



# Externally-Funded Researcher Support Policy

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## OVERVIEW

[Research Fellows](#) and [Grant Funded Researchers](#) play a vital role in the University, and contribute to a vibrant research culture that characterises our research-intensive institution. The purpose of this Policy is to provide a clear statement of the varied ways in which the University will support its externally-funded researchers, including providing financial support where it is necessary and appropriate, under this Policy.

As employees of the University, these researchers enjoy a range of benefits and favourable work conditions, including opportunities for career development and advancement, and access to high-end research facilities and a cohort of talented higher degree by research students.

The University encourages employees to apply for [Research Fellowships](#).

## SCOPE AND APPLICATION

[Research Fellowships](#), and to [Grant Funded Researchers](#) who are employed on grants, or via other external funding sources. This Policy needs be read in conjunction with the applicable funding agreements of the relevant funding agencies

## POLICY PRINCIPLES

1. All applications for [Research Fellowships](#) or grants that will result in [Grant Funded Researchers](#) require University approval prior to submission.
2. Subject to the restrictions applied by some funding schemes, all researchers are expected to apply for a salary that is at least at the level of their current academic salary, unless otherwise approved.
3. Salary shortfalls for [Research Fellows](#) are the responsibility of the relevant Faculty and/or School.
4. Where the funding agreement allows, salaries for [Grant Funded Researchers](#) are to be managed within the grant funding awarded. In the event that the agreement restricts the level of salary chargeable, the Faculty and/or School in which the researcher is employed may agree to fund the salary shortfall.

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5. Salary shortfalls for University titleholders are the responsibility of the associated employer.
  6. Approval for salary loadings above University base salary levels will be considered on a case-by-case basis and in accordance with University policy.
  7. Research maintenance for [Research Fellows](#), will be met from external funding, or from within any approved co-contribution made by the University.
  8. The transfer of a [Research Fellow](#) to another organisation requires the approval of the current [Administering Institution](#) and the potential new host institution, as well as the funding body.
  9. Unless required under the specific [Research Fellowship](#) funding rules and agreed in advance of the [Fellowship](#) application, or required by the University of Adelaide Enterprise Agreement, the University is not obliged to offer post-fellowship appointments or tenure.

## PROCEDURES

### 1. Research Fellows

For approved [Research Fellows](#), the required salary supplementation to meet the salary shortfall is the difference between:

- i. the salary and on-costs package awarded by the external sponsor; and
- ii. the salary plus on-costs package paid by the University.

In the case of a salary shortfall or an increased salary shortfall due to promotion, subject to the conditions of the grant, salary supplementation may come with other obligations to the University, including non-research tasks.

Where the need for salary supplementation is known prior to submission of the funding application, and can be reasonably but conservatively quantified, the University's support may be included in the grant application as part of the justification within the most appropriate grant section.

In the event that the [Research Fellowship](#) requires University co-investment, approval must be received from the Head of School, Faculty and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Research) prior to submission.

#### **Responsibility: Finance**

- a) To provide summary information to Schools and Faculties with respect to their liability for salary supplementation.

#### **Responsibility: Head of School**

- b) To ensure sufficient funds are budgeted to meet the annual salary supplementation requirements.
- c) Consider and, where deemed appropriate, approve applications that have requested University co-investment.

#### **Responsibility: Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Research)**

- d) Consider and, where deemed appropriate, approve applications that have requested University co-investment.

### 2. Grant Funded Researchers

2.1 Where the funding agreement allows, it is expected that the salary will be met within the grant from the external sponsor. This will require agreement from the first-named Chief Investigator. In the case of a multi-institutional agreement, consent from the participating institutions may also be required.

2.3 In the event that the agreement restricts the level of salary chargeable, the relevant Head of School may agree to provide salary supplementation to a [Grant Funded Researcher](#), or part thereof.

2.2 The need to support salaries via a grant is to be moderated by the need to preserve a functional level of project maintenance funds within the project, as it cannot be assumed that a school will be able to meet any shortfall in project maintenance or travel costs. It is important that the delivery of project outcomes remains

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viable. Alternatively, the FTE fraction of the appointee or the term of the appointment may also be moderated to align with the amount of external funding available.

2.4 Unless required under the funding rules, or required by the University of Adelaide Enterprise Agreement, the University is not obliged to offer post-fellowship employment to [Grant Funded Researchers](#) upon expiry of the grant.

**Responsibility: Finance**

- a) To provide summary information to Schools and Faculties with respect to their liability for salary supplementation.

**Responsibility: Researcher**

- b) Confirm to the Head of School whether the applicable grant funding agreement allows award funds to be allocated to meet any salary shortfall.
- c) The First-named Chief Investigator to approve the allocation of the grant budget.

**Responsibility: Head of School**

- d) Consider requests to provide salary supplementation fully or partially where there is no other option (including reduced FTE or contract term).
- e) Notify Finance of any Grant Funded Researcher to receive salary supplementation.

### 3. External Awards at a Level less than a Researcher's Salary

Any salary shortfall resulting from applying for and/or accepting an award at a level less than the applicant's current academic salary level, will be met from the budget of the School and/or Faculty concerned.

All applications for [Research Fellowships](#) will require the Head of School's (and the Executive Dean for existing level E appointments) approval to the terms and conditions *in advance* of any [Research Fellowship](#) application being lodged.

**Responsibility: Researcher**

- a) Seek approval from their Head of School to lodge an application where the award level is less than the applicant's current academic salary.

**Responsibility: Head of School**

- b) Consider and, where appropriate, approve the award which is at a level less than the applicant's current academic salary.

### 4. Research Maintenance

4.1 [Research Fellows](#) may have provision within the fellowship package for research maintenance and travel costs. However, the amount notionally available for non-salary purposes is not always specified separately and needs to be balanced against salary shortfall needs within the total available funds and expended in a manner consistent with the external funding deed.

4.2 [Research Fellows](#) are expected to seek additional research grant funding to support their research program from external funding bodies, and use any available Tied Residual Funding.

4.3 University support for a specific project will only be provided in exceptional circumstances, or where no other research support is available, and is at the discretion of the Head of School.

4.4 Any research maintenance support for a [Research Fellow](#) that is agreed to by a Head of School is to be managed and funded within that School.

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**Responsibility: Researcher**

- a) Where required, confirm with the Research Services whether the applicable grant funding agreement includes funds to cover research maintenance, and to balance the research maintenance needs against compulsory salary shortfalls, where the latter requirement has priority.

**Responsibility: Head of School**

- b) Where required, specify the circumstances under which research maintenance support may be provided by the University outside of the available external funding (and this may be nil or capped), noting that any such ad hoc commitments may be multi-year.

## 5. Transfer of Research Fellowships to Other Organisations

5.1 The transfer of a [Research Fellowship](#) from one organisation to another requires the approval of the current [Administering Institution](#) and the potential new host institution, as well as the funding body.

5.2 The University will only agree to support the transfer of a [Research Fellowship](#) to another University in alignment with the relevant external funding rules and taking into consideration the weight accorded to the quality of the University's research environment in the original selection process.

5.3 Joint or split appointments are rarely permitted by the major [Research Fellowship](#) funding agencies.

## 6. Involvement in other University Activities

6.1 Consistent with the University's Strategic Plan, and the rules of the relevant funding deed, there is an expectation that [Research Fellows](#) will contribute to undergraduate teaching and research postgraduate supervision, commensurate with their academic level and provided the term of their appointment covers the likely duration of postgraduate student candidature.

## 7. Post-Fellowship Arrangements for Research Fellows

7.1 Unless required under the funding rules, or required by the University of Adelaide Enterprise Agreement, the University is not obliged to offer post-fellowship employment. Where the funding rules oblige the University to offer post-fellowship employment, the post-fellowship terms need to be agreed with the Head of School and Executive Dean *in advance* of any [Research Fellowship](#) funding application. Any approved post-fellowship appointment may not be research-only, and may not be at the same salary level as the expiring [Research Fellowship](#), particularly for senior [Research Fellowships](#).

7.2 Any post-fellowship loadings are at the discretion of the Head of School with approval by the Executive Dean, and subject to the University's [Remuneration and Employment Benefits Policy](#).

7.3 Any salary loading comprising more than 25% of the base salary in accordance with the [Remuneration and Employment Benefits Policy](#).

7.4 For retention purposes, up to 12 months of bridging support may be available in exceptional circumstances where a [Research Fellowship](#) application was considered competitive or 'near miss' (where that information is available). This is to allow time to develop an improved application for the next round. The provisions and terms under which bridging support is offered are at the discretion of an appropriate Head of School.

**Responsibility: Head of School**

- a) At their discretion, approve any bridging support for up to 12 months to allow a further application for a [Research Fellowship](#).
- b) Set appropriate KPIs for the period of bridging support.
- c) Consider the terms of any post-fellowship appointment or tenure in advance of the submission of a [Research Fellowship](#) application.
- d) Within the level of their delegated authority, approve at their discretion any post-fellowship loading and associated KPIs.

### **Responsibility: Executive Dean**

- e) For level E staff, in consultation with the relevant Head of School, consider the terms of any post-fellowship appointment or tenure in advance of the submission of a [Research Fellowship](#) application.
- f) Within the level of their authority, approve at their discretion any post-fellowship loading and associated KPIs.

## **8. Financial Procedures**

Detailed financial procedures applicable to this Policy will be available via [Finance Policy and Procedures Handbook](#).

## **DEFINITIONS**

**‘Administering Institution’** means the party to the funding agreement responsible for administering the grant, and where the context permits, includes its personnel.

**‘Research Fellows’** are those staff whose salaries are funded by an external fellowship awarded *in their own name*, and includes staff awarded Australian Research Council (ARC), National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) and similar ‘named’ fellowships (formerly referred to as Category 1 Fellows).

**‘Research Fellowship/s’** includes fellowships funded by ARC, NHMRC and similar named fellowship schemes. For clarity, for the purposes of this Policy fellowships exclude teaching fellowships.

**‘Grant Funded Researchers’** include those research staff employed on grants awarded in another staff member’s name, or grants held as a Chief Investigator (CI) that allow provision for the CI salary, and fellowships funded from project funds or other internal University sources (formerly referred to as Category 2 Fellows).

<b>RMO File No.</b>	F2015/6096
<b>Policy Custodian</b>	Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Research)
<b>Responsible policy officer</b>	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research Excellence)
<b>Endorsed by</b>	VCE on 10 August 2016
<b>Approved by</b>	Vice-Chancellor and President on 12 August 2016; reaffirmed for further three years with minor amendments on 4 February 2021; reaffirmed for a further three years with minor amendments on 12 June 2024
<b>Related Documents and Policies</b>	Staff Development, Performance and Promotions Policy and Procedures External Funding Deeds Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research Responsible Conduct of Research Policy Remuneration and Employment Benefits Policy Recruitment Policy and Procedures The University of Adelaide Enterprise Agreement
<b>Related Legislation</b>	Nil
<b>Superseded Policies</b>	Externally-Funded Research-Only Staff – Salary Shortfalls Contribution Policy (2009)
<b>Effective from</b>	12 June 2024
<b>Review Date</b>	11 June 2027
<b>Contact for queries about the policy</b>	Executive Director, Research Services