AFFORDABLE HOUSING
Hallmark Research Initiative
SEED FUNDING SCHEME ROUND 1 (2019)
Guidelines for Applicants

1. INTRODUCTION

The Hallmark Research Initiatives are intended to enable the maturing of focused research communities that build on research strengths across the University but are broader than existing research groups. They have a distinctive interdisciplinary emphasis and are in selected areas where significant potential to grow and open up new funding opportunities has been identified. Initiatives are expected to identify and involve potential external collaborators, both research providers and/or end users.

Melbourne is facing rapid population growth and a severe housing affordability crisis. Home purchase is among the least affordable in the world and there is an acute shortage of low-cost rental housing. House price growth has driven rising affordability stress among low-income households, and negatively impacts on access to jobs and essential services, physical and mental health, and the risk of homelessness. Addressing the urgent need to better understand and deliver affordable housing in Australia, the Affordable Housing Hallmark Research Initiative will bring together interdisciplinary teams of researchers to further understanding and develop solutions for affordable housing: its design, planning, finance, delivery, affordability, accessibility and use. To this end, the Affordable Housing Hallmark Research Initiative aims to foster research across four inter-connected lenses: design innovation, design precedents, markets and policy and health. The Initiative will convene seed funding opportunities, a series of events, collaboration and publication opportunities and symposia.

2. OBJECTIVES

The overarching goal of the first Affordable Housing Hallmark Research Initiative seed funding round (2019) is to instigate interdisciplinary research partnerships, with the aim of generating new knowledge, insights, teams, impact and ideas on topics related to affordable housing. A key requirement for seed funding applications will be cross-disciplinary research and early career researchers will ideally be included in teams.

3. FUNDING

Grants will be awarded from a total pool of $55,000 and we are looking to fund at least 1 project per lens in this round. Applications will be assessed by a panel from the Affordable Housing Hallmark Research Initiative steering committee, along with members of its external advisory group, comprised of industry, not-for-profit and government stakeholders. Internal funding to a maximum of $15,000 per proposal will be awarded. However, teams may seek additional funding from external parties in the form of monetary contributions or in-kind contributions.

An additional $5,000 top up is available from the Connected Cities Lab (https://research.unimelb.edu.au/connected-cities) for a project that, on top of existing seed fund
requirements, will propose a clear engagement with international institutions, events or processes, with the goal of connecting cutting edge urban research about pressing global challenges for cities in developed and developing countries. In addition to funding, the Lab can also provide support, guidance and engagement with key international organisations to facilitate this initiative.

An additional $5,000 top up is available from the Melbourne Disability Institute (https://disability.unimelb.edu.au/) for a project that relates to accessibility or inclusion.

Funding will be restricted to the following:

- Employing research assistance to facilitate the project
- Support of research enabling activities (i.e., seminars, workshops, etc.)
- Modest expenses for equipment (i.e., audio recorder for interviews) or research materials (i.e., buying ABS data, HILDA licence fees, etc.)
- Modest travel expenses for fieldwork or meetings with partners

Note that funding towards conference travel or related support for University of Melbourne staff, internal infrastructure, and service charges are not permissible. While applicants can request up to $15,000 internal funding per application, final amounts awarded will be decided by the Affordable Housing Hallmark Research Initiative steering committee. Similarly, external partners involved in reviewing applications may choose to match funding on specific projects.

4. COLLABORATION WITH EXTERNAL PARTNERS

Research projects that contribute to a greater understanding of contemporary affordable housing concerns and aims to build relationships between researchers, industry, not-for-profit and government actors are encouraged. To support research partnerships and connections, the Affordable Housing Hallmark Research Initiative will:

a) Fund successful research projects that are submitted with financial or in-kind support from an external partner
b) Host a ‘pitch’ event for short-listed projects that will allow project teams to propose a research topic and receive feedback from the steering committee and select housing partners. These partners may choose to support specific projects through financial or in-kind contributions (success is not dependent on receiving support from an external partner)
c) Host symposia and presentations that allow for the dissemination of research findings to researchers, communities and industry and government stakeholders

5. THE PITCH SESSION

Shortlisted applicants will be asked to attend a pitch session on 14 August 2019 to give a 5 minute presentation on their proposed project with 7 minutes for questions. Presentations should explain the problem they intend to address, the novel contribution of their research, their proposed methodology and a brief description of the research team.

6. ELIGIBILITY

This funding round is open to academics at all levels, but preference will be given to teams that include at least one early career researcher (Level A, B, or C who has received their PhD within the last 5 FTE-equivalent years). Applications are expected to be developed by a team of at least two or more researchers and each application must nominate a Chief Investigator (CI).

Applications must include at least two researchers from different disciplinary backgrounds, and from different schools or research institutes.
The CI must hold a salaried academic appointment at the University of Melbourne of at least 0.5 FTE for the duration of the project and the reporting period (12 months post awarding of the grant). If the CI leaves the employment of the University, CI responsibility will need to be transferred to another member of the team.

7. ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Research proposals will be assessed by the steering committee based on the following criteria

- Will the project advance knowledge on affordable housing design, planning, policy, finance, delivery or social or health impacts?
- Does the team have the knowledge, skills and capacity to undertake the proposed project?
- Is the project feasible within the timeframe and budget proposed?
- Will the research have impacts or outcomes that support affordable housing delivery, policy, design, implementation, funding or management?

8. KEY DATES, APPLICATION FORM, AND SUBMISSION

Key dates:

- Applications made available 21 May 2019
- Q & A event to learn more about seed funding 30 May 2019
- Applications must be submitted by close of business (5pm) 19 July 2019
- Short List Announced 02 August 2019
- ‘Pitch’ Session 14 August 2019
- Successful projects announced 23 August
- Funds will be made available to successful applicants as soon as possible after notification.

Application form (in brief):

The application form consists of four elements:

1) Administrative summary and checklist
2) Proposal
3) Detailed Budget
4) Each team member must provide a CV of no more than one page including:
   a) Current position
   b) Expertise relevant to the proposed role in the current proposal including track record
   c) List of current grants and/or publications in areas relevant to the proposal

Submission process:

Applications must be submitted as a single pdf file via email to affordable-housing@unimelb.edu.au, using this format: Email subject and filename AH-SF-R1-DDMMYY-CI initial+lastname e.g., AH-SF-R1-160218-jsmith

9. CONDITIONS OF THE GRANT

- The decision of the Affordable Housing Hallmark Research Initiative selection committee is final.
- Grant offers must be accepted in writing by the CI and the relevant head of department/school/institute.
- The CI will be the contact person for all administrative matters and is responsible for internal reporting requirements.
• Successful teams are expected to provide appropriate acknowledgement of Affordable Housing Hallmark Research Initiative support when communicating research outcomes.
• The CI must ensure that the research is in accordance with University policy, including compliance with research ethics and financial expenditure guidelines. No project may proceed unless the appropriate ethical or other required clearances have been obtained.
• Funding is for one year only from the date of commencement (that is, when the funding is received). Funds must be expended by the completion date. Extensions may be granted under extraordinary circumstances, only at the discretion of the steering committee.
• CIs must comply with any instructions or conditions in the post award documentation relating to approved items of expenditure. The CI is responsible for ensuring the expenditure of the grant is broadly in accord with the budget presented in the application and is consistent at all times with the nature and aims of the specific project approved and the objectives of the scheme.
• The research team awarded the funding will be expected to participate in a research symposium / workshop hosted by the Affordable Housing Hallmark Research Initiative approximately six months after the grant is awarded.
• The CI will be required to provide a written research and financial report on the outcomes of the project within one month of project completion.
• The Affordable Housing Hallmark Research Initiative may use titles and summaries of funded proposals and final reports for promotional purposes and publications on our website and in other communications. Please keep this in mind when determining funding proposal titles.

CONTACT: Please email affordable-housing@unimelb.edu.au for any inquiries. Please use the subject headline “seed funding r1 query”.