Purpose of the Mid-Career Research Fellowship Scheme (MCRFS)
The MCRFS awards the highest level of funding support to individual researchers of all the Faculty of Arts research funding schemes (maximum of $15,000). This funding enables the partial buyout of teaching duties for up to one semester.

The scheme is aimed at Level B and C academics who aspire to a concentrated period of research time in order to consolidate work on a prestigious publication/s. It is also open to researchers who seek to gain research momentum at a key time in their career.

The scheme aims to provide successful applicants with an opportunity to concentrate on achieving important publication goals, which will enhance their track record for competitive research funding.

- The teaching buyout is “partial” because the maximum amount which can be applied for is $15,000
- The funding may be used to relieve teaching duties only (lectures, tutorials, marking). Other responsibilities (e.g., HDR supervision, unit convening, committees) must still be managed. Note: applicants can apply for assistance for support with convening large units.
- Outputs from the proposed research project are expected to be published in high quality outlets and should meet the ERA definitions of A1, B1, and C1 – not E1. However, if the output is an edited book (ERA A3), applicants will be expected to have contributed a chapter and a substantial introduction to the book and will need to make a strong case for the significance of the publication.

Up to four MCRFs will be awarded in 2019 over two rounds.

Eligibility
- Staff must be on a permanent teaching and research contract, at Levels B or C; and
- Have been awarded their PhD prior to 1 July 2016.
- Must meet the Faculty criteria for being research active.
- If applicants are eligible now for, or have been awarded an MQ New Staff grant including Return from Parental Leave grant since 1 July 2017 they are not eligible to apply.
- If applicants have had a period of OSP in Semester 1 2019 or are intending to apply for OSP in 2020, they are not eligible to apply for this scheme.
- Staff members who are employed to undertake a specific project or projects (e.g., holders of MQRF, DECRA or Future Fellowship grants) are not eligible to apply.

Unsuccessful applicants cannot reapply to this scheme within 12 months. Successful applicants are not permitted to reapply to this scheme.

Funding
Eligible items of expenditure include:

- Teaching Relief:
  - Applicants will need to provide a full costing of the proposed buyout (including 17% on-costs)
  - In the budget justification applicants must explain exactly what teaching commitment is being bought out, including details of the applicant’s full load and expected enrolment numbers
- Research assistance:
  - Applicants must provide a full costing (including 17% on-costs)

1 See the Publication Specifications at: https://staff.mq.edu.au/research/project-management/docs/All_Publications_Categories的信息.pdf
In the budget justification applicants will need to demonstrate how research assistance will support the development of their track record.

Ineligible items of expenditure include:

- Equipment, maintenance and publication costs
- Travel funding – however, travel funding may be requested from the Faculty Research Travel Scheme in conjunction with this award.

**Application Process**

There is no application form. Applicants should supply the requested information in a single document as a .pdf file. The application must:

- Be in 12 point font, on A4 pages, with a minimum margin of 2 cm all round. Handwritten applications will not be accepted
- Adhere to the word and page limits for each section. Applications which exceed the prescribed limits will be deemed ineligible
- Include the full comments and signature of your Head of Department.

Applications should address the following points in the order requested:-

1. Name, department and level of employment (B or C)
2. Title of project (20 words maximum)
3. 100 word summary: brief description of the activity, aims and significance of the project
4. Project Description (2 pages maximum)
   a. Applicants will need to explain their research plans and goals for the proposed period of buyout (structured as: aims, background, significance, approach).
   b. Include information about the proposed outputs from the grant – timeframe for publication, details of publisher(s) and significance of the outputs
   c. Feasibility and benefit
5. Track record
   a. Half a page on:
      i. Years since PhD awarded and when you commenced your academic career
      ii. Nature of current employment (confirmation of teaching/research contract and allocations)
      iii. Research opportunities over the last 5 years, including career interruption information (e.g. sickness, carer’s responsibilities or parental leave)
   b. Employment history for last 10 years (No page limit)
   c. Publications for the last 10 years. Order the list: books, book chapters, refereed journal articles, peer-reviewed conference proceedings, and other publications. For publications which are “in press” or “forthcoming” please provide an acceptance date; do not include publications which have not been accepted by the publisher. Applicants must number their publications continuously (No page limit)
   d. List all competitive funding grants awarded in the last 5 years on which the applicant has been a named investigator, and include any applications which are currently submitted and the result is pending. Provide details of the funding organization and scheme, title of project, names of the project investigators and the amount awarded in Australian dollars. (No page limit)
6. Why is this research opportunity critical to the applicant at this point in their career? (half a page)
   - Applicants will need to make a compelling argument that this opportunity will make a significant difference to their research track record
7. What is the applicant’s research strategy for the next 3 years? (one page maximum)
   a. What will be the main focus of the applicant’s research?
   b. How will this grant contribute to the applicant’s research strategy?
   c. Future publication strategies and proposed grant applications.
   d. An explanation of how the proposed research aligns with the Faculty’s and University’s Future Shaping Research Priorities.
8. Budget (1 page maximum)
   a. What is the proposed budget for your project? You need to include detailed costings for the proposed buyout or research assistance, including 17% on-costs. You are advised to refer to the salary rates in the current Enterprise Agreement for Academic Staff.
   b. Fully justify each budget item requested in terms of need and cost. The budget justification should explain why certain expenditure is required, and how this will enable you to meet your research goals for the fellowship.

9. Describe the arrangements you and your Head of Department have agreed on for your teaching buyout.

10. The applicant’s Head of Department or Head of Discipline is required to comment on and sign the application. Their comments should address:
   a. The feasibility of the project. Are the applicant’s goals for the Fellowship realistic in terms of timeframe?
   b. The quality of the proposed publication(s), including the quality of the proposed publication outlet(s). For example, is this an appropriate outlet for this researcher to be publishing in at this stage in their career, or should they be aiming for more prestigious publishers?
   c. How will this fellowship program make a difference to the applicant’s track record? Will it improve their competitiveness for funding?

**Note:** The Head of Department must sign the application to confirm that the proposed teaching buyout can be accommodated within the Department and that they confirm the arrangements for the period of teaching relief described in response to question 9 above.

**Selection Criteria and Process**
Applications will be assessed by a panel of academics which will be chaired by the Associate Dean Research. The selection criteria reflect that applications will be selected based on the quality of the project, the importance of the fellowship at this point in the applicant’s career, and their research strategy.

- Quality of the proposed project and its outputs and outcomes – 50%
- Track record of applicant – 20%
  - Through their track record to date, applicants will need to demonstrate that they have the ability to become competitive for funding (both internal and external).
- The following will be weighted 30%
  - The argument made in response to “Why is this research opportunity critical to the applicant at this point in their career?”
  - The applicant’s research strategy for the next 3 years

**Reports**
As a condition of funding, grantees will be required to submit a report on the Fellowship to the Chair of the Faculty Research Committee within four weeks of the completion of the fellowship. The Committee may also ask for reports on grant applications and publications related to this grant at a later date.

**Application Submission**
Applicants should email their completed applications, including their Head of Department comments and signatures as a single .pdf file to ArtsRO@mq.edu.au by 5 pm on Wednesday, 1 May 2019. Results will be announced Wednesday 22 May 2019.

**If you have any queries about this scheme, please contact the Arts Research Office (ArtsRO@mq.edu.au).**