

Faculty Trust Fellowships



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for 2022 funding

Date last revised: **11 NOVEMBER 2021**

1. Can a person who is not currently employed apply for a trust fellowship?

Yes, you may apply for the fellowships even though you are not currently in employment. Please indicate your most recent appointment in your application and note the date that the position finished.

2. Can Interstate / International researchers apply for a trust fellowship?

Yes, in addition to current University of Melbourne staff, these fellowships are also open to researchers not currently employed by the University. This includes researchers-based interstate or outside of Australia.

Successful applicants will be required to relocate to Victoria and be based at the University of Melbourne in order to undertake the fellowship.

International researchers are able to apply and if successful will need to obtain the right to work in Australia to be able to take up the fellowship. This will be arranged through HR as part of the recruitment process.

3. What are the eligibility criteria?

The scoring of applications will follow the principles used in the assessment of National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) Investigator Grants.

Applicants will have up to 10 years of relevant postdoctoral experience and be seeking to establish a long-term career at the University of Melbourne. Allowance will be made for clinical researchers where specialist training has delayed or coincided with the postdoctoral training period. Only in exceptional circumstances will applicants have less than three years' experience since the award of their PhD.

Evidence of prior overseas postdoctoral experience is viewed favourably but is not mandatory.

4. Why does my application need the signature of the Head of Department/School?

The fellowship needs to be aligned with a research group in the Faculty. For more information regarding the Faculty refer to <https://mdhs.unimelb.edu.au/#about> and Find an Expert <https://findanexpert.unimelb.edu.au/>

Once you have identified the Department/School and group that you wish to work with you should discuss your proposed project with the group head and Department/School and seek their support of your application prior to the submission of your application to the Faculty. This is to ensure that the Department/School can provide you with the appropriate resources to complete the research as the fellowship is for the provision of your salary and limited Grant in Aid project support.

5. If I want to apply for more than one fellowship, do I need to submit a separate application for each?

No, one application is all that is required. However, please ensure you select all the fellowships for which you wish to be considered in the Application.

6. Do I need to submit copies of my transcripts?

Not for the initial application. If successful in your application, you will be required to provide a copy of your academic transcripts through HR prior to commencement.

7. Do I need to submit a hard copy of my application?

No, only electronic copies are required. Electronic signatures within the application are also sufficient.

8. Do the referees' reports have to fit into the allotted space?

No, there is no limit to the length of the referees' reports, although the expectation would be one A4 page.

9. How should referee reports be submitted?

Applicants must arrange for referee reports to be submitted to the Faculty directly by the referees themselves – that is, independently of the applicant and the application form.

10. Are there any requirements or limitations on who can be a referee?

The referees must be from different organisations. For example, if you are a current University of Melbourne researcher, then one referee can be from the University but one must be currently based elsewhere. Likewise, if you are not currently employed by the University, one of your referees can be from the University with one based elsewhere, or else both can be from external (and different) organisations.

Of your two referees, one should not be a current or former direct supervisor, regardless of where that referee is currently based.

These conditions are in place in order to obtain an objective assessment of your research achievements and reputation in your field.

11. Do I need to submit separate referees' reports for each fellowship?

No, one set of referees' reports is sufficient.

12. Can my referees submit a letter instead of completing the form?

Yes, but your referee should still sign the referee's report and submit this together with their letter of recommendation.

13. Can I use the head of lab as my referee?

Yes, it is acceptable for you to have the head of lab as your referee. However, please note the stipulations outlined in the answer to Question 10 above.

14. What should I consider when selecting my referees?

Consider who is best placed to comment on your track record and likelihood of future success. It is also important to select referees who will be able to submit their reports on time, as late reports will not be accepted and missing reports are likely to significantly disadvantage the competitiveness of your application.

15. How do I submit my application?

Complete the Faculty Trust Fellowship application form and obtain the relevant signatures for submission. Applications are submitted via SmartyGrants which can be accessed via the main Faculty Trust Fellowship page: <https://staff.unimelb.edu.au/mdhs/research-development/research-collaboration-and-funding/faculty-trust-fellowships>

16. Can I delay the start date of my fellowship?

Yes, you can delay the start of the fellowship by six months, in consultation with your proposed supervisor and Head of Department/Centre. Often fellowships are available in the following year, so you may want to postpone your application if you know that you will not be able to commence within the first half of 2022.

17. Can I retain my fellowship if I am subsequently awarded another fellowship?

No, if you are awarded a nationally competitive fellowship during the duration of your Faculty Trust Fellowship, you must relinquish the Faculty Trust Fellowship. These Fellowships are intended to support exceptional researchers only until they are successful in obtaining alternative funding.

18. What are the Medical Research Institute (MRI) based Departments referred to in the Position Descriptions?

- Florey Department of Neuroscience and Mental Health
- The Sir Peter MacCallum Department of Oncology
- Medical Bionics Department
- The Department of Medical Biology (Walter and Eliza Hall Institute)

19. Can Faculty Trust Fellowships be taken up within MRI based Departments?

Fellows may perform some of their research in an affiliated institute of the Faculty while having an appointment in a Department or School*. As the Trust Fellowships are the result of philanthropic funding bequeathed to the Faculty, Fellows cannot be employed in an MRI based university department (note: Bickart Fellows must be employed within the Melbourne Medical School).

*Or Centre in the Melbourne School of Population and Global Health

20. Am I eligible for a clinical loading?

Clinical loadings are not paid to medical practitioners who are employed as research staff, except where they are members of a clinical department and have patient-care responsibilities in the context of sessional services provided on behalf of the department to a teaching hospital. Please see the [policy](#) (Section 9) for further information.

21. Does the faculty recognise pre-prints (e.g. bioRxiv) as publications, in line with current NHMRC Policy?

Yes, the Faculty will consider preprints as publications, aligning with the NHMRC announcement in August 2021: On advice from the NHMRC Research Committee (RC) and considering international practice, NHMRC will accept preprints as publications for track record assessment purposes from October 2021. NHMRC defines a preprint as a complete and public draft of a scientific document, yet to be certified by peer review. To be considered in this category, a preprint:

- must not have undergone peer review
- must be available in a recognised scientific public archive or repository such as arXiv, bioRxiv, Peer J Preprints, F1000 Research, etc.
- should be searchable via a digital object identifier (DOI); for preprints that are incrementally updated as work progresses, each version should have a unique DOI and only the latest version of the work should be included in the grant application.

22. Is there scope to reduce the FTE of the Annemarie Mankiewicz-Zelkin Fellowship?

It is preferred at 0.5 FTE however a lower commitment may be requested as part of the application

23. Does faculty accept the inability to access the lab during the COVID-19 pandemic as a defined career disruption?

Yes, for this scheme, faculty accepts the inability to access laboratories due to the COVID pandemic as a defined career disruption and will accept the correlating time component. Please define this clearly within the career disruption section of the application.