The University of Melbourne Interdisciplinary Seed Funding Scheme
GUIDELINES FOR FUNDING IN 2012

Please refer to the Applicant Instructions which will be downloadable from http://www.research.unimelb.edu.au/rgc/grants/find/schemes/uom/idseed

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The University of Melbourne Interdisciplinary Seed Funding Grant Scheme is an initiative of Melbourne Research which commenced with 2010 funding. This scheme is intended to complement the funding of University Research Institutes and to further catalyse the drawing together of academic staff from across disciplines to engage in research addressing complex societal challenges.

1.2 It is expected that this scheme will run for 3 years (2010-2012) in the first instance. The level of funds available and the designated focus areas will vary over that period to reflect changes in the profile of the University's Research Institutes.

2. OBJECTIVES

2.1 The objectives of the Scheme are to:
• fund highly innovative small- to medium-scale interdisciplinary research projects that show significant potential for future funding by granting bodies; and to
• catalyse the drawing together of academic staff from across disciplines to work on interdisciplinary problems consistent with the broad research objectives of one or more of the Melbourne Research Institutes or designated emerging areas of focus.

2.2 Each application should address a problem that is aligned with the objectives of one of the following:
• the Melbourne Energy Institute (MEI) www.energy.unimelb.edu.au. With a focus on large-scale sustainable energy systems, the MEI will consider all interdisciplinary proposals that address energy resource development, integration, distribution and consumption, including legal and social acceptance issues.
  o Contact Mike Sandiford mikes@unimelb.edu.au or ext 47221; alternate contact Susannah Powell powells@unimelb.edu.au, ext 46538
• the Melbourne Sustainable Society Institute (MSSI) www.sustainable.unimelb.edu.au will consider all interdisciplinary proposals that align with MSSI's current themes:
  - People & Values
  - Health Equity
  - Infrastructure & Transport
  - Climate Change
  - Water, Food & Energy
  - Risk, Resilience and Transformation
  and preference may be given to the development of the following two areas i) public opinion and processes about sustainability; and ii) transformational processes to enhance resilience, either to low-carbon cities or to low-carbon rural and regional living
  o Contact Craig Pearson c.pearson@unimelb.edu.au; alternate contact Craig Prebble cprebble@unimelb.edu.au or ext 43099
• the Melbourne Materials Institute (MMI) www.materials.unimelb.edu.au will consider all interdisciplinary proposals that align with MMI's research themes that include but are not limited to the following, with other materials-related research proposals welcome:
  - Nanomedicine
  - Quantum Technologies
  - Materials Processing
  - Materials Conservation
  - Bionic Devices
  - Defence Materials
  - Materials enabling convergence in cancer research
  o Contact Steve Prawer s.prawer@unimelb.edu.au or ext 45460; alternate contact Akina Mikami amikami@unimelb.edu.au or ext 53828
• the Institute for a Broadband-Enabled Society (IBES) [www.broadband.unimelb.edu.au] will consider all interdisciplinary proposals that align with IBES’s research themes:
  - Education and Learning
  - Health and Wellbeing
  - Network Development and Economics
  - Service and Business Transformation
  - Social Infrastructure and Communities
    o Contact Kate Cornick cornickk@unimelb.edu.au or ext 46692; alternate contact Rod Tucker r.tucker@unimelb.edu.au

• the Melbourne Neuroscience Institute (MNI) will consider all interdisciplinary proposals that align with the following themes:
  - Neural Networks
  - Neural Engineering
  - Regenerative Medicine
  - Clinical Neurosciences
  - Neuroscience in the modern society
  - Next Generation Technologies
    o Contact Trevor Kilpatrick tkilpat@unimelb.edu.au or ext 41820

• the Bio21 Institute [www.bio21.unimelb.edu.au] will consider all interdisciplinary proposals that align with Bio21 research themes:
  - Structural Biology
  - Chemical Biology
  - Nanobiotechnology
    o Contact Tony Bacic abacic@unimelb.edu.au; alternate contact Malcolm McConville malcolmm@unimelb.edu.au

• the Victorian Life Sciences Computation Initiative (VLSCI), [www.vlsci.unimelb.edu.au]
o Contact Helen Gardiner helen.gardiner@unimelb.edu.au or ext 42055

• the emerging focus area of Social Equity
  o Contact Julie McLeod j.mcleod@unimelb.edu.au or ext 43455

• the emerging focus area of Asian Studies
  o Contact Pooking Kee pkee@unimelb.edu.au

• the emerging focus area of Innovation & Creativity
  o Contact Beth Webster e.webster@unimelb.edu.au; alternate contact Su Baker bakerse@unimelb.edu.au

3. FUNDING

3.1 Grants shall be awarded with a maximum value of $70,000

3.2 Grants below $20,000 will not be awarded.

3.3 Grants will be awarded for one year 1 January 2012 - 31 December 2012. Projects may subsequently apply to receive a second year of funding but are not automatically renewable.

3.4 Expenditure on equipment should only be proposed in exceptional circumstances and a compelling justification will be required.

4. APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

4.1 Applications will be prepared by a proposing Team, and each application must nominate a “Co-ordinating Investigator.” The Co-ordinating Investigator must hold a salaried academic appointment at the University of Melbourne of at least 0.5 EFT and their appointment should run until at least December 2013. There are no restrictions on other members of the proposed project team, including international team members.

4.2 A simple signoff process will be used. It will be assumed that in submitting an application, all project team members have consulted appropriately with their Heads and Deans and have the time and basic infrastructure resources to pursue the project concerned, within the context of existing research, teaching and higher degree supervision responsibilities.
5. **NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS**

5.1 Applicants may be involved in only one application as Co-ordinating Investigator, but may be participating Team Members on other applications.

6. **RELATIONSHIP OF THE PROPOSAL TO OTHER PROJECTS**

6.1 Because this scheme is intended to fund ground-breaking initiatives, applications which request funds to supplement another current internal University grant, external grant or research contract will be excluded from consideration.

7. **EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT**

7.1 **Assessment Process**

7.1.1 Applications will be assessed on a competitive basis by a Selection Committee comprising University Research Institute Directors and representatives of designated emerging areas of focus as listed in Section 2.2. The Committee will be chaired by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research Collaboration), Liz Sonenberg.

7.1.2 The Selection Committee reserves the right to discuss applications with Deans, Associate Deans (Research), Heads of Department/School, or other senior colleagues, and reserves the right to seek further information from applicants before making a final decision.

7.2 **Assessment Criteria**

- demonstrably innovative interdisciplinary research
- consistent with the broad research objectives of one or more of the Melbourne Research Institutes or designated emerging areas of focus
- involves a team of academic staff from relevant disciplines with appropriate and complementary expertise for the proposed research. Teams involving early career researchers will be viewed favourably
- shows significant potential for future funding by granting bodies
- budget expenditure is aligned with claimed outcomes

8. **APPLICATION PROCESS**

8.1 An application will consist of three elements:

1. Checklist – 1 page
2. Project Proposal – 2 pages
3. CVs – for each Team Member, a statement of no more than 1 page in total including (a) current position, (b) expertise relevant to the proposed role in the current proposal, including track record of prior collaboration, and (c) a representative list of grants and/or publications in areas relevant to the proposal.

8.2 Applicants are expected to discuss their proposal with the designated contact person most closely aligned with the area of focus of the proposal, as detailed in section 2.2.

8.3 The submission process to be advised closer to the date.

9 **KEY DATES**

- **Applications due:** 21 September 2011.
- **Advice re outcome:** November, 2011.
- **Funds available:** January 2012.
10. CONDITIONS OF GRANT

10.1 Grant Offers must be accepted in writing by the Co-ordinating Investigator and their Head of Department/School.

10.2 The Co-ordinating Investigator will be the contact person for all administrative matters to do with the project and is responsible for internal reporting requirements.

10.3 The Co-ordinating Investigator must ensure that the research is conducted in accord with University policy, including compliance with the Code of Conduct for Research and policies on human research ethics, animal experimentation ethics, requirements of the Office of Gene Technology Regulator, health and safety and intellectual property. No project may proceed unless the appropriate ethical or other required clearances have been obtained.

10.4 Funding is for one year only, commencing January 2012. Projects must be completed and funds expended by 31 December 2012. Extensions to this completion date will be considered only in exceptional circumstances, with a maximum extension date of 30 June 2013. Where exceptional circumstances exist, a written request must be approved by the Co-ordinating Investigator’s Head of Department, and endorsed by the relevant Institute Director/emerging focus area designated representatives and submitted to the Executive Director (Research) no later than 1 November 2012.

10.5 The Co-ordinating Investigator must comply with any instructions or conditions in the Offer of Grant relating to approved items of expenditure.

10.6 Unless special conditions are set down by the Committee, the grant should be regarded as a ‘one-line budget.’ The Co-ordinating Investigator is responsible for ensuring that the expenditure of the grant is broadly in accord with the budget presented in the application and is consistent at all times with the nature and aims of the specific project approved and the objectives of the Scheme.

10.7 The Co-ordinating Investigator will be required to provide written reports and presentations on the progress and outcomes of the project as requested by the Selection Committee from time to time, with a formal final report required on the outcomes of the project within 6 months of the project’s completion. Summaries of projects funded and project final reports may be published. In addition, it is anticipated that at least one University Showcase will occur during 2012 at which all funded projects will be required to report on progress.

10.8 Successful applicants are expected to provide appropriate acknowledgement of University support when communicating research outcomes.