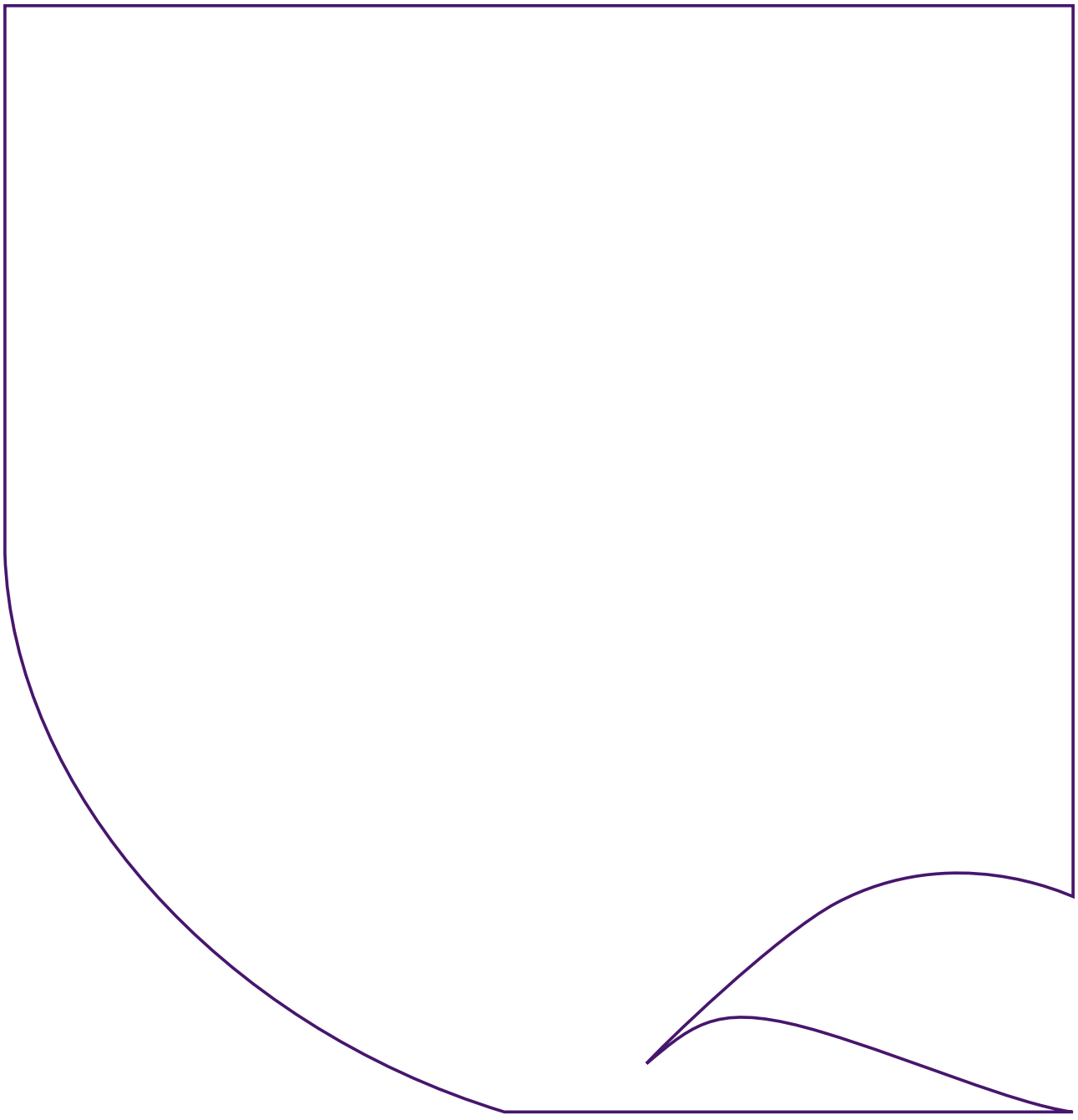
Institute for Teaching and Learning Innovation

THE UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND
AUSTRALIA

CREATE CHANGE

Early Career Educational Research Grants | Application Guidelines



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1. Introduction

1.1 Teaching and Learning Enhancement at UQ

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) has committed $1 million in funding in 2021 for Teaching and Learning Grants, including the Early Career Educational Research (ECER) Grants and the Teaching Innovation Grants.

This document provides the guidelines for the ECER Grants. Guidelines for the Teaching Innovation Grants scheme can be found here.

1.2 Aims

The purpose of the ECER Grants is to enable Teaching Focused (TF), Teaching and Research (T&R) and Clinical Academic (CA) staff to promote and enhance Educational Research at the University.

The aims of the scheme are:

1. to encourage new members of TF, T&R or CA staff, and existing staff members transferring to a TF position, to engage in Educational Research;
2. to identify teaching and learning issues, within or across disciplines, and facilitate an approach to addressing these issues;
3. to initiate the development of a project or program that could later attract internal or external funding; and
4. to support, on a competitive basis, high quality teaching and learning projects of modest financial cost.

1.3 Early Career Academic

For the purposes of this scheme, an Early Career Academic (ECA) is*, at the time of application*, within their first eight years of full-time equivalent university employment in a TF, T&R, CA or similar role.

Applicants should refer to the Eligibility criteria below to ensure they are eligible to apply.

2. ECER Grants

2.1 2021 Strategic Innovation Areas

The ECER Grants encourage members of TF, T&R or CA staff to engage in Educational Research and to identify teaching and learning issues, within or across disciplines, and facilitate an approach to addressing these issues.

The ECER scheme supports projects that are both aligned to UQ's institutional priorities, as identified in UQ's Operational Plan for 2021 and innovate teaching and learning in Higher Education.

- In 2021, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) encourages applications, which seek to innovate teaching and learning in address one or more of the following:
- Investigate innovative or authentic online assessment, and feedback practices, including promoting academic integrity across assessment.
- Enhance quality digital tools and content to support engaging learning experiences that also increase flexibility for students.
- Increase active learning and engagement in the online and blended environment including, but not limited to, collaborative learning, building a sense of community, or promoting belonging and well-being for an enriched student experience.
- Deepen our understanding of data about learner activities and stimulate development of learning analytic tools that support research on student learning and retention, student community experience and diverse student cohorts

2.1.1 Projects with Student Partners

Projects that plan to include Student Partners and demonstrate genuine Students as Partners practice will be considered favourably. That is, your project proposal will demonstrate:

- Student representation and voice: your project might include student participants in focus groups and feedback sessions, or as representatives in a working group; or
- Student partner projects: which include students to co-develop and deliver the project's initiatives.

2.1.2 University-wide Initiatives

To avoid conflict with centrally supported, university wide initiatives (like eAssessment, Shorter Form Credentials, Blended Learning, etc.) your project abstract will be reviewed by ITaLI during the application process (refer to 3.1) before submitting a complete project proposal.

If there is a correlation identified between your project's aims and a central teaching and learning initiative, ITaLI will refer your abstract to the appropriate working group or party. Projects that do not meet the deadline for the submission of their project abstract will not be eligible to submit.

Applications for projects that are linked to central teaching and learning initiatives, may apply for Teaching Innovation Grant funding to develop a pilot or related project. However, these projects must be designed in consultation with central project teams and be supported with a written statement of support from the Academic Lead outlining the contribution of the project to the initiative.

2.2 Eligibility Criteria

Staff applying for an ECER Grant must fulfil the following general eligibility criteria:

- At the time of application, and for the grant period, applicants must hold a (salaried) TF, T&R or CA appointment at UQ
- The appointment must be of at least 0.5 full time equivalent (FTE)
- The appointment must be for at least a three-year term (can be a single appointment or a series of shorter back-to-back appointments covering at least a 3-year period including the grant period). If a staff member's appointment is less than three years at the time of application, they need to present a special case to explain why they should be considered
- Applications from individuals yet to complete their PhD/other postgraduate training (in addition to holding an eligible appointment as outlined above) will only be considered in highly unusual circumstances. The University believes such applicants should not embark upon additional teaching and learning projects, but should concentrate on completing their thesis and publishing the results. Applicants currently completing postgraduate training must demonstrate:
  - the project is clearly different from their higher degree project, and
  - the progress of their degree will not be affected by taking on the additional work outlined in the project, for which they are seeking funds under this scheme
- Applicants must apply as an individual. Team applications will not be accepted
- At the time of application, applicants must be within their first eight years of academic employment, following completion of postgraduate research training. Usually this will mean applicants will have been awarded their PhD or other postgraduate training in the eight years prior to the closing date. If you do not comply with this requirement but have compelling evidence as to why you should be considered an early career researcher, please justify your claim by completing the relevant question in the Application Form.
- Applicants can only submit one ECER application per round, and
- Applicants must be appointed to academic levels A, B or C. Staff appointed to academic levels D or higher can make a special case if they believe they should be eligible.

ECER Grant applications will not be accepted from:

- Staff who were successful in obtaining a grant under the scheme previously.
- Adjunct, Affiliated or Clinical Academic Title Holders and
- Staff who will be on Long Service Leave during the grant period.

2.3 Project Duration

The timeline should assume the project will begin in Semester 1, 2022 and be completed within 12 months.

***Please Note*: If the project leader needs to withdraw from their project, the project will be terminated.**

2.4 Funding

Each ECER project will be funded up to a maximum of $15,000. In total, up to $60,000 in funding will be allocated to grants awarded under ECER Grants scheme.

2.5 Project Impact

Project impact is a key expectation for all projects. Applicants must outline the expected impact of their project in the application. A strong application will make a compelling case about anticipated project impact at UQ and will provide a planned approach for transfer of project outcomes at each project phase.

2.6 Timelines for 2021

June 2021	Call for 2021 ECER Grant applications.
July 2021 Date to be confirmed	*Developing a Successful Teaching and Learning Grant Application and Information Session.* Please register your attendance through the University Staff Development Calendar.
August and September (Dates confirmed) *Please check the ITaLI Website for session and registration details.*	Sponsored by ITaLI, virtual sessions will be arranged to '***pitch your idea***' and receive feedback from ITaLI, ITS, eLearning Operational Forum members and potential collaborators. These sessions are not compulsory but are highly recommended.
2 August 2021	**Confirm Intention to Apply for a Teaching Innovation Grant by submitting a short project abstract here.** **Submission of an abstract is compulsory**
11 September 2021	It is recommended that applicants forward their complete proposal to Heads of School/ Faculty/ Institutes using the online endorsement form by this date.
17 September 2021	**Closing Date** **ECER applications including Head of School/ Institute/ Centre endorsement due to ITaLI.**
1 October	On receipt, ITaLI will facilitate Associate Dean (Academic) sign off on all applications. Associate Deans (Academic) reserve the right to offer additional feedback and applicants should address this with them before the proposal will be considered by the Teaching and Learning Grants Selection Panel. Associate Dean (Academic) Endorsement and Full Final applications due to ITaLI.
December 2021	Announcement of successful projects.
March 2022	Projects commence.

2.7 Notification of Results of Applications

Applicants can expect to be notified by email of the outcome within three months of the closing date.

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) reserves the right to make the first public announcement of successful applications. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) may also decide to consider proposals outside an advertised round of applications.

3. Application Information and Instructions

3.1 Application Process

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) will call for applications via email. Relevant details will also be available on the ECER Grants website.

ITaLI will provide opportunities for project teams to 'pitch' to a wide audience, in a virtual offering of the **"Pitch Your Idea"** sessions, to allow for feedback and to seek advice prior to submission of the application. These sessions are not compulsory but are highly recommended and should be just one of many consultations undertaken in the development of your project.

Applicants should initially discuss their proposed application with the relevant Head of School, Associate Dean (Academic) or Executive Dean to ensure the application is appropriate to the needs and strategies of the host school/faculty and ascertain whether the school/faculty is prepared to support both the application and embedding outcomes at the end of the project.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to consult with ITS, Library, ITaLI, educational designers and other Units, as appropriate, to inform their application. For advice on who to contact to discuss a project idea, please contact teaching.grants@uq.edu.au.

Refer to section 5.6 in these Guidelines for important information for projects involving interface with technologies. Please ensure these issues are appropriately considered in your proposal. This includes ensuring that the proposal includes details of your market scan (including your scan of currently University supported eLearning tools). To discuss this further, please contact ITS by email (e. TIG.Submissions@its.uq.edu.au).

3.1.1 Stage 1: Intent to Apply

Applicants will confirm their intention to apply by completing a short online form.

The **Intention to Apply** form is compulsory. Submitting your **Intention to Apply**, will allow for correlations between your project, school and faculty priorities, and central university initiatives to be identified early. This will provide you with an opportunity to develop a project proposal in consultation, before the Selection Panel assesses it. This form asks you to provide a draft of your abstract (no more than 200 words), and your contact information. Project abstracts are due to ITaLI by 2 August 2021.

3.1.2 Stage 2: Complete Application Submission

Applications are to be prepared using the online UQ Teaching Innovation Grants Application Form and Project Proposal Template.

3.1.2.1 Application Components

The online application form comprises the following sections:

Form

A. Summary Details

B. Personnel and Related Details

D. Project Value (including Budget)

E. Project Certification (Head of Faculty/ School/ Institute as relevant).

File Uploads

C. Project Proposal

3.1.2.2 Section C: Project Proposal Page Limit

Your response to Application **Section C: Project Proposal** should not exceed **a combined total of eight (8) A4 pages.** Please use the template as provided.

- Page limits:
  - Responses to sub-sections C1 – C10 (as relevant): limited to six (6) pages
  - Application Attachment C4 - Project Impact and Transfer of Innovation Plan: limited to two (2) A4 pages; 9pt font (one page per table).

Applications less than eight pages are strongly encouraged.

3.1.2.3 Section E: School and Faculty Endorsement

Applicants should prepare proposals in sufficient time to ensure written endorsement is available before the closing date by relevant Heads of School/Centre/Institute Directors and ADAs.

The full and final Project Proposal including the Head of School/ Faculty/ Institute endorsement is to be submitted online by the 3 September 2021. It is recommended that Applicants submit the online recommendation form to their Head of School by the 25 August to allow them time to review and consider whether the proposal is suitable to the needs of their School.

On receipt of the complete and endorsed application, ITaLI will liaise with Associate Deans (Academic) (AD(A)) for their review and endorsement of the project proposal. *AD(A)s reserve the right to offer their additional feedback on the proposals and applicants must address this feedback in consultation with them*. Applications requiring updates following AD(A) review must be returned to ITaLI by 17 September 2021.

3.1.2.4 Formatting

Prepare your application as follows:

- Documents must be A4 page size.
- Font size must be 11-point Arial or 11-point Calibri and narrow fonts must not be used.
- Margins must be at least 2cm with clear definition between paragraphs and sections.
- No columns should be used
- Tables are acceptable.

Submissions that do not meet these requirements will not be accepted. Applications which do not comply will not be reviewed by the Selection Panel.

3.2 Budget and Financials

A budget outline must be included in each proposal. The budget shall comply with the recommended format and content. Refer to the budget template in Section D of the online application form.

3.2.1 Project Budget

The budget should clearly identify and justify all expenses associated with the project, broken down as per the budget template above. Where there are other funding sources including cash and in-kind, these should be included, and the items they will cover should be indicated.

The budget should be appropriate to the project outputs, timeframe, scale and scope, noting that maximum funding is $15,000 for ECER projects.

3.2.2 Budget Sub-Headings

The required budget sub-headings will include:

a. Personnel:

Include the salaries, wages, and on-costs of staff to be recruited to the project. The level of each appointment and the hours per week (or percentage of time committed) should be specified. Please discuss on-costs and budgeting with your local area Management Accountant.

Learning design support for the project is capped at level HEW7.

It is expected that the Project Lead and Team Members will manage their own projects thus, project officer support for the project is capped at level HEW6.

It is not expected that teaching relief from normal duties will be included in the budget, however it will be considered in exceptional circumstances if a strong case is made and supported by the Head of School. Rationale for why a teaching relief position is required and how it will be filled for the period in question should be endorsed by the Head of School and attached to the application. Grant monies may only be used for teaching relief where this has been specified in the application.

b. Project Activities:

Where the purpose of expenditure is linked to a project deliverable (an output, a product or resource that will be generated through undertaking the project) these costs could include, for example, software, consumables, learning resources, workshops, reports, learning objects, and tools.

c. Project Dissemination and Evaluation

A separate item should be included for project dissemination and project evaluation.

3.2.3 Other Funding Sources:

Include cash and in-kind contributions from the school or faculty and other sources.

3.2.4 Non-Approved Use of the Grant

The grant cannot be used for:

- Building works.
- Teaching buy-out, except in exceptional circumstances as described above.
- Purchase of assets. However, asset purchases may be considered in exceptional circumstances and approved after consultation with ITS (this restriction would normally include computers and small digital devices which should be provided by the school or faculty as a contribution to the project).
- Travel that is not directly related to achieving the outcomes of the project (e.g. travel for dissemination purposes is not supported).
- The supplementation of projects being funded by other agencies.
- Projects which consist primarily or substantially of conference travel.

- Travel or other expenses while the grant recipient is on a Special Studies Program.
- Fees of overseas students.
- Basic facilities and equipment (specialised teaching and learning equipment may be funded).
- Projects that constitute the topic for an applicant's higher degree thesis.

3.2.5 Basic Facilities and Infrastructure

Funds are provided on the assumption the basic facilities required for the proposed work will be available in the relevant faculty/institute/school. Basic facilities include suitably equipped and furnished accommodation; access to workshop services, library facilities, adequate computer facilities and secretarial services; as well as the required time to carry out the project.

3.3 Lodgement and Processing

The application period offers a three (3) month window for proposal development, consultation, critical feedback sessions (i.e. 'Pitch Your Idea' sessions), endorsement, and submission.

Late applications will not be accepted unless there are extenuating circumstances. All extensions must be approved in writing prior to the closing date by the Chair of the Selection Panel.

Applicants are strongly advised to review the application prior to submission to ensure it meets the format requirements as detailed in section 3.1 of these Guidelines.

3.4 Contact Details

All queries should be directed to teaching.grants@uq.edu.au

4. Assessment of Project Proposals

4.1 Assessment Process

A Teaching and Learning Grants Selection Panel ("the panel"), which reports to the Teaching and Learning Committee, will manage the ECER Grants competitive application process. The panel will assess applications for eligibility and compliance against the requirements. The panel reserves the right to ask for a proposal to be modified and/or re-submitted for decision.

The panel will assess all proposals against the assessment criteria stated in section 4.2 in these Guidelines. The panel will seek advice from relevant UQ units, which may include ITS, ITaLI, Learning Design Community, Library and eLearning Operational Forum as required. The panel will submit its final recommendations for consideration to the Teaching and Learning Committee, which in turn will make recommendations to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) for approval.

Where a member of the panel believes they may have a conflict of interest (COI) in providing an assessment, UQ Policy and Procedure on COI is to be followed. Applications under this scheme are submitted in confidence. Assessors are required to respect this confidence.

4.2 Assessment Criteria

Proposals for ECER Grants will be assessed against the following criteria:

1. Rationale and Outcomes

- The aims, expected outcomes, and significance of the project must be clear.
- The project should ideally address a 2021 strategic innovation area (refer to Section 2.1).
- Projects designed to support, extend, or investigate the work of a centrally supported initiative should outline its relationship and contribution to the objectives of that central initiative.

2. Project Approach

- The project must take a scholarly approach and be grounded in previous work and the literature where appropriate.
- Appropriate strategies must be outlined which will achieve the expected project outcomes in the suggested timeframe.

3. Evaluation

- An evaluation strategy must be described. No matter how small the project, a strategy that intends to determine if the project outcomes were achieved and how the project was received needs to be included.

4. Impact and Dissemination

- The project must plan for positive, substantial, and sustained impact beyond the life of the grant for students, staff, and/or the higher education sector, as appropriate to the scale and scope of the project.
- A strong application will make a compelling case about anticipated project impact at UQ. Projects that impact more than one area (unit, school, faculty, institute etc.) will be considered more favourably.
- The application must also explain how the applicant will use the outcomes of the project to enhance their professional profile.
- The application must demonstrate a considered, planned, and specific dissemination strategy to transfer the projects' innovations through each phase.

5. Collaboration

- The proposal should explain the expertise required to adequately address the issue and how other scholars in the field will be identified and involved in the project.

6. Project Value

- The project must represent good value for money.

5. Operational Information

5.1 Intellectual Property

The University supports both open and commercialisation options for work produced by the ECER Grants scheme, pursuant to the policies and procedures Guidelines as stated in 4.10.13 Intellectual Property for Staff, Students and Visitors. Where an academic would like to elect Open-Source licensing of code, preferred alternatives may be selected among licenses that do not foreclose future commercialisation possibilities.

While the right to assign copyright for material created by UQ academics and employees is owned by the University, permission to use open source and creative commons licenses for the purposes of the work generated by ECER Grants may be granted by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), as delegated by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research).

5.2 Contractor Guidelines

A condition of the award is meeting UQ and Queensland Government contractor requirements for all hire of non-UQ staff undertaking work on an ECER Grant.

5.3 Projects Involving Interface with Technologies

If the project involves interface with technologies, ITS should be consulted for advice when preparing the application and prior to submission.

Before a bespoke development project is considered, there should be evidence that existing systems or services, including the very large and rapidly evolving international market of eLearning tools, has been reviewed for options that can be adopted or adapted to provide an equally effective solution. Inclusion of evidence of environmental scans for existing technologies or alternatives and reasons why they were not chosen will be looked upon favourably.

Depending on the stage of the proposed technology, ITS should be consulted prior to submission on the following to inform the proposal:

Sustainability

- Service management
- Performance and scalability
- Security
- Integration
- User interfaces required
- Policy compliance
- Content copyright

Market Considerations

- Vendor viability
- Unsuitability of alternative sources for the technology
- Third party support for related products and services
- Level of support provided by vendor

Design Principles

- Secure systems
- Designs target high availability and reliability where required
- Systems safeguard privacy and intellectual property
- Systems use the authoritative source for data
- Designs should use open standards unless there is clear and considered justification to do otherwise (e.g. LTI for learning tool integration)
- Systems are structured for simple adaptation and extension
- Designs are compatible with UQ IT roadmaps and architectures

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