Faculty of Sciences
Grant Development Program

Background

The category 1 nationally competitive grants space (ARC Discovery, NHMRC Project Grants, Fellowships, and Linkage Projects etc.) is an ever more challenging environment in which to achieve funding success. The Faculty of Sciences is committed to providing supporting structures for new and existing researchers to help improve the quality of their applications and to deliver improved success.

Overall Process

Under this scheme proposals for submission in the 2017-2018 funding rounds, new applications and grants unfunded after review in a current round, will be offered the opportunity for review and feedback. The process will follow a staged approach. Stage 1 will be open to all intending applicants, but participation in subsequent stages will be by invitation and subject to available resourcing. The stages comprise:

Stage 1 - Initial Review
Internal feedback on a brief project description (with slides), addressing key assessment criteria, in a presentation and discussion format.

Stage 2 - Detailed Review
Peer review by internal and/or external reviewers.

Stage 3 – Cut & Polish
Professional grant development support.

Schedule

In preparation for the 2017-2018 nationally competitive grant funding rounds, the Faculty of Sciences will run a grant development scheme in three main modes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Round</th>
<th>Stage 1</th>
<th>Stage 2</th>
<th>Stage 3</th>
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<td><strong>Ongoing</strong> Aimed (non-exclusively) at industry-linked grants.</td>
<td>By request</td>
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<td><strong>Fellowship Round</strong> Focused on fellowship applications requiring submission in late 2017/early 2018 (e.g. ARC Future Fellowships, NH&amp;MRC Early Career and Career Development Fellowships etc.).</td>
<td>September</td>
<td>October</td>
<td>October/November</td>
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<td><strong>Major Round</strong> Focused on the major ARC/NHMRC grant rounds which normally require submission early in the following year (e.g. ARC Discovery, NHMRC project grants etc.).</td>
<td>October</td>
<td>November</td>
<td>January</td>
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Please note:
From time-to-time there may be extra grant development assistance/resources provided to intending applicants from DVCR/Research Services. Such assistance will normally only be accessible for applicants at Stage 2 and/or Stage 3.

All dates given above are approximate and subject to change. Accommodations can be made in round timing and scheme inclusion to fit with submission dates and for those with existing applications pending announcement. Applicants with particular timing requirements should contact us to discuss the options.

17/08/2017
Stage 1: Initial internal review by panel of experts

There will be an internal review process managed by the Faculty Office. This will involve intending applicants presenting a verbal project pitch with accompanying PowerPoint slides to a small panel of reviewers put together from the Faculty Research Committee (FRC) and experienced researchers in the Faculty.

The applicants will prepare and present a short 5-10 minute pitch of 5 slides maximum, with each slide addressing one of the following:

- A brief overview, proposed title, lead CI and project team/partners details, target scheme;
- Key research questions/hypotheses/aims/preliminary data (or the possibility thereof);
- Information on the lead CI including years' post-PhD, total publications, publications in the last 10 years (and 5 years); citation metrics (total, last 5 years; h-index); grant track record summary;
- Information on the research collaborators or partners (e.g. for Linkage) with names and some information about the staff to be included on the grant, including international collaborators;
- Details about the resources needed to support the research including funding envelope, major equipment and infrastructure needs, facility requirements, access to expertise to enable the research etc.

Applicants will receive immediate oral feedback on the proposed application strategy from the panel. Written notes will also be supplied to the applicant following the session.

Stage 2: Detailed review by peers and Faculty

Stage 2 involves a more detailed peer review of a more expansive draft proposal and CV section, and will normally involve:

a) Applicants invited to progress from Stage 1 (new grants); and/or
b) Applicants who are in the band 10%-50% of unsuccessful proposals in that year’s grant outcomes (applicants in the top 10% of unsuccessful will be invited straight to Stage 3); and/or
c) Applicants who meet the criteria for DVCR/Research Services assistance/support.

Options for this stage include:

Option A: Internal or external 'ARC style' review
These new or revised applications will be placed with independent reviewers identified by the applicants. Reviewers may be internal and/or outside the institution and should ideally be non-collaborators (to maximise objectivity) with relevant expertise. Reviewers will be asked to provide a brief, but comprehensive review of the grant and suggestions for improvements.

Option B: 'Trigger point' review
Drawing on expertise of current and former College of Expert panel members, faculty staff and FRC committee members will examine grants looking for possible 'weaknesses' in the grant structure, the research environment and research team that can be used by reviewers to discredit grants. This will not involve extensive feedback on the science (the science will be assessed by peers in schools etc.).

Stage 3 – Professional grant review and assistance

Depending on progression through the preceding stages of this process, and available resourcing, selected applicants will be directed to professional grant reviewers/editors funded by the Faculty and/or Research Services.