

How do I...

APPLY FOR PGRF

The Macquarie University [Postgraduate Research Fund \(PGRF\)](#) a designated fund of up to \$3000 per candidate for activities that add value to a research project, such as a trip for a conference presentation or visit to a laboratory.

All PhD candidates are encouraged to apply, but being a competitive grant application process, not all applicants are successful. Here are some tips to help you prepare an application that is more likely to succeed.

READ THE RULES CAREFULLY

Print out [the funding rules and application form](#). Read them both through carefully before you start writing.

CHOOSE YOUR ACTIVITY WISELY

The PGRF is intended to fund an activity which will add value to your thesis but *is not essential to its completion*. Essential research activities need to be funded by your Department or Faculty.

Discuss with your supervisor which conferences / labs / archives / workshops they would recommend you attend that would enhance your project or thesis. For conferences, you will be required to present your research.

APPLY AT THE RIGHT TIME IN YOUR CANDIDATURE

Typically, candidates apply for PGRF $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{2}{3}$ through their PhD/MPhil degree to fund an activity 5-10 months later. Earlier than that, and you'll need to stress how much you've already completed in the short time you've been enrolled. Longer than that and you'll need to explain how you can integrate what you've gained from the activity into your thesis.

DETAIL YOUR BUDGET

Think of the PGRF panel as a sceptical and stingy Scrooge character who never wastes a cent. For your grant application, you should list exactly how much you'll need to fund this activity. For some items like accommodation and (ground) transport costs, you need to explain why it's the best choice out of many. If you're travelling away from home for the activity, include the correct per diem for each day you are away. You may also include items that you will cover from a source other than PGRF, eg if you are staying at a friend's house during the trip, your accommodation costs = \$0 (own arrangements).

WRITE FOR THE TARGET AUDIENCE

Your PGRF application is assessed by a panel that includes those outside of your discipline. Spell out acronyms and unpack specialist terms on first mention. Test drive your 100-word summary with an educated friend or colleague outside of your field: can they understand the aim and significance of your thesis?

KNOW WHEN, WHERE AND HOW TO SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION

The PGRF deadline is stated in the funding rules, but your faculty may have a shorter deadline so that your application can be compliance checked before it is formally assessed.

Submit your application to your Faculty HDR office. At present, you are required to email your application as a PDF, but double check this, as the submission form occasionally changes.

You are responsible for getting your application signed by your supervisor and Head of Department. Do *not* leave it until the last day to request these signatures!

ATTEND THE PGRF WORKSHOP

HDR Learning Skills runs a PGRF grant writing workshop 2-3 weeks before the application deadline, and some faculties also offer a workshop to assist you in preparing your application. Attend these workshops or get the recording and slides. You'll get more out of the workshop if you bring your draft application along.

Dr Juliet Lum
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How Do I...? Guidelines are produced by HDR Learning Skills for HDR and MRes candidates. They provide succinct, user-friendly advice consistent with best practice and MQ Policy and Procedures at the time of writing.

FIND OUT MORE

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