2018 RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS - Key changes and important information

Key Changes

- The requirement for professors to apply at PRF/SPRF levels and provide a justification if applying at SRF levels has been removed.
- ‘Assessing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Contributions’ text included in Attachment A: Category Descriptors.
- Section 5.1 Clarification that it is expected applicants ‘will hold’ instead of ‘must hold’ a PhD
- Section 9.1 Applicants can inform NHMRC of any special considerations for their interview via a webform.
- Section 10.4 Clarification regarding parental leave.

Critical Dates:
10 January 2017 – internal review by RIC
25 January 2017 – final submission to RIC*

* RIC process for Submission of Authority to Submit form has changed. Hard copy of form is no longer required, now to be submitted to RIC by email as one PDF form via nhmrc-peoplsupport@unimelb.edu.au

Grant Proposal template
Formatting requirements have been slightly ‘softened’ for all schemes. Some changes are:

- NHMRC now ‘recommend’ a minimum of TNR 12pt font be used (including text within diagrams, graphics and headings) rather than rather than ‘requires’ this font be used.
- Labelling graphs and images – description and/or legends must be no smaller than 12pt Times New Roman. The labelling of graphs and parts of images may be in reduced font, but should be readable by assessors
- Tables are exempt from minimum font but it must be readable
- *NEW* If the assessor cannot read the application due to inconsistency with any of the above formatting requirements, or a combination of any of them, the assessor is not compelled to consider the improperly completed section in their assessment or complete the assessment of the application, on the grounds that the application does not comply with the formatting requirements.

(Refer 2017 Funding Rules Clause 10.3.3 for full details of formatting requirements)

NHMRC Eligibility
Applicants must not include in any part of their application, including their CV/Profile:

- links to external websites, apart from references to journal articles, guidelines, government reports, datasets and other outputs that are only available online. Where links are included, provide the URL in full e.g. the NHMRC website https://www.nhmrc.gov.au
- publication metrics such as Journal Impact Factors, and the previous Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) Ranked Journal List, consistent with the recommendations from the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment.

Translation Advancement Incentive (TAI)
TAI is designed to help bridge the gap between health research and health practice or policy, or between health research and commercial or industry developments. For Research Fellowships, the TAI is $15,000 per annum for five years, in addition to the base Research Fellowship Package. For part-time Fellowships, this amount will be adjusted in accordance with the FTE of the part-time Fellowship. The two options available are Health Practice or Industry TAI. If you select “Industry” TAI, you are required to fill out the B-ICP: Industry/Commercial Partner (RF) page. You must provide the name and address of the industry/commercial partner(s). You are also required to upload a letter of support on the industry/commercial partner(s) organisation’s letterhead. Applicants should refer to the Research Fellowships Scheme-Specific Funding Rules section 8.3.1 for a full description of the TAI.

Funding Rules to take special note of:
Funding Rules Attachment A – Category Descriptors guide to score applications against assessment criteria.
Funding Rules Attachment B - Statement of Expectations describes various levels available.
Funding Rules Attachment C – *NEW* clearly explains correct type and corresponding level to select (table format).

5.2 Time Commitment
5.2.1 Full-time Fellows are expected to devote a minimum of 0.8 FTE to achieving the outcomes of the Fellowship. The remaining 0.2 FTE may be spent on activities directly related to the research under the Fellowship, including clinical responsibilities, commercial activities, policy development and public health activities. Fellows cannot use this time to engage in financial, administrative, academic or managerial activity beyond that which directly relates to their own research.
5.2.2 Part-time Fellowships are available to Fellows who are unable to conduct research full-time (see subsection 5.2.2) and are for researchers who have either:
   - parental or carer responsibilities where work time is reduced
   - personal circumstances such as illness.

Part-time Fellows must devote at least 80% of their part-time commitment to achieving the outcomes of the Fellowship, e.g. if a part-time Fellow is employed at 0.5 FTE, at least 80% (i.e. 0.4 FTE) of that time should be devoted to research. The non-fellowship time cannot be spent on other research, teaching, clinical or practitioner responsibilities, or administrative roles as identified in section 5.3 of this document.

5.3 Other Appointments

A successful applicant, who in addition holds an appointment such as a full time academic teaching role, directorship of an independent Medical Research Institute, Institute or Centre under university or hospital governance, or a position as Dean, Deputy Vice-chancellor or Pro Vice-chancellor with substantial administrative responsibilities, must relinquish their additional administrative appointment before the Fellowship can commence. Similarly, a Fellow must relinquish their Fellowship if they choose to retain or take up one or more such appointments.

5.4 Changes in Employment Circumstances

Recipients of a Research Fellowship are not entitled to receive additional salary from another full-time position in conjunction with their Research Fellowship. Fellows are required to inform the NHMRC (refer to NHMRC Funding Rules 2017, section 12) if changes to their employment circumstances occur which affect their eligibility to hold a Research Fellowship. If this happens, the Research Fellowship will cease from the point when the change occurred.

7.4 Sixth Year Extensions

Sixth Year Extensions will not be offered to new Fellows for funding commencing from 2016 onwards. However, NHMRC recognises that a transitional period is required for Fellowships that commenced in 2015 or earlier.
   - Fellows in the final year of a Fellowship for which funding commenced in 2015 or earlier, who are unsuccessful with their reapplication, will be recommended for a sixth year of funding at their current level.
   - If such an application receives an overall score of less than five at any stage of the peer review process, a sixth year extension will not be granted.

Decisions in relation to the granting of Sixth Year Extensions are based on the merits of the current application and funding policy.