Sydney Research Infrastructure Access Grants

Guidelines

1. Strategic aim

The [Sydney Research Infrastructure Access Grants](#) (formerly 'Core Research Facilities User Access Scheme') support the University's 2032 Strategy by:

i. enabling access to applicable Core Research Facilities and Research Service Units for high-quality and impactful research by early and mid-career researchers (EMCRs) whose access opportunities may otherwise be limited;
ii. enabling scoping projects in support of new grant applications; and
iii. enabling access to help facilitate the completion of research manuscripts where funding is no longer available.

2. Applicability

Grants can be used for access to one or more of the following Core Research Facilities and Research Service Units (hereafter, "facility" or "facilities").

Applicable Core Research Facilities	Applicable Research Service Units
Research and Prototype Foundry	Laboratory Animal Services
Sydney Analytical	
Sydney Cytometry	
Sydney Imaging (excluding Total Body PET)	
Sydney Manufacturing Hub	
Sydney Mass Spectrometry	
Sydney Microscopy and Microanalysis	

Note: These grants do not apply to Sydney Informatics Hub Core Research Facility and the Australian National Total Body PET Facility (overseen by the Sydney Imaging Core Research Facility).

- For Sydney Informatics Hub, please see the [Sydney Informatics Hub Project Scheme](#).
- For the Australian National Total Body PET Facility, please see the Total Body PET [Pilot Study Seed Funding Scheme.](#)

3. Value

The total value of facility access credit for a project will be determined based on an assessment of the project's quality and impact by the respective facility. Credit is not transferable between projects or facilities. The maximum amount that may be awarded is up to $5,000 in facility access credit *per project.*

4. Eligibility criteria

Early and mid-career researchers (EMCRs) and above are eligible to apply.

i. Applicants must be employees of the University of Sydney or a formally affiliated partner of the University (e.g., Centenary Institute, Westmead Research Hub)
ii. Proposed research projects must not be within the scope of research that is already directly funded
iii. Research projects supported by the Sydney Research Infrastructure Access Grants must outline their expected research impact (e.g., papers to be published, other research or commercialisation metrics)
iv. Preparatory research projects which are likely to lead to further ARC, NHMRC, or other grant funding, and/or paid commercial projects may be prioritised

5. Selection criteria

Applicants will be selected according to research quality and merit. All eligible proposals will be considered against the following criteria:

i. Quality and potential impact of the research proposed
ii. Transformative potential of the award to create opportunities for the applicant
iii. Extent to which the proposed activities advance Sydney's strategic research goals

Preference will be given to:
- Early-career researchers (ECRs) who have not previously used the target facility and who are seeking to achieve results that contribute to the establishment of a research track record in a particular discipline or area
- Mid-career researchers (MCRs) who have not previously used the target facility and who are seeking to demonstrate a research track record in a particular discipline or area
- A strategic proof-of-concept experiment that will lead to further external funding opportunities and/or collaborations
- A peak experiment or study that is needed to complete a major work, achieving leverage of research already undertaken
- Researchers who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, LGBTQIA+, culturally or linguistically diverse, living with a disability and/or have returned

from long-term leave (e.g., parental leave of six months or more) within 12 months of date of application, or otherwise meet criteria for support under the University's strategic [diversity and inclusion](#) objectives

Note that some facilities may have further criteria/priorities in addition to those outlined above (e.g., the desire to support emerging areas of research within particular fields).

6. Application Process

i.   **Contact your target facility/facilities.**
Discuss your project, your intention to apply for the Sydney Research Infrastructure Access Grants, and your eligibility, with the facility/facilities you wish to use. They will help you devise your experimental plan enable collection of pilot or extra data needed apply for a grant or finish a paper. Facilities will advise applicants on the strength of your application, and how it may be improved (if applicable).

ii.   **Submit an online application form.**
Address the basic eligibility and selection criteria, plus any unique criteria for your target facility. Include an outline of the research plan, the resources that need to be accessed (including instrument time) staff time for training.

iii.   **Your application is reviewed by the target facility.**
The Academic Director of the target facility will review your application. If the applicant is eligible and the project meets the selection criteria, the application will be recommended by the facility's Academic Director to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research Infrastructure) for approval.

iv.   **Result notification**
You will receive an email advising the result of your application. Estimated turnaround time is 15 working days from submission.

v.   **Book facility access**
If your application is approved, you will be advised by the relevant facility/facilities on how to book equipment and/or organise training as needed.

You may also be invited to register as a user at the relevant facility/facilities as per facility guidelines if you are not registered already.

7. Usage

i.   Grants may be split across more than one facility, if approved by applicable facility Directors.

    ii.   Successful applicants must redeem their Grant allocation within 12 months of award date.

    iii.   Equipment use, services and consumables covered under the Grants will vary according to facility/service. Please consult with your target facility/service to determine how Grants can be used.

    iv.   The usage caps employed by some facilities do not apply to Sydney Research Infrastructure Access Grant projects (caps apply to paid access only).

8. Conditions of award

Facility credit can only be used for the projects and facilities specified in the grant approval.

Successful applicants agree to:

    i.   Submit a brief report to your target facility/facilities three weeks after exhaustion or expiry of facility credit (whichever comes first), outlining:

- what was achieved during the awarded access time
- how the achievements matched the program goals, and
- proposed next steps for the project (publication, grant application etc).

    ii.   Acknowledge the facilities in any published work (recommended acknowledgements are available on facility websites or are available by request)

    iii.   Where possible, acknowledge the facilities in storytelling about your research, and/or provide brief research updates and achievements for showcase opportunities (e.g., publications, events, social media, etc.)