Research Leave Awards – FAQs

Is this the only form of Research Leave?
No, this is a competitive Awards scheme, for selected high-achieving researchers. School-level arrangements are the primary means of accessing research leave. Under the University’s Supporting Professional Development policy (as revised October 2007) academics have the right to apply for one semester of research leave every 3 years.

Is it open to all academic staff?
It is open to full-time and part-time academic staff in a continuing position, who have been employed at RMIT for the last 3 years, and have been research active over the last 3 years.

How will the Award recipients be selected?
A small panel chaired by the PVC(R&I) will assess and rank applicants taking into account:
- applicant’s record of research achievement over the last 3 years;
- merit of the proposed activities and the standing of the institutions, establishments or teams to be visited;
- the likelihood that the Research Leave Award will enable the applicant to significantly advance his/her research productivity.

How is ‘research active’ defined?
No specific definition has been given in the context of this scheme. The definition of ‘research active’ used for the purposes of data analysis can be found at www.rmit.edu.au/research/researchactive; for the purposes of the supervisors’ register research outputs in addition to the four recognised in the Higher Education Research Data Collection may be recognised.

How many Awards will be given?
There is no predetermined number. The number awarded will depend on the number of applications, track record of the applicants, and the perceived value of the proposed research programs to the individuals’ and RMIT’s research objectives.

What is the maximum period of leave?
Up to 6 months, but it must be taken within the one RMIT semester to enable appropriate teaching replacement.

Is there a minimum period?
Whilst there is no minimum period, in order to obtain clear benefits from this program it is expected that the research leave period will be for a minimum of six weeks.

Does the applicant have to have a fully developed plan for the period of leave?
Yes. S/he needs to have a clear plan for a research intensive program of activities, which may include visits and collaboration, and have secured the agreement of the receiving institution/s, with a view to achieving specific research outcomes.

Do they need to have secured additional funding?
This is not a pre-condition. However advice that external supporting funds had been obtained or were anticipated, or that a specific application had been submitted to an external body, would be viewed favourably.

Does it count as research funding?
No, because it is paid from internal university funds. In any case, it is largely paid leave, with associated travel funding and some minor project support. If project funding were required it would need to be found from other sources.

Will there be a cost to Schools?
Schools will be subsidised half the cost of the leave (up to a maximum of $30k) - to be met from the Research Investment Fund - and will meet the remaining salary & on costs associated with the period of leave. The travel and support costs – to the agreed maximums – will be met from the Research Investment Fund.

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