

Vice-Chancellor's Research and Impact Fellowship Scheme 2025

Applicant Guidelines

Updated May 2025

Acknowledgement of Country



Victoria University acknowledges, recognises and respects the Ancestors, Elders and families of the Bunurong/Boonwurrung, Wadawurrung and Wurundjeri/Woiwurrung of the Kulin who are the traditional owners of University land in Victoria, the Gadigal and Guring-gai of the Eora Nation who are the traditional owners of University land in Sydney, and the Yulara/Yugarapul people and Turrbal people living in Meanjin (Brisbane).

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Key Dates

| Date | Step |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Wednesday 14 May 2025 | Guidelines released. Applications open. |
| Wednesday 11 June 2025 | Applications close (5pm AEDT). |
| Week of 14 th July 2025 | Interview period for shortlisted candidates |
| End of July 2025 | Notification of Outcomes |
| | Fellowships commence no later than January 2026. |

Introduction

Victoria University (VU) is a dual-sector institution with campuses in the heart of Melbourne, and across Melbourne's western suburbs. International students can also choose to study at VU Sydney, VU Brisbane or partner institutions overseas.

For over a century, VU has championed inclusive education, offering pathways from vocational training to higher education and research. Today, we are proud to be a globally connected university committed to equity, excellence, and impact.

VU's vision, as outlined in our strategic plan **2022-2028 “Start Well Finish Brilliantly”**, is to be a global leader in dual sector research and learning by 2028. Our strategic research purpose is to create life-changing and world-changing research for the wellbeing of our people, place and planet. Established in 2025 by the Vice-Chancellor, the VU Vice-Chancellor's Research and Impact Fellowship (VCRIF) scheme advances our strategic goals to maximise research with impact. The **VCRIF fellowship is structured at four levels (B–E)**, with responsibilities and expectations scaled accordingly:

- Vice-Chancellor's Postdoctoral Research and Impact Fellow (Level B)
- Vice-Chancellor's Senior Research and Impact Fellow (Level C)
- Vice-Chancellor's Principal Research and Impact Fellow (Level D)
- Vice-Chancellor's Professorial Research and Impact Fellow (Level E)

VU's research priority areas

Our bold research direction is outlined in the **VU Research and Impact Plan 2023-28**. In 2024, the Plan was strengthened by an external Strategic Review of Research, which identified six research priority areas. These areas reflect VU's research strengths and offer significant opportunities for multidisciplinary engagement. These six research priority areas include:

- 1. Innovating education & future-proofing Australia's workforce**
 - Research that enhances education delivery, improves student outcomes, and aligns with future workforce needs.
- 2. Sport that inspires elite performance, community participation & healthy living**
 - Research that advances elite sports performance, sports technology, community health, and participation.

3. Health & wellbeing solutions

- Solutions for chronic disease prevention, mental health, health equity, and integrated care models.

4. Transforming communities through policy, practice & governance

- Research on public policy, governance, social innovation, and community-led transformation.

5. Smart, sustainable & liveable cities

- Research on urban planning, infrastructure, sustainable development, and climate resilience.

6. ‘By community, for community’ First Nations Knowledge

- Research that is led by, or in partnership with, First Nations communities, ensuring knowledge sovereignty and cultural impact.

Objectives

The Vice-Chancellor’s Research and Impact Fellowship Scheme aims to:

- Attract, support, develop, and retain high-performing researchers who will contribute to VU’s strategic ambition to be a global leader in dual-sector research and innovation.
- Drive impactful research on critical challenges through collaboration, ethical inquiry, and strong engagement—aligned with VU’s six research priority areas listed above.

To achieve these aims, the Scheme will:

- Provide dedicated research time and funding to enable Vice-Chancellor’s Research and Impact Fellows to deliver high-quality, high-impact research outcomes.
- Foster interdisciplinary and industry-engaged research by embedding Fellows within a supportive and collaborative research ecosystem.
- Support research leadership development, including mentoring of early career academics, and contribution to research capacity building at VU.
- Advance equity and inclusion in research, particularly by encouraging applications from underrepresented groups and promoting First Nations-led research.

General Eligibility

To be eligible for the Vice-Chancellor’s Research Impact Fellowship, applicants must meet the following eligibility commensurate to the academic level they are applying for:

1. A PhD in a relevant discipline.
2. A demonstrated strong research track record of high-quality research outputs (Q1/D1 journal publications, reports, patents, or equivalent).
3. Proven track record in research leadership, including the ability to mentor staff to achieve quality outcomes, lead and foster collaborative research teams in proportion to their academic level.

4. Proven track record to secure significant and sustained competitive external funding to support ongoing research activity, and manage funded projects, including oversight of budgets and reporting obligations in proportion to their academic level.
5. Significant experience in supervising higher degree by research candidates, with a strong focus on enhancing research quality and performance in proportion to their academic level.
6. Proven experience conducting multi-disciplinary research.
7. Valid work rights in Australia, including Australian or New Zealand citizenship, Australian permanent residency, or a current visa that permits employment for the duration of the fellowship.
8. Research experience that aligns with at least one of the six research priority areas.
9. Applicants must be available to begin their fellowship by November 30, 2025, and no later than January 30, 2026.

Current VU academic staff who meet general eligibility requirements may apply if their current appointment at the time of application is sessional or fixed-term. VU staff on ongoing continuing appointments are not eligible.

Eligible career interruptions and achievements relative to opportunity will be taken into consideration upon application.

Our Commitment to Protecting Country

Victoria University values its diverse community and honours First Nations perspectives. We are committed to respectful engagement, Indigenous voice, and sustainable practices that support the health and wellbeing of people and the planet.

Our Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion at VU

We welcome applications from women, gender-diverse individuals, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and others from under-represented groups.

Appointment duration and funding

1. **College/Institute/Centre:** Dependent on the successful applicant's research focus
2. **Campus Location:** The position will be primarily located at one of VU's metropolitan or suburban Melbourne campuses, with travel to other campuses as required. Hybrid work arrangements are available.
3. **Appointment level:** Academic Level B–E
4. **Employment Type:** Fixed-Term
 - 3 years for Levels B & C
 - Up to 5 years for Levels D & E
 - Fellows will have a significant research time allocation for the duration of the fellowship. Fellows will also undertake other academic activities including teaching and leadership, higher degree by research (HDR) supervision and administrative duties directly related to their research activity.
5. **Time Fraction:** 1.0 FTE
6. **Salary & Benefits:** Competitive salary package based on appointment level.
7. **Research Allowance:** An annual research allowance will be included in the package.
8. **Research Allocation:** Research-focused

Expectations of VCRIF Fellows (Levels B–E)

VCRIF Fellows are expected to deliver on the research program and impact agenda outlined in their submitted project plan, with expectations scaled to their academic level and aligned to their career stage.

VU defines research impact as the demonstrable direct or indirect contribution that research processes or outputs make to: a) Shifting understanding and advancing academic (i.e., scientific or scholarly) methods, theories, or knowledge across or within disciplines (i.e. academic impact) and/or b) Cultural, economic, industrial, ecological or social changes. These changes influence the well-being of people, planet or society for this and future generations (i.e. non-academic, societal impact).

VCRIF Fellows are expected to:

- Conduct research of national and international standing, demonstrating a commitment to research excellence and advancing knowledge with meaningful societal benefit.
- Produce high-quality research outputs that reflect research excellence, such as Q1/D1 journal publications, commissioned reports, patents, or other significant scholarly or industry-relevant contributions.
- Pursue and secure competitive external research funding, appropriate to their discipline and level of experience.
- Supervise and/or mentor HDR candidates, supporting the development of emerging researchers.
- Engage meaningfully with external stakeholders, including industry, government, and community partners, to enhance research relevance, translation, and impact.
- Contribute to research leadership and capability building, particularly in advancing research impact, collaboration, and engagement across the University.
- Foster interdisciplinary research collaboration, strengthening cross-disciplinary networks within and beyond VU's research community.

Fellowship Levels

| Fellowship Level | Indicative Post-PhD Research Experience | Research Career Stage | Description |
|---|--|-------------------------------|---|
| Postdoctoral Research and Impact Fellow | Up to 5 years (or longer if adjusted for career interruptions) | Early Career Researcher (ECR) | Suited to researchers in the early stages of an independent career, demonstrating potential for high-quality outputs and impact. |
| Senior Research and Impact Fellow | 5–10 years (or equivalent considering career interruptions) | Mid-Career Researcher (MCR) | Aimed at mid-career researchers with a growing national profile and a track record of collaborative, interdisciplinary, and impactful research. |
| Principal Research and Impact Fellow | 10–15 years (or equivalent considering career interruptions) | Established Researcher | For established researchers with leadership experience, strong external funding success, and evidence of significant research translation and impact. |
| Professorial Research and Impact Fellow | 15+ years (or equivalent considering career interruptions) | Senior/Leading Researcher | For internationally recognised researchers with a distinguished record of research impact and leadership in shaping research agendas. |

Selection Criteria

Criterion 1: Research track record (50%)

- Up to 10 research outputs (e.g. journal articles, NTROs, monographs). Include a short description of each output's significance and your role.
- Up to 10 major or representative grants. Include funder, project title, your role, amount, duration, and partners.
- Other indicators HDR supervision, leadership roles, awards, research impact, engagement and impact achievements with stakeholders, including academic, industry, government, and community partners.
- ORCID iD (if available): Please provide your ORCID iD as part of your track record. This helps us accurately assess research outputs and contributions.

Criterion 2: Research plan – Impact and Feasibility (25%)

- Summary of your research aims, novelty, and approach.
- Feasibility and support for delivery within the fellowship.
- Anticipated impact (academic and non-academic).
- Strategy for funding, engagement, and research translation.
- (Optional) Indicate potential VU academic contacts or research units for collaboration.

Criterion 3: Strategic alignment and contribution to VU Research (25%)

- Clearly identify which of the six priority research areas the proposed research program primarily aligns with:
 1. Innovating education & future-proofing Australia's workforce
 2. Sport that inspires elite performance, community participation & healthy living
 3. Health & wellbeing solutions
 4. Transforming communities through policy, practice & governance
 5. Smart, sustainable & liveable cities
 6. 'By community, for community' First Nations Knowledge
- How your work aligns or will contribute to achieving the objectives of VU's Research and Impact Plan 2023–2028.
- Your potential contributions to VU research culture, mentoring, and inclusion.
- How your experience supports VU's mission and dual-sector model.

See [Appendix 1 Selection Criteria Template](#) for further instructions.

Application Process

Step one:

Applicants must submit the following three documents in PDF format via the [Jobs at VU webpage](#):

1. CV and Referee Details (Max 2 pages)

- A concise academic CV highlighting relevant academic and research experience.
- Contact details for two referees (name, title, institution, email). At least one referee should not be a current or former supervisor. Listing a VU academic contact is optional.

Note: Do not include a publication list or grant history here—this can instead be included in your selection criteria response (see section [Selection Criteria](#) and [Appendix 1 Selection Criteria template](#)).

2. Selection Criteria Response (Max 4 pages)

- A structured response addressing the three selection criteria outlined in these guidelines.
- Guidance on how to address each criterion is provided in [Appendix 1](#).

3. Career Interruption and Eligibility Context (Optional, Max 1 page)

- If applicable, applicants may submit a separate statement outlining any career interruptions or eligibility-related considerations that may have impacted their opportunity to undertake or produce research.
- Guidance on how to address career interruption and provide eligibility context is provided in [Appendix 2](#).

Step two:

- Interviews will be arranged for shortlisted candidates. Interviews will be asked to attend a face to face or online interview during the interview period specified in [Key Dates](#).

Application Assessment

Complete applications are competitively assessed by a panel of senior academics from diverse disciplines. The Committee is chaired by the VU Deputy Vice Chancellor, Research and Impact (DVCRI) or a nominee appointed by the DVCRI. The Committee is responsible for recommending shortlisted applicants to be interviewed and for recommending a final ranking of candidates for approval by the DVCRI and Vice-Chancellor. Due to the high number of applications anticipated, we will not be able to provide detailed feedback for unsuccessful applicants.

Conditions of Fellowship

Employment conditions

The Letter of Offer will include a Position Description outlining the duties VCRIF Fellows are expected to perform.

Fellowships are offered as full-time research roles (1.0 FTE) for a period of three to five years, depending on the academic level of appointment.

Relocation assistance will be provided to overseas and interstate VCRIF Fellows in line with [VU policy](#).

An academic can only be awarded one VCRIF however they can apply in future rounds if their application was unsuccessful.

Funding conditions

A research allowance, negotiated with each VCRIF Fellow, will be transferred annually to the responsible College, Institute or Centre where the Fellow is placed (inclusive of project budget).

VCRIF Fellows are encouraged to apply for external funding during their fellowship. If a Fellow secures an external grant or fellowship that includes a salary component, the VCRIF will cease from the commencement date of the external award. The VCRIF will not be paused or extended although contract extensions will be considered at the end of their external grant or external fellowship funding. Any research allowance provided through the VCRIF will remain available alongside the external award.

Fellowship structure and contract variations

VCRIF Fellows will participate in the annual performance review process under the supervision of their Head of College, Institute or Centre or nominee.

These requests will be assessed against the scheme's objectives and in accordance with the University's workplace policies and entitlements under the VU Enterprise Agreement.

Fellowship reporting

VCRIF Fellows will submit yearly progress reports and a final report detailing the research achievements and impact to the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research and Impact or delegated authority.

Contact

All enquiries for the VCRIF scheme should be directed to the program team via email to vcrif@vu.edu.au.

Appendix 1 – Selection Criteria Template

Applicants must submit a structured response addressing the three selection criteria. The total length must not exceed 4 pages (A4, minimum 11pt font, single spacing, 2 cm margins).

Criterion 1: Research track record (50%)

- Up to 10 research outputs (e.g. journal articles, NTROs, monographs). Include a short description of each output's significance and your role.
- Up to 10 major or representative grants. Include funder, project title, your role, amount, duration, and partners.
- Other indicators HDR supervision, leadership roles, awards, research impact, engagement and impact achievements with stakeholders, including academic, industry, government, and community partners.
- ORCID iD (if available): Please provide your ORCID iD as part of your track record. This helps us accurately assess research outputs and contributions.

Note: If applicable, career interruption or eligibility context should be provided in the Career Interruptions statement (see [Appendix 2](#)).

Criterion 2: Research plan – Impact and Feasibility (25%)

- Summary of your research aims, novelty, and approach.
- Feasibility and support for delivery within the fellowship.
- Anticipated impact (academic and non-academic).
- Strategy for funding, engagement, and research translation.
- (Optional) Indicate potential VU academic contacts or research units for collaboration.

Criterion 3: Strategic alignment and contribution to VU Research (25%)

- Clearly identify which of the six priority research areas the proposed research program primarily aligns with:
 7. Innovating education & future-proofing Australia's workforce
 8. Sport that inspires elite performance, community participation & healthy living
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 10. Transforming communities through policy, practice & governance
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- How your work aligns or will contribute to achieving the objectives of [VU's Research and Impact Plan 2023–2028](#).
- Your potential contributions to VU research culture, mentoring, and inclusion.
- How your experience supports VU's mission and dual-sector model.

Appendix 2 – Career Interruptions and Eligibility Context Template

This optional statement (max 1 page) provides context on career interruptions or non-traditional research pathways. At VU, we understand that you may experience a range of professional and personal circumstances that may affect your career. As such, you may decide to provide an optional statement to provide context on career interruptions or non-traditional research pathways.

Please include a response in two parts:

Part A:

- Circumstance type, period from and to, brief description
- Whether you worked part-time or outside academia
- Career shifts (e.g., industry, government, policy, clinical roles)

| Part A: Claim Summary | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------|-----------|-------------------|
| Circumstance Type | Period From | Period To | Brief Description |
| | | | |

Part B:

- Impacts on your capacity to conduct or disseminate research

Example:

Between February 2018 and July 2019, I was on 12 months' maternity leave, followed by a 6-month phased return at 0.5 FTE to a research-focused role with a 40% per cent research allocation. During this period, I was unable to lead grant applications or complete major publications. This significantly impacted my research output and ability to supervise HDR candidates. Since 2019, I have since resumed full-time work in a research-focused role (80 percent research-focused) and regained research momentum.