



Information Sheet 2016

ABOUT THE FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

The Helen & Geoff Handbury Fellowship Program was developed in 2001. It is a community-research fellowship program that encourages and supports practical research by individuals or groups that contributes to lasting improvements, especially in the sustainability of vulnerable western Victoria communities. The Fellowship aims to develop socially-inclusive projects that lead to effective and responsive community-based approaches to questions of community sustainability and well-being.

The term “community” is not defined exclusively by geographic region, but also includes communities of interest, occupation, history, language, and others. Sustainable development may include any one or a combination of economic, social, cultural, educational or environmental benefits. It is desirable that research supported by the Fellowship Program would have benefits to similar communities beyond western Victoria. The program also aims to contribute to regional policies, encourage improved local engagement in regional sustainability issues and share resulting knowledge locally and globally.

WHAT WE FUND

The Fellowship grant is open to community members and/or community groups; and is particularly interested in the ideas and work of people who might fall outside of other grant processes, or who would not see themselves as capable of applying for a grant. For community members and/or community organizations, it is an opportunity for new ideas and collaborations; to determine what is valuable to research and to access the research expertise of relevant research partners. For the research partners, it is an opportunity to work with community on local issues, and contribute to and collaborate on emerging ideas and responses to the research itself.

Projects will normally be expected to be undertaken over a period of up to twelve months and may be undertaken either part-time or full-time. The amount of funding available for any one Fellowship varies according to need and project scope, and is in the range of up to \$10,000. In certain circumstances, where the project under consideration shows great value to the community but not to the level of a Fellowship, then seed funding will be provided to strengthen the application. In special cases the advisory group may award a sum larger than this. Proposals go through a rigorous selection process prior to selection and funding through the RMIT University Helen & Geoff Handbury Fellowship Program.

KEY RESEARCH AREAS

Agricultural innovation

Agriculture is a powerful resource for promoting sustainable development and is a resource that must be constantly renewed through knowledge and innovation. The kinds of knowledge and innovation required in agriculture will not be the same from year to year or from place to place. Agriculture requires a widening and perpetually changing array of local-global knowledge and innovation to meet the diverse needs of the world's growing population and to resist or mitigate the effects of climate change. Funding from this program especially supports new thinking about changing sources of innovation.

Cultural diversity

Cultural diversity refers to the quality of diverse or different cultures. Projects within this area can be inclusive of the arts but must promote cultural interaction, learning and wellbeing. Such projects would explore engagement with popular and traditional culture and practices. This program also encourages a focus on the diverse ways in which different groups of young people, secondary school and tertiary education students create, design, invent and re-invent cultural and inter-cultural events, projects and ideas. Through such culturally diverse engagement and collaborations, there is greater opportunity to contribute to building stronger communities.

Food security

Agriculture sectors provide livelihoods for millions of workers, particularly in rural areas, and underpin food security and nutrition. Food security exists when people have access on a continual basis to sufficient, safe and healthy foods. Community food projects have grown in response to concerns around access to fresh and affordable food, health, sustainability and resilience in a changing climate; and can have an impact on the way communities think about food, and questions of food security and food sovereignty; , and forge mutually beneficial relationships and networks. Such projects also offer an opportunity to grow or provide access to culturally appropriate, affordable and healthy produce. Investing in agricultural productivity, infrastructure and social protection are some of the other ways in which food security and food sovereignty projects can be funded.

Ecology

Ecology is defined within the Fellowship program as that which focuses on the enhancement on habitats in which wildlife and plants flourish. It is the overall study of the distribution, abundance and dynamics of organisms, their interactions with other organisms and their physical environment; and can be divided into four categories: physiological ecology, population ecology, community ecology and ecosystems ecology. The Fellowship Program supports support projects that increase public understanding of, and engagement with, ecology; stimulate discussion about ecology and its implications for society; inspire and enthuse people of all ages about the science of ecology, especially those not previously interested and develop skills in communicating the science of ecology. Projects can range from community-wide energy responses to implementing sustainable forestry practices.

FUNDING CRITERIA GUIDELINES

- Does it offer a clear public benefit for some or all of the community living in the region?
- Does it have a good prospect of longer-term viability and impact?
- Does it involve partnerships or leverages financial and/or in kind contributions from the other groups involved?
- Is the project differentiated from similar projects already in existence?
- Does the proposed project have good project management and budget management processes?
- Does it have clear outcomes or performance indicators against which the project can be evaluated?
- Does the project demonstrate innovation – doing something that is beyond the normal business of the organization or person applying

Proposals go through a rigorous selection process prior to selection and funding through the RMIT University Helen & Geoff Handbury Fellowship Foundation. All grant recipients are required to acknowledge the support of their project through the Helen and Geoff Handbury Fellowship Program. This includes signage, invitations, posters, advertising, internet sites, reports, books and any other promotional material related to the funded project. A logo is available on request from the Fellowship office.

WEBSITE INFORMATION

The following website will provide further information about the Helen & Geoff Handbury fellowship program and Fellowship projects. Fellowship Information Sheet and Application Cover Sheet (with application criteria) are available and downloadable under 'How to apply'

<https://www.rmit.edu.au/research/research-institutes-centres-and-groups/research-centres/centre-for-global-research/opportunities/handbury-fellowship-program/>

Applications forms are also available at some of the Information Centres in the region (Warrnambool, Hamilton, Portland, Port Fairy, Coleraine, Casterton, Heywood, Dunkeld, Macarthur and Ararat).

Please contact any of the Advisory Committee if you wish to further discuss an idea that you may have or are interested in seeking some feedback to your proposed idea.

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Applications need to be posted or emailed to the Handbury Fellowship Program Office by COB Tuesday 31st May 2016.

Dr Yaso Nadarajah

Handbury Fellowship Program Office

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Please contact the Handbury Fellowship Office or any of the Advisory Committee should you have any queries regarding the application process