HDR candidates and honorary, library and academic staff.

*The Research Grants are **highly competitive**, and all applicants will be ranked in order of the strength of the application.* The Research Grants Panel reserves the right not to award any grants in any particular round if it deems the quality of the applications to be insufficient to merit an award.

### 1. Background

In May 2015 the Academic Board accepted the eleven recommendations of the Grants and Scholarships Review Panel Report. These included development of a new Research Grants Policy, to be administered by a Research Grants Panel replacing the existing Grants and Scholarships Working Group. The policy has implemented the recommendations of the review.

The Council has continued to provide funds for Research Grants to support the production and dissemination of high quality research by the University. This includes the support of academic staff, honorary researchers, higher degree by research students, and libraries associated with the University to undertake activities that lead to the production and dissemination of research, and to the attraction of external or other funds to support research.

### 2. Research Grants Policy

Applicants should ensure that they have read through the Research Grants Policy before lodging the application with the Research Office.

<https://www.divinity.edu.au/documents/research-grants-policy/>

### 3. Completing the Application Form

Application forms that miss any component that is required, such as a Dean's/Supervisor's signature or reports on UD grant awards within the past ten years, will not be considered by the Panel.

While there is no Policy requirement for an application to be typed rather than handwritten, the former suggests more than the latter that time and care has been taken in completing the application form in a professional manner.

### 4. Application Categories and Amount

#### (1) Category of Research Grant Applied for

Applicants must ensure they tick the appropriate category box. For example, students and honoraries are not eligible for Large Grants, and if the wrong category box is checked then the Panel will be unable to consider the application.

#### (2) Amount Applied for

Small research grants are normally given up to the value of \$4000. Applications should not ask for an amount greater than this. However, awards up to the value of \$5000 can be given in exceptional circumstances, and a case must be provided as to why the application should be considered as qualifying for these exceptional circumstances.

## **5. Submitting the Application**

### **(1) Electronic Submission**

All applications are to be submitted to the Research Office in an electronic format (Policy 7.6).

### **(2) Timely Submissions**

The Panel is unable to consider any further material submitted after the closing deadline, such as a revised application form or signatures unless the Panel specifically requests further information from the applicant.

## **6. Criteria for Panel Assessment**

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### **(1) Applicant's Track Record**

Demonstration of a research production and/or dissemination track record is a major component of the application. The track record is evaluated as relative to the professional academic level of applicant, and relative to opportunity (a case should be made regarding that lack of opportunity that the applicant requests to be taken into consideration by the Panel). The most robust applications are able to demonstrate high level research and high quality, peer reviewed, output, particularly over the previous five-year period. This track record for academic staff and honorary researcher applicants indicates that the applicant has been able to publish at an appropriate level to raise the quality of the University's research profile and impact in the Excellence in Research Australia (ERA) exercise.

### **(2) Research Outcome**

Applications should have clear research outcomes, and those outcomes should enhance the research reputation of the University of Divinity through the production and dissemination of high quality research projects that, for academic staff and honorary researcher applicants, will contribute positively to the University's ERA submission.

Consequently, applications with modest outcomes are extremely unlikely to succeed in a research grant competition: for example, attendance at a conference; presentation of a paper at a small local conference; publication of a book project with a low level local publishing house; and so on.

The best applications demonstrate strategic planning and ambition: they are able to indicate multiple forms of output, and therefore they offer particular value for money.

Where applicants are seeking a Research Grant to cover publication costs the application must provide evidence of: the cost, and either proof that publishers that do not require a subvention have been unsuccessfully sought or a case for the suitability of the publisher requiring a subvention for the particular output.

(3) Clarity and Thoroughness of Application

Applications should articulate the aims, rationale and content of the project being applied for substantially and clearly. Do not assume the Panel knows the research area, the quality of the conference, the level of the conference participants, and so on. The Panel should not be required to read between the lines of the application or to have to guess what is intended in the description. **The application should promote itself, and confidently demonstrate its value to the University.**

(4) Seed Funding

The University hopes to encourage high quality applications for external research grants, and Large Grant applications are strengthened by planning the application for the purposes of 'seed funding'.

(5) Large Grants

The Large Grant category of research funding is not well served by applications that intend to use it as a way of simply requesting more funds for individual researchers than a small grant is able to provide. The category instead provides an opportunity for expansive research projects involving co-operative work. **Value for money** remains an important consideration for the Panel when ranking these applications in competition with the Small Grant applications. Therefore, applications for significant funds should demonstrate considerable research output and/or impact.

## 7. Research Grant Consultation

Applicants are able to seek consultations with the Director of Research and the Research Development Co-ordinator.