

# UQ Foundation Research Excellence Awards – 2024 Guidelines



## Description and Purpose of the Award

The University of Queensland Foundation Research Excellence Award (UQ FREA) celebrates the exceptional research achievements and leadership potential of individual early and mid-career researchers (EMCRs). By recognising and supporting EMCRs, this prestigious award aims to foster their development as research leaders, enabling them to make a sustained impact in their disciplines.

The UQ FREA is specifically designed to accelerate the career development of the recipients, empowering researchers to enhance their research trajectory and leadership capabilities over a 12-month period.

Nominations will be reviewed by a Central Selection Committee. The selection of recipients will be based on two primary criteria:

- **Track record:** the nominee's track record of excellence and impact in their field.
- **Proposal:** the merit of their proposal to utilise UQ FREA funding to enhance their career development and establish themselves as emerging research leaders.

Please note that this is not a grant application. The intent of this award is to foster the career development of emerging research leaders therefore **the central focus of the UQ FREA proposal should be the benefit to the recipient's career development.**

### Funding and Duration

Awards of up to \$50,000 are available and approximately eight will be funded. Funding will commence on 01 January 2025, and it is expected that funds will be fully expended within 12 months.

## Eligibility Criteria

### Nominee Eligibility

Nominees must fulfil the following eligibility criteria at the time of nomination and for the duration of the Award.

- Nominees must hold an eligible UQ salaried appointment. The appointment must meet the following criteria:
  - must be a **Teaching and Research, Research Focused, or Clinical Academic** appointment;
  - must be **at least 0.5 FTE** (Full Time Equivalent);
  - must be at **Academic Level B or C**; and
  - the primary appointment must not be an adjunct or affiliated appointment (although these can be held in conjunction with another eligible appointment).
  - ***Mater Research Institute-UQ: MRI-UQ researchers with approved honorary UQ appointments are eligible to apply for UQ FREA, provided subsequent external applications are submitted through UQ's Research Office with UQ as the Administering Organisation.***
- Nominees must **not** be taking a period of Long Service Leave during the Award period.
- Nominees **must hold a PhD**.
- At the time of nomination, nominees should normally have **more than two years but no more than ten years professional experience** since the award of their PhD.

- Nominees must not be a previous recipient of a UQ FREA.

### Additional eligibility criteria for nominees employed on other research grants and fellowships

- Nominees whose salary funding is sourced from another research grant or fellowship must obtain approval from the lead Chief Investigator of the grant or fellowship on which they are employed to undertake the proposed UQ FREA award activities. This approval should be retained on file by the nominee and made available to UQ R&I if requested.
- The eligibility of Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) employees is dependent upon the CRC's rules relating to the research activities of its staff, and the ability of individuals to accommodate the proposed UQ FREA award activities. It should be noted that staff appointed directly by a CRC are unlikely to be eligible given the eligibility requirements outlined above. CRC employees should seek further advice from their director.

## Proposal Eligibility

The proposed award activities should align with the objectives of UQ FREA, which are centred around accelerating the career development of researchers and positioning them as emerging research leaders. The proposal should present a well-defined plan for utilising the awarded funding for professional development activities including undertaking professional development courses, enhancing research outputs and impact, fostering new collaborations, developing leadership capability and may include international visits or other collaboration opportunities, within a 12-month timeframe.

## Budget Eligibility

Funds can be used to pay any category of expenditure consistent with the proposal including staff salaries, travel, equipment, maintenance, and professional development activities.

A contribution to the UQ FREA nominee salary may be requested for up to 0.2 FTE but these requests must be accompanied by a strong justification.

Funds can be used for the provision of (or access to) special equipment and facilities needed for a project over and above basic facilities. Special facilities and services may include financial support for auxiliary staff, equipment, consumables, and certain categories of travel.

Funds can be used to support professional development or capacity building activities that will support future career progression and research leadership development including collaborative research visits and exchange, and conference attendance, training courses.

Items **not supported** under the UQ FREA scheme include:

- Salaries of other academic research staff
- Abstracting services
- Employer contributions to elective superannuation
- Fees of international students

It should be noted that UQ FREA funds are not intended to supplement research projects inadequately funded by external agencies, but they may be used to enhance and provide an additional dimension to a program of research that is already funded. Note that where the proposal includes funding for these activities emphasis should be placed on the benefit to the nominee's career development.

## Basic Facilities and Infrastructure

Funds are provided on the assumption that the basic facilities required for the proposed work will be available in the relevant Faculty/Institute. Basic facilities include: suitably equipped and furnished accommodation; access to workshop services; library facilities; adequate computer facilities and administrative services; and, of course, time to carry out the project. Nominees are expected to have access to basic standard library materials needed for research as well as for teaching, including standard databases and equipment and materials for scanning and photocopying.

## Selection Criteria

### Track record (70%)

Past research achievements (relative to opportunity) described using supporting evidence.

#### Top Five Publications

- Publication assessment will focus on the applicant's top five publications (or other relevant outputs) over the last five years (accounting for career disruptions) and will be supported by applicant explanations of the importance of each publication, including appropriate field weighted metrics and citation metrics where relevant.
- Assessment of publication track record will focus on the quality of the research and contribution to the field rather than the quantity of publications.

#### Research Impact

Applicants will be assessed on **up to two** examples of research impact defined as research outputs that lead to:

- *Knowledge impact* – research that has contributed to significant discoveries or conceptual/technological advances leading to important advances/benefits as indicated by adoption/adaptation or use of the research findings, including to inform further research.
- *End-user impact* – research that leads to demonstrable economic, societal, environmental or cultural benefits, as indicated by reach of the research and the degree to which the research has created impact (through influence on policies and practices, products and services, cultural development, and health and wellbeing).

Please refer to the instructions within the nomination form for crafting your impact statements.

### Project Plan (30%)

Applicants should describe their research aims, future vision, and their career goals, including the significance of their research question(s) and the potential outcomes and impact of the research. Applicants will be assessed on their utilisation of UQ FREA funding to accelerate their research leadership.

## Nomination Process

The nomination must contain all the information necessary for assessment by the selection committees, without the need for further written or oral explanation, or reference to additional documentation unless requested by the assessors.

### Nomination form

Nominations must be submitted on the *2023 UQ Foundation Research Excellence Awards Nomination Form* with accompanying supplementary pages as specified on the Form. Nominations must conform to the prescribed page limits and formatting requirements.

## Submission of Nomination

Nominations are to be submitted to the UQ Research Office at [internalschemes@research.uq.edu.au](mailto:internalschemes@research.uq.edu.au) by **5:00pm, 10 May 2024**.

## Assessment Process

The assessment of nominations will be undertaken by a Central Selection Panel. All nominations will be assessed against the Selection Criteria. Awards will be made on the basis of excellence, from the pool of nominees (i.e. each nomination will be assessed on its own merit against all other nominations).

## Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality

Any conflicts of interest will be managed in accordance with the University's Conflict of Interest Policy. Where any assessor believes that they may have a conflict of interest in providing an assessment, the matter is to be discussed with the relevant Faculty Associate Dean (Research) or Institute Deputy Director (Research). It should be noted that nominations under the UQ FREA are submitted in confidence. Assessors are required to respect this confidence.

## Appeals

As UQ FREA is a research award rather than a grant scheme, the Central Selection Panel will be unable to provide individual feedback on the outcomes. Unsuccessful nominees have the right to appeal against the selection process, but not the assessment outcomes. The Appeals Committee for this round will be chaired by the Executive Director, Research Office and will not involve anyone who has participated in the assessment process.

Nominees prepare proposals using the 2022 UQ FREA Nomination Form, then submit to the UQ Research Office  
**(10 May 2024)**



UQ R&I checks the eligibility of each shortlisted nomination prior to referral to a Central Selection Committee  
**(May 2024)**



The final selection of successful nominees will be made by the Central Selection Committee and outcomes announced during Research Week  
**(September 2024)**

## Post-Award Processes

Nominees will be notified of the outcome in June 2024, and the formal public announcement of the UQ FREA awardees will be made during Research Week. Following the announcement, recipients will be issued with a Grant Record Letter (GRL) which will include details of the Award and the Conditions of Award. In some instances, a GRL may be issued prior to the formal approval of ethical/biosafety clearances (if applicable). However, nominees should note that all necessary ethical/biosafety clearances must be obtained before work requiring such clearances can commence.

## Expenditure of Funds

The funds can be used to pay any category of expenditure consistent with the approved nomination. Funding will begin 01 January 2025 and it is expected that the funds will be fully expended within 12 months. Requests to carry funds forward, beyond the original term of the award, will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.

## Reporting Requirements

Following expenditure of all funds, the recipient is required to submit a final report on the outcome of the project, within three months of the end date of the project. A proforma will be made available on the Research Office [website](#).



## Contact details

### UQ Research Office

[internalschemes@research.uq.edu.au](mailto:internalschemes@research.uq.edu.au)

### UQ Faculty/Institute Research Managers

<https://www.uq.edu.au/research/research-support/research-management/faculty-and-institute-research-managers>

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