Faculty Research Travel Scheme (FRTS)
Frequently Asked Questions

Basics
1 Q What forms do I need and where do I get them?

A The FRTS policy and form can be found on the Arts Staff Intranet at: http://www.arts.mq.edu.au/intranet/sr/research/faculty_grant_schemes, under ‘Research’, ‘Faculty grant schemes’

You should also read the University’s Travel Policy at: https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policies/travel

2 Q How do I submit the application?

The FRTS submission process is different to other Faculty research schemes.

Your Department Administrator (DA) will submit your application. You need to provide the submission & supporting documentation including

- a list of your publications since 2014,
- quotes, acceptance of conferences,
- confirmation of meetings, hosting arrangements etc.

Your DA will upload the submission to a private share folder.

If your submission is successful, funds will be transferred to your Department account for the DA to administer.

3 Q Can I go on two cheaper trips in a year for the same cost as a single, more-expensive one?

A No. However, you can plan more than one research activity in a single trip.

Funding
4 Q How much funding can I apply for?

A The maximum amount for which you can apply is dependent on your travel destination:

- North America, Europe and Japan -- $5,000
- Elsewhere outside of Australia -- $3,500
- Within Australia -- $2,000

The maximum allowance awarded per researcher per year is $5,000.

The panel considers the budgets carefully and applications should demonstrate value for money where possible.

When to apply to FRTS
5 Q If I have an internal or external grant which includes the funding for this travel, do I need to apply to the FRTS?

A No.

6 Q If another organisation is going to pay for my travel, but wants me to pay for it first and then reimburse me, do I need to apply to the FRTS?

A No. If your Head of Department agrees, the department can fund your travel and then be reimbursed by the outside organisation. You need to complete all of the paperwork for travel and attach documentation which says that the costs will be reimbursed.
7 Q If I could fund this travel from research project funding or other university funding, can I still apply?

A In general, no. You will need to explain why you need to access FRTS funding.

Conferences
8 Q I will be applying for the Faculty Travel Scheme this round, to present a paper at a conference; paper presenters must register to have their participation confirmed before the FRTS outcomes are announced.

If I pay for the conference registration now and do receive Faculty funding, will I be reimbursed for the payment?

A Yes.

9 Q Do I have to include conference participation as an activity to be eligible for FRTS?

A No. You can apply for other activities such as archival research, collaboration with researchers to work on a key project such as a grant proposal. However, you must make it clear in your application why no other source of funding is available.

10 Q I haven’t received confirmation that my paper has been accepted yet. Can my application still be approved pending receipt of this acceptance?

A Yes, but you must provide evidence that your paper has been accepted before you can use funding for the travel to the conference.

11 Q I have just found out about an excellent conference next month. How do I get my application expedited?

A There is no “expedited” route for applications.

Also, it is expected that as part of your PDR you will have identified the research activity and conferences which you wish to undertake – it is unlikely that finding out about a conference at such very short notice will be incorporated in your PDR. Travel expenses related to a conference are only going to be covered if you are delivering a paper or Chairing a panel discussion at the conference – this is very unlikely at such short notice.

Flights & accommodation
12 Q Do I still have to book with STA or Campus Travel?

A Yes. Refer to the University’s Travel Policy at: https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policies/travel under the heading “Travel Purchase”.

13 Q Can I claim for transport costs to and from my departure airport (usually Sydney)?

A No. You can only claim return transfer costs from your destination airport to your accommodation in the place you are visiting. (You can claim the costs of transport to and from the airport in Sydney in your tax return.)

14 Q If I have paid for airfares and receive Faculty funding, will I be reimbursed for the payment?

A No. You should not purchase airfares in advance of receiving funding.

15 Q Do I still have to complete the other travel documentation – such as Absence on Duty and Airline Booking forms?

A Yes. The actual process for booking and paying for travel is the same as before – the Faculty Research Travel Scheme is the way for you to obtain funding for your travel.
16 Q Where should I get quotations for accommodation and what standard is considered reasonable?

A Quotes should be from 3-star hotels/motels which are close to the venue of your research activity (e.g. where a conference is being held, the Library you are visiting). If appropriate, make the case as to why your selected venue is the best choice for your research trip.

17 Q Can I use Airb&b?

A There is no university policy on Airb&b and you can use Airb&b.

18 Q What should I do if the quoted airfare increases by the time I book the flight?

A The panel which assesses the applications will meet four times per year and will notify applicants of the outcome of their application very soon after the meeting. You should finalise your travel plans as soon afterwards as is practical.

Your application will be for a budgeted amount, and you will need to manage that funding to cover your airfare, conference registration and accommodation costs.

Other budget questions

19 Q How do I pay for living expenses (per diems or reimbursements based on receipts)?

A The University's Per Diem Schedule is available at: https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policies/travel

You must read the University’s travel and per diem policies before applying.

The per diems are a guide: in the past many FRTS submissions have not used the maximum rate.

In the budget justification, if relevant, explain how the budget demonstrates value for money in order to strengthen the competitiveness of your application.

NB: if your application is successful you must organise for per diems to paid in advance of your trip. After you return from a trip, reimbursements can be claimed based on receipts.

20 Q What other sources of funding are available to cover the costs of my travel etc?

A In some circumstances you may be able to apply for an internal grant or to another grant making organisation (e.g. AAH Travel Fellowships). No other departmental funding will be available to you.

If you fund the additional costs of your travel yourself, you may be able to claim a tax deduction for them. Please refer to the ATO website: http://www.ato.gov.au/

OSP

21 Q Can I apply for funding for travel, e.g. to a conference, which is while I am on OSP?

A If you have been awarded an external fellowship for OSP, you cannot apply to the FRTS in the same calendar year. If you have been awarded an internal fellowship for OSP, you can apply for FRTS support for research travel in the same calendar year, and that travel can be during the period of OSP.
Leave

22 Can I take leave while on a FRTS-funded trip?

Yes, but it cannot exceed the period of your work (or the university is subject to Fringe Benefits Tax). The university travel policy states:

Travellers may undertake up to seven days personal or private travel in conjunction with travel on official University business, provided:

- the private travel does not exceed the business portion of travel
- prior approval is obtained for the period of leave
- all costs associated with this travel are paid for separately and from non-University funds.

Eligibility

23 Q I started as a full-time continuing academic at MQ in February. How soon may I travel using funds from the FRTS scheme?

A You may apply to the FRTS if you meet the eligibility criteria described in the policy; there is no period of service required before you apply but you should have completed a PDR.

You will need to explain in your application why you need funding from this scheme rather than other sources of funding – including the Macquarie New Staff grant scheme.

24 Q I haven’t had a PDR meeting yet. Can I still apply for this scheme?

A Yes. However, your Head of Department will have to endorse your application and explain how this activity will contribute towards your professional research development.

If you are successful

25 Q What happens if my application to the FRTS is successful?

A If your application is successful you will be notified by email.

FRTS funding is kept at Faculty level. Department Administrators will code all FRTS approved travel expenses, including to book airfares and pay staff claim-forms to this Faculty account. The onus is on Department/DA to ensure that FRTS funding is not exceeded when processing staff FRTS travel claim(s).

Heads of Department may sign off on this account code for FRTS in line with previously approved expenditure. Faculty will provide Departments with a monthly report to enable the tracking of expenses. All overspending will be journalled to the Department’s general account.

26 Q Will I have to write a report on the research development activity in this application?

A No. However, if you apply to the FRTS for travel in future years you will be required to explain your progress towards achieving the outputs and outcomes listed in the current application. Lack of progress will disadvantage your application.

If you are not successful

27 Q If my application to the scheme is not approved, can I re-apply for the scheme again in the same year? If so, how many times?

A Yes. You may re-apply once for funding within the same year.

Further information

28 Q Who should I contact if I have further questions about this scheme?

A The Arts Research Office on ArtsRO@mq.edu.au