

FUNDING GUIDELINES

Science Research Office



Indigenous Engagement Grants

Funding type	Indigenous Engagement Grants
Applicants	Levels A-E
Maximum award (AU\$)	Up to \$10,000
Funding duration	1 year
Academic Leads	Prof Andy Martin (Associate Dean Research) Prof Michael-Shawn Fletcher (Associate Dean Indigenous)
Research & Industry Lead	Patrick O'Duffy (Award Coordinator)
Scheme Contact Information	science-research@unimelb.edu.au

Introduction

The Indigenous Engagement Grant scheme recognises the importance of building relationships with Indigenous communities, and works towards removing ongoing barriers that affect collaboration and productivity.

This grant provides funding to assist Academic staff to:

- establish new relationships with Indigenous communities for future research projects
- cover travel costs for Indigenous community partners to visit the University (and vice versa)
- assist current researchers to continue significant engagement with their Indigenous research partners
- compensate Indigenous research and community partners for their time and expertise.

The Indigenous Engagement Grant scheme is intended to align with, and support the objectives of, the Faculty of Science's [Indigenous Research Strategy](#).

Eligibility

Applicants must:

- have an academic appointment within the Faculty of Science for the duration of the project
- have a well-outlined research project that involves Indigenous Australian peoples or communities
- not have other Indigenous engagement funding available for the proposed project.

In addition, researchers working with/within Indigenous communities must have an awareness of, and commitment to, Indigenous cultural safety. Researchers who can provide evidence of past experience, who have completed appropriate cultural awareness and/or decolonisation training, or have an Indigenous cultural background may apply with no additional requirements. Researchers who do not have this experience may still apply, but must complete cultural awareness and/or decolonisation training before funds will be awarded. (Note: such training cannot be paid for using the Indigenous Engagement Grant funds, but must be funded by the researcher's School or another body.)

The eligibility of proposed projects will be confirmed by the Science Research Office, with reference to the Indigenous Knowledges Institute's [Charter for Research with Indigenous Knowledge Holders](#). Projects must be aligned with the five principles outlined in the Charter.

Successful applicants must provide interim updates on project performance, and/or present on their engagement with Indigenous communities, upon request from the Faculty of Science.

Funding

Successful applicants will receive a maximum amount of **\$10,000**. Applicants should base the level of funding they request upon their project requirements.

A limited amount of funding is available, and the scheme will close when all funds are allocated.

Applications will be accepted up until **4 November 2026**, with funding to be made available within 4 weeks of a successful application being submitted. All funds must be spent within 12 months of the award.

Selection Criteria

Applications for the scheme will be evaluated against three criteria (with equal weighting).

1: Relationship building with Indigenous communities

The project team must demonstrate existing capacity to engage with Indigenous partners, or incorporate relationship development as part of the project. Applications must demonstrate benefit for Indigenous Partner Investigators and/or Partner Organisations.

How does the project do this? How does it involve Indigenous partners? Will it be embedded in an Indigenous community or organisation? What are the partner commitments to the project, research engagements with Indigenous knowledge holders, and/or opportunities for Indigenous knowledge holders to co-develop the project and its research outputs?

2: Advancing Indigenous Knowledge

Does the project aim to advance research into Indigenous Knowledges? To what extent does the project address an identified gap or need in this field?

3: Reciprocity

Proposals must involve mutual exchange of resources and knowledge – i.e. what is the community getting out of this exchange? Is there an opportunity within your research to advance community members, such as providing employment or access to data (and can the community use this data to determine community decisions)? What does success look like for the community? Do your Indigenous community partners have the right to ICIP (Indigenous Cultural Intellectual Property)? Has a Memorandum of Understanding been established (for current projects)?

Application and Assessment Process

- Complete the [online request form](#) to address the selection criteria, outline your research project and explain how you plan to use the requested funds.
- Your eligibility will be reviewed by the Science Research Office.
- Requests will be assessed and endorsed by the Associate Dean Indigenous and Associate Dean Research (or approved delegates).

Timeline

Process	Date
Applications open	2 March 2026
Applications close	4 November 2026 (or when all funds are allocated)
Outcome	Within 2-4 weeks of application
Funding	Within 1-2 weeks of approval

Additional Resources

- [University of Melbourne's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Heritage Policy](#)
- [AIATSIS Code of Ethics for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research](#)
- [The Indigenous Knowledge Institute](#)
- [Outreach and Indigenous Engagement](#) (Faculty of Science intranet)
- [Recognition and Reconciliation](#) (Faculty of Science intranet)

Contacts

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