University of Western Australia

Research Development Awards 2009

Report to Research Committee

The final Convenors’ meeting for the inaugural round of the UWA Research Development Awards was held on 18th November 2008

Present: Professor Doug McEachern, Deputy Vice Chancellor (R&I)
Professor Colin McLeod – Convenor, HSS Subcommittee
Professor Carol Bower – Convenor, CMD Subcommittee
Professor Harvey Millar – Convenor, BS Subcommittee
Professor Laurie Faraone – Convenor, MPSE Subcommittee
Olivia Langensiepen – Executive Officer, HSS & BS Subcommittees
Liz Davey – Executive Officer, CMD & MPSE Subcommittees

Of the 116 applications received, a total of 71 (61%) were recommended for funding. These recommendations were approved by the DVC(R&I) on behalf of the Research Committee. A full list of the grants awarded is available at: http://www.research.uwa.edu.au/page/77455.

Applications received:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Panel</th>
<th>Number of appl</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>T/Relief applied for</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Grant Amount applied for</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Total Amount applied for</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Biological Sciences Subcommittee</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>32.75%</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>$1,011,194</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>$1,011,194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical Medicine &amp; Dentistry Subcommittee</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>22.41%</td>
<td>$14,500</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>$739,006</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>$753,506</td>
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<tr>
<td>Humanities &amp; Social Sciences Subcommittee</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>21.55%</td>
<td>$127,637</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>$529,195</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>$556,832</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maths, Physical Sciences &amp; Engineering Subcommittee</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>23.28%</td>
<td>$36,694</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>$682,532</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>$719,226</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>$178,831</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>$2,961,927</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>$3,140,758</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Applications funded:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Panel</th>
<th>Number of appl</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Amount requested successful appl</th>
<th>Amount approved successful appl</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Biological Sciences Subcommittee</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>57.89%</td>
<td>$572,400.00</td>
<td>$448,073.00</td>
<td>78.28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical Medicine &amp; Dentistry Subcommittee</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>57.69%</td>
<td>$379,904.00</td>
<td>$325,730.00</td>
<td>85.74%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Humanities &amp; Social Sciences Subcommittee</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>76.00%</td>
<td>$507,062.00</td>
<td>$340,832.00</td>
<td>67.22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maths, Physical Sciences &amp; Engineering Subcommittee</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>55.56%</td>
<td>$407,252.00</td>
<td>$322,280.00</td>
<td>79.14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>61.21%</td>
<td>$1,866,618.00</td>
<td>$1,436,915.00</td>
<td>76.98%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Amounts inclusive of teaching relief
Resubmission of Applications
It was agreed by the sub-committees that applicants who were given the opportunity
to resubmit would not be ranked higher than those who fell within the fundable range
and did not have the opportunity to resubmit. As a consequence, where funds were
limited it would be unlikely that a resubmitted application would be funded. The value
of resubmissions was therefore questioned. Also, allowing only some, rather than all
applicants the opportunity to address assessors' comments and to resubmit was
considered inequitable. In particular, while it was felt that middle ranked applicants
would be benefit from the chance to engage with detailed feedback, such opportunity
is only provided to lower ranked applicants.
Recommendation:
The provision to allow resubmission of applications should be removed from the
Funding Rules. In place would be a greater emphasis on providing detailed feedback
to all unsuccessful applicants.

Feedback
It was noted that not all selection panels chose to provide feedback to unsuccessful
applicants, despite this being considered to be beneficial to applicants.
Recommendation:
Add to the Funding Rules that all unsuccessful applicants will receive comprehensive
feedback.

Eligibility
There was concern regarding applications from adjuncts, in particular employees of
other universities, being accepted, whilst UWA part-time employees working less
than 50% were deemed ineligible.
Recommendation:
Add to the Funding Rules that adjunct researchers employed by other tertiary
institutions would be deemed ineligible.

Timeline
It is felt by many applicants that the results come out too late in the year (November).
Recommendation:
Bring the opening and closing dates forward by a month, to early April and early June

For information of Research Committee

Mentors
There was difficulty in appraising the quality of mentors, as it was not known to what
extent they would be involved in the project. To remedy this, a section of the
application could be set aside for mentors to complete. It's hoped that in doing so
the mentor would be prompted to help with the preparation of the application, and
assessors would be able to better determine the suitability and commitment of the
mentor. The application form will be modified so that mentors provide:
- a track record including publications and grants
- details of previous mentoring experience
- a description of the research environment/group in which the applicant
  would be working
- a statement describing the involvement of the mentor in the project.

Track Record
Track record information was sometimes unclear with respect to the applicant's
recent employment history. As a consequence, the application form will be amended
to incorporate the applicant's employment history for the previous five years.