**C2 ADMINISTERING ORGANISATION LETTER OF SUPPORT**

7 December 2023

Ms Judi Zielke

Chief Executive Officer

Australian Research Council

PO Box 2702

Canberra ACT 2601

Dear Ms Zielke,

**ARC Discovery Early Career Researcher Award Application – [Title] *Firstname Surname***

It is with great pleasure that I forward to the Australian Research Council an application for a Discovery Early Career Researcher Award (DECRA) for funding commencing in 2025 from [Title] <Surname>.

Title GivenName FamilyName is…

*[Insert 1-2 brief paragraphs introducing the Candidate, their research achievements, and their standing in the discipline. Highlight the significance of their research outcomes, innovation, and impact. Include some basic descriptors of track record, such as number of publications, number of citations, h-index, field weighted citation index, and use benchmarking data where available. Note key papers in leading journals or those with particular impact, as well as notable editorial or peer review roles, appointments, awards, invited talks, etc. Research supervision should also be discussed in terms of capacity building and knowledge transfer. Avoid hyperbole, be specific, and cite evidence wherever possible – this section sets the context for what follow and demonstrates the Candidate’s status as a research leader on a rising trajectory. Be concrete avoiding empty claims such “I am a famous/nationally renowned/leading expert in...”. The purpose of this introductory statement is to draw out the main strengths of the candidate and their work in a summary form, setting the context for the detailed statements to follow.]*

***Alignment with UQ Core or Emerging Research Strengths***

*[This section articulates the alignment of the Candidate’s proposed research with UQ’s existing or emerging* [*research strengths*](https://research.uq.edu.au/about/uq-research-strengths/research-strengths)*. Please retain the standard text below and add text that demonstrates the quality of UQ’s research in the relevant fields, by reference to* [*international rankings*](https://research.uq.edu.au/about/international-rankings) *and/or the most recent* [*ERA outcomes*](https://www.arc.gov.au/era-outcomes#Institution/QLD)*.]*

The University of Queensland (UQ) has a strong and internationally focused research culture. UQ ranks well within the top 100 universities worldwide, measured through a number of major independent university rankings: the Academic Ranking of World Universities, Times Higher Education World University Rankings, US News Best Global Universities Rankings, QS World University Rankings and Performance Ranking of Scientific Papers for World Universities, and is indeed in the top 50 in some of these rankings.

UQ is one of Australia’s most comprehensive universities, with one hundred percent of our research across all 22 broad fields rated either above (4) or well above (5) world standard in the 2018 Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) exercise. Significantly, UQ was also assessed as being above or well above world standard across more specialised fields of research (93) than any other Australian university. In the nation’s 2018 Research Engagement and Impact assessment (EI2018), UQ was first amongst all Australian universities in the number of high and medium ratings across *Engagement*, *Impact*, and *Approach to Impact*, highlighting UQ’s commitment to translating research in all disciplines for the benefit of our wider society.

*[After citing evidence for UQ’s research strength in the relevant fields, explain how the proposed DECRA research will complement, enhance, or extend areas of existing or emerging research strength at UQ. Please note that UQ is focusing on ERA rankings and local School/Faculty/Institute research priorities as indicators of strength and capability in a particular field. In addition to the* [*2018 ERA ratings for UQ*](https://dataportal.arc.gov.au/ERA/Web/Outcomes#/institution/QLD)*, other evidence of strength includes: international profile, discipline-specific world rankings, and UQ publication performance in the specific field of the DECRA. Is there a critical mass of researchers in this field? Are there one or more recognised national or international leaders, perhaps other fellowship holders? Are there research centres or key infrastructure in this or related areas at UQ? Articulate how the proposed DECRA will both leverage and add value to UQ’s research efforts in the field.]*

***Quality of the Environment and Level of Resources to Support the DECRA Candidate***

*[Following on from the previous section, which discussed the broad alignment between the proposed DECRA research and areas of existing or emerging research strength at UQ, this section should drill down to more specifically detail the nature of the research environment and the support and resources available to the Candidate. This should include discussion of both the infrastructure and facilities that the project will require, and the broader collaborative intellectual environment in which the research will be conducted. Include detail of mentors and collaborators, centres or research groups that will support the DECRA Candidate, particular research opportunities that will be available, access to wider networks, and so on.* *It is also important to integrate a statement about expansion of collaborative links involving the Candidate (as enabled by the award of a DECRA). You might also comment on how the Faculty/Institute/University is building and/or focusing its staffing profile in the broad area of research, and how the proposed DECRA aligns with, enhances, complements this. Where local resources have been explicitly committed to the project, these should be detailed here and email confirmation forwarded to OSR.]*

Should Dr <FamilyName> be successful in securing a DECRA, the University will cover any gaps between the DECRA salary funding and Dr <FamilyName>’s UQ appointment level. This salary top-up is in the order of $x,xxx per annum for the three-year term of the grant. In addition, the DECRA project will benefit from *[insert details of any other support, such as School/Institute travel grant funding, seed funding, or in-kind contributions such as access to facilities].*

Demonstrating its commitment to capacity building for this Grant, UQ is pledging new central support in the form of one PhD scholarship for a suitably-qualified student whose project is aligned with the successful application, subject to the standard UQ conditions for Earmarked PhD scholarships. As part of a framework of support for successful ECR Fellows and the PhD candidate, team supervisory arrangements would apply, with the Fellow participating as Principal Advisor in an appropriately-constituted PhD supervisory team. The stipend has a cash value of $32,192 annum (2023$) for 3.5 years, with one possible six-month extension. This will *<…applicant to insert possible comments about likely topic area/s and how this builds capacity around the project and accelerates research etc…>.*

***Opportunities for the DECRA candidate to demonstrate the level of independence required to be competitive for research and/or research and teaching pathways at UQ, during and after the project.***

As a DECRA fellow, Dr <FamilyName> will be employed on a Research-Focused appointment for the three-year term of the award at the UQ <School/Institute Name>. At the conclusion of the DECRA, Dr <FamilyName> will have the opportunity to apply for a two-year fixed-term appointment under UQ Amplify, a strategic initiative that aims to retain and support eligible competitively funded Fellows. UQ Amplify provides a pathway to broader and longer-term career options that enhance the academic and professional development of DECRA awardees, including through appropriately scaled involvement in UQ’s teaching program.

*[Insert any further comments about the development of greater independence via the work to be undertaken in the DECRA, including the opportunities inherent in the research program itself as well as other opportunities to participate in the research culture at UQ and to develop research leadership through supervision, collaboration, and engagement with wider networks.]*

The University of Queensland strongly supports the integration of teaching and research to enhance the student experience through research-informed curricula. Dr <FamilyName> will have the opportunity to continue developing their teaching portfolio, within the provisions of the ARC *Grant Guidelines*, to provide greater exposure to potential Honours and PhD students, and to enable multiple career pathways at the conclusion of the DECRA. Dr <FamilyName>’s research career will be further enhanced by opportunities for independent funding, and through training and professional development opportunities in HDR supervision, leadership, Intellectual Property and commercialisation, among others.

*[Insert a summary paragraph outlining the value-add the DECRA will deliver and the difference the award of the Fellowship will make in terms of both the project outcomes and their impact and the career development and research leadership of the Fellow. The ARC asks us to detail how any FTE (maximum 0.2 FTE) allocated to the administering institution over the life of the DECRA will develop your capacity building and career skills (e.g. teaching, commercialisation support etc.). You might link this to the above statement; in support your progression to other Fellowships such as UQ Amplify. In addition, please also articulate any capacity building or development opportunities that may be available to the Fellow. If the applicant already has a continuing appointment at UQ, be sure to clearly articulate how the award of a Fellowship will significantly change their research opportunities, and why the award of a DECRA at this time will facilitate this change – i.e. why you, why here, why now? It is not sufficient to argue a Fellowship will provide more time for research – it should be clear how the Fellowship will allow to the applicant to take on a larger, more complex project, to build capacity around their research, to accelerate time-sensitive research in a dynamic and competitive field, etc.]*

The University of Queensland is pleased to support Dr <FamilyName>’s proposal and to commend it for consideration by the ARC. *[This final paragraph should emphasise the potential benefit of the proposed DECRA, both in terms of the difference it will make to the career trajectory and research leadership of the applicant, but also in terms of the potential impact of the project outcomes, including the wider social and economic benefits]*.