It is that time of the year when funding for research becomes a major preoccupation. Faculty grants are announced, the Australian Research Council (ARC) grant applications are called for and scholarships for our research students are vied for.

We had an exciting number of applications for faculty grants for this year. Faculty grants are designed to encourage and support faculty members with selected research projects which will result in research output. The RDU was able to offer 13 faculty grants.

The successful applicants are as follows:

S Bellamy, K Watty  
Measuring Work Satisfaction of Business Academics

M Jackson  
Access to Government Information

M Jackson  
Electronic Bill Presentation and Payment

P O'Brien  
Cost Analysis of Broadacre Farming

R Faff  
A Style Analysis of Australian Funds

R Faff, T Josev  
Estimating and Adjusting for the Intervalling Effect Bias in Beta

B Martin  
Knowledge Management and Local Government in Australia

P Muir, B Banerjee  
Corporate Social responsibility and Stakeholder Management

C Boucher, R Holian  
Development of a Competency Model for Health Service Managers

S Jones  
A Women's Place is on the Picket Line

S Adam  
WebQual Audit: Australasian and International Extension

C Sindt, J Morris  
The Effect of e-commerce on Household Activity and Travel Patterns in Melbourne

F Wang, J Morris  
The Question of Choice or Necessity: Car dependence Among School Children

Congratulations to all those who were successful. We look forward to seeing your completed research.

ARC grant deadlines are also looming up for our researchers. The ARC large grants, and fellowship applications need to be in by the 18 February. Drafts for comment can be handed by the 2 of February for the large grant applications and by the 4 of February for the fellowships. Applicants do not have to put in a draft for comment - this is optional.
The Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research & Development) at RMIT has released a memo outlining key points for applicants to consider for the ARC Large Grant Applications. These include the aims of the scheme, directions to instructions for the correct format, changes to the application from last year, number of applications, structural priority, funding levels, ARC/NHMRC overlap, time commitments, assessment, track record, the length of applications and attachments and project on-costs. For further details regarding these points please contact the RDU.

To encourage applications for ARC Large Grants the faculty will be providing seed funding of $2000 to all applicants for ARC Large Grants. A similar seed funding scheme will also operate for SPIRT grants applicants.

Finally research student scholarships have been on the go since December last year. APA scholarships have been allocated. Congratulations to Zichun Liu a PhD student from BIT for receiving an APA scholarship. Faculty scholarship applications are now all in and ranking will be commencing shortly. Good luck to all those who applied.

Congratulations to...

Joanne Wilkinson (Management), who has recently been granted a Doctor of Philosophy for her thesis, 'The Professional association as a loosely coupled system: Membership and participation dimensions that create choices'.

$ Have you cashed in your FPA? $

Do you have a Faculty Publication Award that you haven't used yet? Don't forget to cash it in. Remember you have to use up your award within the specified time limits. For further information pick up an information and guidelines sheet from the RDU.

Faculty Publication Awards

Congratulations to the following people in the RMIT Business faculty who received Faculty Publication Awards since the last Business Research News.

In the 'B - Book Chapter' Category


In the 'C1 - Article in Refereed Journals' Category


In the 'E1 - Conference Paper in Refereed Proceedings' Category

Steiner, C. (Management), 'Unifying research and practice through concrete, personal knowing', 7th International Conference on Post-Compulsory Education and Training.
RDU November Working Papers are now available for electronic viewing on the RDU website. Hard copies are available from the RDU.

Research Management Conference 1999

At the end of November the annual Research Management Conference was held for 1999. Traditions were departed with somewhat at this conference as it was held in Adelaide instead of Canberra, and delegates were from industry as well as universities. This conference allows university research managers and administrators to get together and discuss policy issues. The conference went for 3 days (Wednesday 24 to Friday 26 November) with optional workshops being held on the first day, and information sessions covering the following two days. The theme of the conference was 'Helping research happen'.

Plenary speakers on the first day were Dr Robin Batterham, the Chief Scientist, and Professor Vicki Sara, Chair of the Australian Research Council. Dr Batterham urged researchers to go out amongst the community, particularly politicians and high school students and enthuse about the relevance of research. Professor Sara outlined the dire situation of research in Australia. She suggested research institutions were at a cross roads where hard choices had to be made to stay competitive with the rest of the world. Both mentioned a report entitled 'High Road, Low Road', which became a commonly quoted source throughout the conference.

Topics covered at the conference included: Research issues confronting higher education, developing a training program for advisers in research integrity, GST implications for research management reporting, commercialisation and mentoring to name some. Overall many strategies were offered to help organisations build their research capabilities.

Further information can be obtained from the Research Development Unit.

Media Watch

This section was compiled from information obtained from 'Media Watch' documents purchased by RMIT. Please let Liz Merlot know of any items that are missed in this collection. This section is intended as an informal way of keeping staff informed of the other activity occurring in the rest of the Faculty.

Dr Rosalie Holian (Management) comments on her study into the relationship between a sense of humour and ethical decisions.


Edmunds, M. 'Good bosses have last laugh', The Herald Sun, September 24, 1999. p26.

Associate Professor Jenny Morris (TRC) discussed annual RMIT survey finding that more people are choosing to travel by car rather than walking.

News, 3LO, 29 November 1999, 4.00pm.

Mr John Leigh's (Marketing) supervision of the study on sales and resales of heritage-listed inner-city residential properties is discussed.


Professor Paula Swatman (BIT) discusses the possible Y2K problems with billing systems when people start processing accounts.

'R2K bug may still bite', Ballarat Courier, 6 January, 2000, p5.

Associate Professor Philomena Leung (Accounting & Law) discusses e-crime.


Professor Peter Sheldrake (Management) discusses changes in China.


Professor Paula Swatman (BIT) discusses the profit potential of e-commerce in the Asian markets.

Changes at the RDU

A new student administration system is being introduced for research students at RMIT. This system will allow students to apply online in the future. Consequently the RDU will be working hard over the next six months to convert all of our existing students over to the new system. All new students are moving straight into the new system. Currently enrolled students who have not had their application for candidature approved have until the 30th of June this year to complete this process under the old system. It is imperative that these are completed by the 30th of June or students may find it difficult to continue their candidature. Once candidature has been approved students data will be transferred onto the new system.

We would like to congratulate the Head of the Research Development Unit Robert Brooks, and the previous head of the unit and current Director of Research and Development for the School of Accountancy and Law, Margaret Jackson on their promotions to professor. Well done!

Finally, our administrative assistant, Liz South was married in December. Her name is now Liz Merlot. All the best for her and her husband.

Call for Working Papers


Working papers are an excellent way to obtain feedback on your work in progress. Submissions can be accepted from both staff and students of RMIT Business including papers jointly written by both.

Copies of working papers are available in hard copy and electronically on the RDU website.

Tender Writing Introduction Course

Not knowing anything about tender writing I felt that I should expand my horizons so that I could have some understanding of what the people on the other end of my tenderlist emails go through. An opportunity came up to attend RMIT’s Business Training and Consulting’s Tender Writing Introduction course. This was a one day course which provided an outline of what made up a tender response. The course was run by Anne Armstrong. I found this course an excellent introduction to writing a response to a tender specification.

The course started with an explanation of submission and proposal writing moving on to tender writing so that an appreciation of the difference could be gained.

The second part of the day involved more technical aspects of writing a tender response - the different sections usually required followed by formatting guides. It was at this point that I understood the enormous effort required in preparing a response. As we went through each section, we considered as a group what was involved. Some stories from other members of the group opened my eyes - the financial cost, the man hours involved, (some groups talked about teams working 24 hours a day for a week to get their tender response in), and the lack of guarantee of the tender even going ahead made it clear that a cost benefit analysis of whether or not it was worthwhile to put in a response was essential. For formatting, the bible was the same resource we recommend to our research students - ‘The Style Guide’. One participant said that at their work they had someone who just read through all the tenders and made sure that the language, punctuation and grammar all conformed to the Style Guide.

Overall I discovered that tender writing is a highly involved process which requires a lot of skill. However chances of success seemed to be improved by a careful match of skills to the tender needs.

Report by Liz Merlot from the RDU. As part of our service to staff the RDU sends out emails listing tenders which staff may be interested in applying for. If you would like to receive this service please contact the RDU and we will add you to the list.
Upcoming Conferences and Lectures

5th International Partnership Conference: Partnering Education and Business

The conference is designed for anyone with an interest in preparing young people for work. There will be key speakers from a range of disciplines including, business, politics and education. The aim of the conference is to present education business developments, promote economic success through skills development and develop thinking about volunteering. The conference will be global in its orientation. The conference will run from 20 to 23 of June 2000 and will be held at the Edinburgh International Conference Centre.

For more information visit the conference website at wwwebp2000.com or e-mail organisers on ebp2000@meetingmakers.co.uk.

Research Funding, Scholarships and Fellowships

Further information and application forms for all research funding and scholarships listed are available from:

Research Development Unit
Level 11, Building 108
City Campus
Ext: 55594
Email: rdu@bf.rmit.edu.au

IMPORTANT NOTE
All closing dates are external due dates. In most cases internal RMIT closing dates will be one week earlier. It is also advisable that you forward potential applications to the RDU so that where possible the RDU can offer feedback and faculty support.

Manual for SPIN Database

The SPIN database is a rich database of funding opportunities suitable for both academic staff and research students. A manual which includes tutorials and information on doing more complex searches on the SPIN database is available in paper form at the RDU and also on the Research and Development (Bundoora) website at: http://www.rmit.edu.au/departments/rd/SPIN/

R&D Website links to External Research Funding

The Research and Development (Bundoora) website contains an alphabetical listing of external research fundings with hyperlinks to the funding bodies where available. It can be found at http://www.rmit.edu.au/departments/rd/selgrants/index.html.

Alexander George Foundation Grant Program

The sponsor provides grants for public charitable purposes in Australia. Funds, authorities or institutions are invited to apply for support under one of the following areas: Education; Scientific Research (including Medical Research); Health; Social Welfare; Humanities; Environment and Conservation; and small Travel Grants.

Closing date: 1 February 2000

Australian Research Council Large Research Grants

The ARC supports research from individuals or research teams in all disciplines except clinical medicine and dentistry. The scheme provides one and three year grants of $20,000 and over per year for social sciences, humanities and mathematical sciences, and $30,000 and over per year in other disciplines.

Closing date: 18 February 2000

Australian Research Council Fellowships

The ARC offers the following fellowships in 2000: Australian Postdoctoral Research Fellow; Australian Research Fellow/Queen Elizabeth II Fellow; and Australian Senior Research Fellow. ARC Fellowships are open to world wide competition, in any field except clinical medicine and dentistry.

Closing date: 18 February 2000

Churchill Fellowships

The sponsor provides financial support for Australians to undertake overseas study, or an investigative project, of a kind that is not fully available in Australia. Maximum period of tenure is 12 months. Provides return airfares, travel allowances and an overseas living allowance for the fellow.

Closing date: 29 February 2000
Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts - Networking the Nation

This program provides funding for projects that enhance telecommunications infrastructure and services in regional, rural and remote areas. A total of $50 million is available for the program and its administration each year until 2001/02. Collaborative approaches and partnerships between the public and private sectors are encouraged.

Closing date: 8 March 2000

Grains Research and Development Corporation - Research Grants

Funding is provided for research and development projects which benefit Australian grain growers within a wider grains industry and community context. Proposals are favourably considered which involve consultation with producers, end-users and marketers, and those that involve collaborative research across institutions.

Closing date: 21 January 2000

Pig Research and Development Corporation - Industry Placement Awards

The sponsor provides support for the development of partnerships between the pig industry and academic institutions. Awards will be made to an Australian citizen or permanent resident for a period of up to 2 years and recipients will be expected to enrol in an MSc, MEng, MBA or equivalent program.

Closing date: 1 March 2000

Pig Research and Development Corporation - Research and Development Projects

The PRDC provides funding for R&D projects which have the potential to improve the economic performance of the industry. Projects are considered from a number of areas including production, processing and technology adoption and skill enhancement. Funding is for a duration of three years and collaborative research is encouraged.

Closing date: 4 February 2000

Ian Potter Foundation - Grants Program

The sponsor provides funding for public charitable purposes in Australia. Research areas include education, health, social welfare, and environment and conservation. Funding is generally for between $5000 to $20000 for academic projects. There are areas which are not likely to receive support such as conferences held in Australia which do not have international status.

Closing date: 2 February 2000

Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts - Test IT - Testing and Conformance Infrastructure Program

Research organisations are supported for projects to improve access by Information Technology and Communications firms to domestic and overseas markets by enhancing the testing/trialing and conformance infrastructure to meet the current and future needs of the Australian IT/C industry. Applicants are expected to make a significant cash or in kind contribution. Grant applications follow a two step process with expressions of interest required initially.

Closing date: 15 February 2000

Australian Research Council - Research Infrastructure Equipment & Facilities Program Grants

The sponsor provides support for collaborative proposals by 2 or more institutions for larger equipment and facilities. Funding is available for high quality research in all areas except clinical medicine and dentistry. The minimum grant is $100 000. The program aims to encourage collaboration and to enhance support for areas of research strength. Funding is for 1 year and is not recurrent except under special circumstances.

Closing date: 1 March 2000

Please note: The closing dates listed for ARC grants are RMIT’s internal dates.
Working Papers (Internal to RMIT)


Steiner, C., *Unifying Research and Practice Through Concrete, Personal Knowing*, WP 99/14.

Steiner, C., *How Important is Professionalism in Public Relations Management?*, WP 99/15.


Working Papers (External to RMIT)


The aim of this newsletter is to keep staff informed of research activity within RMIT Business and of research opportunities both outside and within the faculty. If you have any contributions (we are always interested in research or researchers for our feature article) that you think would be of interest to the faculty please contact Liz Merlot at the RDU.

The *Business Research News* is also available for viewing on the RDU’s web site shortly after it has been distributed in paper form. The web site also contains information for research staff and students including the RDU’s library holdings.