



## Research Support Funds (RSF), Thesis Editing Funds and Fieldwork Support Funds (FSF)

### Guidelines for Students

#### 1. RESEARCH SUPPORT FUNDS

##### *(a) Eligibility*

A person may apply to the Research Committee for Research Support Funding if they are a graduate research student with a full or partial enrolment in Melbourne Law School.

The applicant must have been confirmed before the funds will be released (although it may be applied for up to two (2) months before confirmation).

Applications for retrospective funding will be approved only in exceptional circumstances, and an explanation for the delay in applying must be provided.

##### *(b) Funding Cap*

Eligible applicants may apply for up to **\$6,500** for the duration of candidature. It is important to note that this is a cap (i.e. the maximum amount that can be awarded during candidature) and not an entitlement.

Where a student is jointly enrolled in Melbourne Law School and another Faculty, costs will generally be shared by Melbourne Law School and the other Faculty on a pro-rata basis. Accordingly, a student who is jointly enrolled in Melbourne Law School and another Faculty will, if their application is successful, normally receive pro-rata funding (unless, for example, the amount requested is less than \$500 or funding for the activity in question is not available from the other Faculty in which the candidate is enrolled, in which case the Research Committee may decide to award the full amount).

##### *(c) Use of Funds*

Research Support Funds may be used for fair and reasonable costs associated with:

- Presenting at conferences (domestic and international), including registration fees, accommodation and travel expenses;
- Attending a conference that is clearly related to the research area but at which the applicant is not presenting, limited to registration and accommodation costs (airfares will be made available for such conferences only in exceptional circumstances, e.g. the applicant is an organiser of the conference or attendance will have a significant and substantial benefit to their research work);
- Travel in support of research projects (e.g. fieldwork and archival work);

- Translation costs;
- Obtaining necessary material for course-related research work that is not available through the Law Library (such as archival material);
- Business cards for the purpose of a student's research project, which may include fieldwork or face to face interviews/ surveys/ consultation who are required to identify themselves, their project and their affiliation with Melbourne Law School;
- Other expenses directly related to the costs of undertaking course-related research work.

Funds will usually not be provided to support costs associated with third-party assistance (such as the use of Research Assistants or Editorial Assistance). Only in rare and exceptional circumstances and with the knowledge and support of supervisors, should students use paid editorial assistance from an outside source.

#### *(d) Application Process*

Applicants should complete the standard RSF application form and attach all relevant documentation and a justification of budget. A separate statement of support must be provided from their supervisors (of up to one page).

#### *(e) Assessment of Applications*

Applications are assessed by the Research (Finance) Sub-committee of the Research Committee. The Sub-Committee may award the full amount requested or a smaller amount. The Sub-committee considers applications throughout the year and reports decisions on applications to the four annual meetings of the Research Committee.

When assessing an application for RSF, the sub-committee will give consideration to the following factors:

- The necessity of the expenditure for the completion of the project and the resulting benefit to Melbourne Law School or the research project;
- Whether the applicant has previously obtained funds from the Research Committee for this project;
- Whether the applicant has sought funding for this expenditure from another source; and
- The supervisor's recommendations and supporting statement.

## **2. THESIS EDITING FUNDS**

#### *(a) Eligibility*

A person may apply to the Research Committee for Thesis Editing Funds if they are an International graduate research student with a full or partial enrolment in Melbourne Law School, for whom English is not their first language.

The applicant must have been confirmed before the funds will be released (although it may be applied for up to two (2) months before confirmation).

#### *(b) Funding Cap*

Eligible applicants may apply for up to **\$1,000** for the duration of candidature (provided they are not receiving this support from an Australia Awards scholarship or another source of funding from the University or elsewhere). It is important to note that this is a cap (i.e. the maximum amount that can be awarded during candidature) and not an entitlement.

The amount is reduced pro-rata where a student is jointly enrolled in Melbourne Law School and another Faculty (i.e. a student whose enrolment is 60% in the Faculty of Arts and 40% in Melbourne Law School will have an Thesis Editing Funds cap of \$600).

### *(c) Use of Funds*

A student applying for this additional support for editorial assistance must ensure compliance with the University of Melbourne's [Graduate Research Training Policy](#) which requires editorial intervention to be restricted to copyediting and proofreading.

### *(d) Application Process*

Applicants should complete the standard RSF application form indicating that they are applying for Thesis Editing Funds and attach the relevant documentation, including a statement of support from their supervisors (of up to one page).

### *(e) Assessment of Applications*

Applications are assessed by the Research (Finance) Sub-committee of the Research Committee. The Sub-Committee may award the full amount requested or a smaller amount. The Sub-committee considers applications throughout the year and reports decisions on applications to the four annual meetings of the Research Committee.

When assessing an application for Thesis Editing Funds, the sub-committee will give consideration to the following factors:

- Whether the applicant is an international student for whom English is not their first language,
- The necessity of the expenditure for the completion of the project and the resulting benefit to Melbourne Law School or the research project;
- Whether the applicant has previously obtained funds from the Research Committee for this project;
- Whether the applicant has sought funding for this expenditure from another source; and
- The supervisor's recommendations and supporting statement.

## **2. FIELDWORK SUPPORT FUNDS (FSF)**

### *(a) Eligibility*

In addition to RSF, PhD students who travel to undertake field research during their candidature may also apply for Fieldwork Support Funds (FSF). Applicants must apply for any other [relevant university funding](#) where applicable.

The applicant must have been confirmed before the funds will be released (although it may be applied for up to two (2) months before confirmation).

For this scheme, fieldwork includes travel within Australia or overseas to collect data in support of their PhD project. This funding is not guaranteed and will be awarded on a competitive basis.

#### *(b) Funding Cap*

Eligible applicants may apply for up to **\$2,000** for the duration of candidature. It is important to note that this is a cap (i.e. the maximum amount that can be awarded during candidature) and not an entitlement.

As with RSF, this cap is reduced pro-rata where a student is jointly enrolled in Melbourne Law School and another Faculty.

#### *(c) Use of Funds*

FSF may be used for travel and associated expenses in support of fieldwork including:

- accessing archival records; and
- conducting interviews and observations.

Funds will not be provided to support the costs associated with presenting at conferences (domestic and international), as RSF can be sought for this purpose.

#### *(d) Application Process*

Applicants should complete the standard RSF application form indicating that they are applying for FSF and attach any additional relevant documentation, which may include:

- Ethics approval,
- Evidence of meetings that have been arranged or institutions that will be visited as part of an applicant's field research must be provided.

Applicants should also provide a justification of up to 500 words explaining how the funding would benefit the applicant in collecting research data, and seek a statement of support from their supervisors (of up to one page).

#### *(e) Decision-making process*

Applications are assessed by the Research (Finance) Sub-committee of the Research Committee. The Sub-Committee may award the full amount requested or a smaller amount. The Sub-committee considers applications throughout the year and reports decisions on applications to the four annual meetings of the Research Committee.

When assessing an application for FSF, the sub-committee will give consideration to the following factors:

- The necessity of the expenditure for the completion of the project;
- The quality of the proposed activity;
- Its benefits for the applicant's thesis;
- The involvement of the applicant in the life of the Law School; and
- The recommendation of the supervisor.

### **3. INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL – GRADUATE RESEARCH STUDENTS**

(a) Applicants must ensure that they have an approved [Study Away Application](#) for the period of study prior to international travel. Application must be made at least one (1) month prior to travel.

(b) If you are a currently enrolled University of Melbourne student and are yet to complete your course requirements, you are eligible for travel insurance if you are required to travel as part of your course, or if your intended travel has been approved by your department or faculty prior to your departure. Further information is available through the [Insurance Office](#).

### **4. FUNDING FOR INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT) FACILITIES**

Applicants seeking funding for IT facilities must, prior to submission of their application, discuss their requirements with the appropriate IT staff member in [Facilities](#).

### **5. ETHICS APPROVAL**

Research may require ethics approval. Where appropriate, evidence of ethics approval, or approval pending, must be provided.

### **6. TIME LIMIT ON USE OF FUNDS**

Successful applicants have six (6) months from the date they are notified of the approval of their application in which to use the funds allocated by the Research Committee.

### **7. PAYMENT OF RESEARCH SUPPORT FUNDS**

If your Research Support Funds application is approved, you will be contacted by Central Finance to supply or confirm your bank account details. The agreed amount will be deposited to your nominated bank account. If you are unable to undertake the project as described in your application once awarded, you are required to repay the full amount of the award to Melbourne Law School.

### **8. PART-TIME STUDENTS INCOME TAX IMPLICATIONS**

Scholarship and bursary payments are normally exempt from income tax provided that all of the following conditions are fulfilled (s51.10 Income Tax Assessment Act 1997 (Cth)):

- the payment is to a student enrolled as a full-time student;
- the scholarship is provided for educational purposes and not as part of an employment agreement;
- the student is not required to be, or become, an employee of the University or a scholarship sponsor as a condition of the scholarship; and
- the terms of the scholarship do not amount to a contract for labour with the scholarship sponsor or the University.

Scholarship and bursary payments to students who are enrolled part-time may be subject to income tax. If applicable, the University withholds income tax to prevent students from accumulating a tax debt.

## **9. REPORT TO RESEARCH COMMITTEE**

Successful applicants **may** be required to provide a brief overview of how the funding has been used and the resulting benefits to their research project within seven (7) months of the date of notification of approval of an application. This report is then tabled at a Research Committee meeting.

## **10. FURTHER INFORMATION**

Should you have any queries as to any part of these guidelines or the application process, please contact:

*Graduate Research Officer*

Office for Research (Law)

Telephone: (03) 8344 8946

Email: [law-graduateresearch@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:law-graduateresearch@unimelb.edu.au)