

# Faculty of Science

## Research Impact Award

### 2026 Guidelines



#### 1. OVERVIEW

- 1.1 The Faculty of Science Research Impact Award was established in 2025 to recognise excellence in research impact. This award is an initiative arising from the Faculty of Science (FoS) *Research Strategy 2023-2030* and its associated implementation plan, which commits to attracting and retaining a diverse cohort of the best researchers from around the world. These efforts aim to enable a culture beyond scholarly impact, supporting Australia's participation in a global knowledge economy and leveraging our expertise to deliver meaningful impact for next and end users. The Faculty of Science holds impact in high esteem; striving to deliver meaningful public good and positive outcomes for humans, animals, and our wider ecosystem through science. Excellence in research impact includes an effect on, change or benefit to the economy, society, culture, public policy or services, health and wellbeing, the environment and/or quality of life beyond academia.
- 1.2 One Research Impact Award will be awarded annually to University of Melbourne staff, in the Faculty of Science, in recognition of the significant impact and demonstrable contribution their original research has made in the preceding ten years.
- 1.3 The assessment process and award of the Research Impact Award is overseen by Associate Dean Enterprise & Innovation and administered by the Science Research Office.
- 1.4 The recommendation of the Award is made to the Dean by the selection committee comprised of:
  - Associate Dean Enterprise and Innovation
  - Associate Dean Research
  - Office of the DVCR nominee
  - Two additional senior academic staff, recommended by the Associate Deans Enterprise & Innovation and Research, to provide expertise in the general area of the applications.
- 1.5 The Awards will be presented at the annual Deans Awards ceremony, subject to timing.

#### 2. ELIGIBILITY

- 2.1 Applicants must be members of staff in the Faculty of Science of the University of Melbourne at the time of their application.
- 2.2 Honorary staff whose primary academic affiliation is to the Faculty of Science of the University of Melbourne are eligible to apply if they satisfy all other Research Impact Award eligibility criteria and their application relates to research impact occurring between 1 January 2017 and 30 July 2026. In the scenario of a multi-member team application for co-authored works, the co-author(s) may have an honorary appointment to the University.
- 2.3 For 2026 applications, the demonstrated research impact must have occurred between 1 January 2017 and 30 July 2026. However, acknowledging the lead time to impact, the original research upon which the impact is based does not need to have occurred within this period.

### 3. APPLICATION PROCESS

- 3.1 Members of staff who are applying for the Research Impact Award must be supported in writing by a colleague with knowledge of the applicant's field ('internal support statement') and sign-off of the internal support statement must be provided by the relevant Head of School.
- 3.2 The internal support statement must address each of the following:
  1. The nature and quality of the original research that led to the research impact.
  2. The pathway, extent, and evidence of the impact of the research.
  3. The impact of the research with reference to the specific contribution of the award applicant(s).
- 3.2 The application must also include a written supporting statement from an independent expert who is external to the University, such as a preeminent researcher in the field or a publisher ('external support statement'). This will be used to provide technical context and independent verification of the content of the application for the selection committee.
- 3.4 In the case of a team-based application, each applicant must provide their academic curriculum vitae (CV), and explicitly detail their individual contribution to the research, any publication(s)/research outputs, and the research impact.
- 3.6 Applications for the Research Impact Award must detail the original research upon which the impact is based. Evidence of the original research may take the form of publication via a book, a refereed journal article or a suite of related books, patents and/or articles published electronically or in hard copy, or other creative work published in an appropriate digital medium. Applications may include up to, but no more than, three items for review. Evidence of clinical trials and research translation (e.g. a crop trial) will be considered as evidence in the pathway to impact but are insufficient on their own to sustain an application.
- 3.7 Applications must articulate and demonstrate the impact of the original research beyond the academy, which may include an effect on, change or benefit to the economy, society, culture, public policy or services, health and wellbeing, the environment, or quality of life beyond academia. Applications should provide evidence of the impact, and show clear linkages between the original research, the impact, and the specific contribution of the applicant/applicants. The University of Melbourne *Marles Medals: Guidance on Research Impact Evidence* document provides further guidance on how the evidence of the impact may be demonstrated.
- 3.8 Where an applicant's research and impact are multi-authored or teamwork, the applicant must explicitly clarify their own contribution to the original research and impact.
- 3.9 Applicants who have previously received the University of Melbourne Marles Medal for substantially the same body of work are ineligible to apply.
- 3.10 Applications submitted will not be checked by the Science Research Office for completeness and eligibility prior to final lodgement; this is the responsibility of the applicant. Ineligible or incomplete applications will be excluded and not considered by the selection committee.
- 3.11 Applications are to be submitted via the SmartyGrants portal. Digital access to the research work(s) under consideration is preferred; applicants are encouraged to provide a digital copy of publications if they can or submit a final proof version of the publication via email. If a digital copy of the work is not available, the applicant should contact the Science Research Office to discuss alternatives.

#### 4. SELECTION CRITERIA

- 4.1 On the basis of the application form, supporting statements, publications and evidence provided, the Selection Committees for the Research Impact Award will determine which application is considered to have the most significant demonstration of excellence in research impact.

#### 5. EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 The selection committee is chaired by the Associate Dean Enterprise & Innovation.
- 5.2 In exceptional cases, selection committees may decide to share an award between applicants.
- 5.3 As a reflection of the FoS Research Impact Awards significance, prestige and purpose within the Faculty's recognition and reward system, the Selection Committee may give preference to demonstrated research impact based on original research that was substantially undertaken at the University of Melbourne, and/or where the pathway to research impact substantially progressed while applicants held positions at the University of Melbourne.
- 5.5 If an appropriate awardee cannot be identified for an award, the Selection Committee may choose not to recommend the award of the Research Impact Award that year.
- 5.6 To manage any real or perceived conflicts of interest, Selection Committee members must not be applicants and must not be internal supporters of Research Impact Award applicants under consideration in the same year.

#### 6. KEY DATES

- 6.1 Table of Key Dates:

Release of Guidelines and Application Portal	24 August 2026
Applications due to Science Research Office via SmartyGrants	10am on 21 September 2026
Selection Committee meets to consider applications	October
Awardee(s) announced (subject to communications planning). Awardee(s) will be individually notified prior to the wider release of results.	November/December

#### 7. ADMINISTRATIVE CONTACT

- 7.1 Please direct any queries regarding eligibility and compliance to the Science Research Office at [science-research@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:science-research@unimelb.edu.au)