Research Funding 2001

It is that time of year when researchers in the university system become very focused on funding. Faculty grants are announced and the Australian Research Council (ARC) applications are being polished up and submitted. Research funding has been a little different this year at the faculty, university and government level.

The ARC have altered their funding, replacing the old ARC large grants and SPIRT grants with the Discovery and Linkage schemes. RMIT's Office of the Pro-vice Chancellor of Research brought in a new process for the submission of ARC funding applications. In the past, researchers had an option of submitting a draft to the office for review. It was felt that more could be done to support researchers with their ARC applications, therefore researchers were required to submit an intention to apply for ARC grants to the Office of the Pro-vice Chancellor of Research at the end of November last year. Applicants were allocated a case worker to help with the applications, and drafts were due in by the 15 of January so that applications could be sent out to external reviewers for feedback. RMIT Business was pleased to receive 9 intentions to apply for ARC Discovery Grants and 10 intentions to apply for ARC Linkage Grants. Well done everyone. RMIT Business will be offering seed funding again this year for ARC Discovery and Linkage applicants. Each ARC Discovery Grant application will receive $5000 seed funding and each ARC Linkage Grant application will receive $2000.

The Research Development Unit's faculty research funding was expanded from offering funding for Research Grants and Scholarships to include Sabbaticals and a Student Support Fund. So in addition to funding staff's research projects, and research student places, we are providing funding to buy out time for our researchers to work on their research project (through the sabbatical scheme), and to give research students access to a range of items and activities (through the student support fund). Faculty research funding is designed to encourage and support staff and students with research that will result in research output in strategic areas. The RDU was able to offer 6 faculty research grants, 3 sabbaticals, 5 research student scholarships and 9 students funding from the student support fund. The successful applicants are as follows:

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**Research Grants**

Francis McGinley, (TRC), 'Travel patterns of students in tertiary education', $10,000,
Associate Professor Jenny Morris and Dr Fei Wang, (TRC), 'Comparative analysis of women's travel patterns', $10,000,
Dr Daryl Cahill and Mr Paul Myers (Accounting and Law), 'Intellectual capital ration analysis and business performance and accountability reports', $10,000,
Dr Daryl Cahill and Mr Paul Myers (Accounting and Law), and Mr Marc Olynk and Mr Magdy Stephan (Economics and Finance), 'The use of internet based financial information by individual investors', $9,500,
Dr Booi Kam, (TRC), 'Towards a transport sustainable city: An empirical study of the Melbourne city revitalisation program', $9930,

**Sabbaticals**

Dr Ngaire Bissett, (Management), 'Global manufacturing and Taylorism practices of Nike corporation and its subcontractors', $10,000.
Associate Professor Bobby Banerjee, (Management), 'Environmental and social dimensions of corporate sustainability: A multi-stakeholder perspective', $10,000.
Dr Carlene Boucher, (Management), 'An ethnographic study of a management team in an aged care facility', $8,640.

**Student Support Fund**

Charles Lau, (TRC), Database purchase ($2000) and software purchase ($1000),
Frida Lie, (Economics and Finance), half costs of attending the Banking and Finance Conference in Sydney ($700)*,
John Gionea, (Economics and Finance), purchase of FAO data ($1200),
Ken Hunt, (Marketing), cost of attending the AIPIO Conference in Brisbane ($600),*
Lyn Stavretis, (Management), half costs of Queensland data collection visits ($1000),
Hoa Nguyen, (Economics and Finance), half cost of attending APFA Conference in Bangkok ($1200)*,
Carol Gill, (Management), cost of statistical consulting advice, ($600),
Karen Benson, (Economics and Finance), Half cost of attending AAANZ Conference in Auckland ($1200)*,
Penelope Barr, (BIT), funding for interview data collection ($800) and attending a conference in Sydney ($600)*.
*Please note that conference support is conditional on applicants paper being accepted for presentation at the conference.

**Scholarships**

Yin Yip, scholarship for PhD with the School of Business Information Technology,
Heath Spong, scholarship for Masters by Research with the School of Economics and Finance,
Brett James, scholarship for Masters by Research with the School of Accounting and Law
Michael Baron, scholarship for Masters by Research with the School of Business Information Technology,
Matthew Vine, scholarship for Masters by Research with the School of Business Information Technology.
RMIT Business was also fortunate to have 2 students, Neil Porter [Masters of E(business)] and Cielito Baria [PhD with the School of Business Information Technology], receive Australian Postgraduate Award (APA) scholarships and 1 student, Helen Hughes [Masters with the School of Management], Australian Postgraduate Award (Industry) [APA(I)].

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

** The Research Development Unit has moved to Level 3, Building 112. **

February 2001 Working Papers

The Research Development Unit is pleased to announce the first print run of it's working paper series for the year 2001. Thank-you to all those who submitted papers. We really appreciate the hard work in producing these papers. If you would like to submit a working paper for the RMIT Business Working Paper Series please send a word document copy of your paper to the RDU via email. The following are dates which we would need papers to be submitted to the RDU by to be published in the RMIT Business Working Paper Series print runs: Thursday 19th April, Thursday 19th July, Thursday 18th of October and Thursday 10 January. Please note: Papers are usually published about a month after final submission dates. Also you can submit papers to the RDU at any time to be included in the nearest print run date.

Here is the list of working papers for the February 2001 RMIT Business Working Paper Series print run:


Research Management Conference Review

In November Maree Schweitzer and myself set off to Brisbane to attend the annual Australasian Research Management Conference, which was called Research as Investment: Building on ideas. This conference was organised by the newly formed Australasian Research Management Society (ARMS). The conference had three sub-themes: investing in research, the changing research environment, and the importance of strategic links. These were very topical themes as the effects of the white paper on research begins to be felt. The conference went over two days from the 23rd to the 24th of November.

The Conference kicked off with a very insightful session from Professor Ian Chubb, the Vice-Chancellor and President of Flinders University of South Australia, titled 'If you think research is expensive, try ignorance'. He demonstrated that the Australian government's decreasing funding to universities in a large range of research disciplines will actually cost the country money. From that explosive start, we had a number of thought provoking sessions from Professor Vicki Sara, Chair of the Australian Research Council, Professor John Funder from the Baker Medical Research Institute in Melbourne, Professor Millicent Poole, Vice-Chancellor of Edith Cowan University, Professor Elspeth McLachlan, Acting Chief Operating Officer, Centre for Research Management at the National Health and Medical Research Council and Dr Robin Batterham, the Chief Scientist. These people talked about the changes facing the research industry due to international pressures and the government's white paper on research and the responses various institutes are making in the face of these changes.

I attended an investing in research session on the first day and an importance of strategic links on the second day. The investing in research session was in two parts. The first part was from the perspective of a researcher who had successfully collaborated with industry. He talked about the need for proposals to be understandable to people not familiar with the research area, and the importance of intellectual property. Industry often wants control over IP, which can limit the ability to publish so it is important to consider how you are going to deal with this issue. Sometimes you can find ways to publish that do not violate the IP agreement. The second part of the session was from the point of view of an industry investor. He said that researchers need to be proactive sending in plans to investors with follow up calls – he said they didn't want a detailed proposal just a brief 10 page document that can assure the investor that your research team can produce. He stressed that decisions were made based on the people who are doing the research. Fundamentally they are looking to see if the researchers can deliver. Other important feedback that industry commented on working with academia, was the sloppiness of universities research proposals, the need for academics to network with potential industry partners, the need to identify both tangible (dollars) and intangible benefits to the industry partner, and the need to be mindful of timelines and costs in working with industry.

The importance of strategic links consisted of three parts one looking at Co-operative Research Centres (CRCs), one on rural collaborations and a comment from the CSIRO. The CRC session suggestion suggested that for a CRC to be successful in needed to be focused and well managed, and output focused. The rural collaboration session outlined the difficulties for farmers, who are used to operating by themselves, on their own terms, to work with each other or industry partners. The CSIRO representative outlined a number of successful collaborative research projects that they had been involved in.

The conference ended in a humorous debate on the Researcher as entrepreneur – with one side using the simile of Alice in Wonderland and the other tennis.

Report by Liz Merlot. For further details on the conference please contact the RDU.
A Student's View

The research student life can be lonely and isolated. To help our research students get to know their fellow students we have decided to profile our students in the BRN. Each month we hope to profile a different student - find out what they are studying, their experience as a research student and any advice they have for their fellow students. In this month's profile we introduce Charles Lau, a PhD student with the Transport Research Centre. Here are his comments.

I am a Research Fellow at the Transport Research Centre of the Business Faculty. At the moment, I am working part-time while doing my PhD with a scholarship from the Department of Infrastructure. My PhD topic is on land use and transport interaction. The study investigates the dynamics of land-use transport interaction taking Melbourne as a test case. It uses a spatial modelling technique called cellular automata (CA) to simulate the changes in land use in relation to changes in population and employment distributions, development of transport infrastructure and other socioeconomic attributes. The essence of CA is that simple local actions lead to complex global behaviours. The main focus of the study is on the interdependence between land use, transport development, accessibility, and travel demands.

I choose my topic because it comes from a real-world problem with significant impacts on the community. I hope that the modelling techniques developed and the outcome of my study will assist the government in formulating its long-term development strategies on land use and transport infrastructure.

My tip for other research students is to read widely before you start to focus on a topic.

Media Watch

A summary of issues collected from the press impacting on research and research degrees has been compiled. Bibliographical details can be found at the RDU.

A preliminary report has been released on the development of characteristics and performance indicators of higher education institutions. There has been confusion due to a miscalculation in this years APA stipend, as some institutions were already offering scholarships at the higher rate when DETYA discovered their error. There was more commentary on the need for the government to increase research and development funding. There were comments that students are starting to challenge the service they are receiving for the education they are paying for.

Research Funding, Scholarships and Fellowships

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

Research Development Unit
Level 3, Building 112
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.
Australian Research Council - Discovery Projects

The ARC Discovery projects funding is an amalgam of the ARC Large Grants and ARC Fellowships Schemes. The discovery projects scheme provides opportunities for a continuum of activities from smaller single research projects to clusters of larger projects. Applicants can seek between $20,000 and $500,000 for annum for up to 5 years.

Closing Date: 28 February 2001 (Please note that this is an internal due date)

Australian Research Council - Linkage Projects

The ARC Linkage projects funding replaces the SPIRT program. The program encompasses collaborative research projects, collaborative research training or a combination of both projects and training. Funding can be for collaborative research only, or for funds together with an APA (Industry) or Australian Postdoctoral Fellowship (Industry). Matching funds are required from Industry partners.

Closing Date: 28 March 2001 (Please note that this is an internal due date)

Australian Federation of University Women - Jean Gilmore Bursary: Thenie Baddams Bursary

These bursaries provide women of any nationality who have an honours degree or equivalent and who are not in full-time paid employment an opportunity to complete a Masters and PhD degree by research at an Australian university by assisting with costs.

Closing Date: 1 March 2001

Bank of Sweden Tercentenary Foundation - Research Grants

The foundation supports research related to Sweden through project grants to advanced researchers or teams of researchers. Areas of interest include economics, business, geography, behavioural and social sciences, education, law and related fields.

Closing Date: 1 March 2001

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 Australasian IT/C industry.

Closing Date: 15 March 2001

** RMIT University has developed a new process for the ARC Discovery and Linkage project grants. If you wish to apply for these please notify the RDU as soon as possible. For further funding ideas please see the Calendar of Grants compiled by the Research Development Unit. Hard copies can be obtained from the RDU or electronic copies can be viewed from the RDU website. **
What's New in the RDU Library

Working Papers (External to RMIT)


Research Development Unit

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Staff at the RDU

Professor Robert Brooks, Associate Dean (Research)
Jenny Diggle, Director, Industry Research
Libby Hess, Administrative Officer
Maree Schweitzer, Research Student AO
Allison Dutka, Administrative Assistant

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.