

2025 SBS EMCRA Seed Funding Award

Form Preview

2025 SBS EMCRA Funding Application Overview

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Purpose The SBS EMCRA Seed Funding Award (hereafter referred to as the “Award”) is designed to support innovative new research led by Early-Mid Career Researchers and Academics (EMCRA) Association in the School of Biomedical Sciences (SBS). SBS recognises the value and importance of supporting the career development of EMCRA towards establishing a track record of securing funding, project management and autonomous innovative research that will underpin future bids for external competitive research funding.

The Award facilitates emerging research led by EMCRA across SBS. Applicable research projects may include basic research, translational work, teaching-focused projects, or other research projects within the scope of EMCRA working across SBS. Collaborative research projects are encouraged, but not required, and in situations where a collaborative project and an individual project are ranked equally for funding the collaborative project will be given preference. Collaborative projects can be with researchers internal or external to the University of Melbourne; however, funds must be expended through the University’s Purchase and Acquisition services.

To facilitate the development of EMCRA research, SBS will make available three grants, to the maximum value of \$40,000 each, to the highest ranked applicant from each of the School’s three Departments: Anatomy and Physiology (DAP), Biochemistry and Pharmacology (DBP), and Microbiology and Immunology (DMI).

Duration All funds must be exhausted by 31st of December 2026.

Administration

1. The scheme is open to all level A and B academics (research- and education-focused) with primary employment in SBS with (or with a reasonable expectation of) ≥ 0.5 FTE employment extending until the end of 2026.
2. The primary applicant must be a level A or B academic. Co-investigators can be of any academic level or a professional staff member.
3. Applications are to be submitted via SmartyGrants. Late submissions will not be considered unless prior approval is sought from the SBS EMCRA committee.
4. Applicants must include in the “Expected Outcomes and Impact” section of their application a statement for how the proposed work will support a future external competitive grant application (e.g., NHMRC Ideas or Investigator Grants).
5. The project budget should not exceed \$40,000 AUD and be appropriate for the project planned. If the project will be supported by additional funds, only list the items/activities that will be supported by the Award in the “Budget” and “Budget Justification” sections and provide a short description of the external funding support in the “Feasibility” section of the application.
6. The Award cannot be used to support the salary of the primary or co-investigators. Salary support can be requested for any other individual (e.g., a research assistant) but an explanation for why salary support is necessary to complete the project must be provided in the “Budget Justification” section.
7. The Award cannot be used for expenses related to conference attendance (or similar meeting-type activities). In general, travel-related expenses are not supported by this scheme. However, if travel is necessary to complete the proposed project, a clear explanation must be provided in the “Budget Justification” section.

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8. Applicants may work collaboratively with other researchers and laboratories within or external to the SBS and the University of Melbourne as a whole. While this is not a requirement of the scheme, applicants who propose a collaborative project will be given preference over non-collaborative projects in situations of resolving score tie-breaks.
9. Awards are available for one primary investigator from each department in SBS. If any Department is found to not have an eligible application deemed fundable, the award will go to the next highest ranked application from across the remaining Departments.
10. Previous recipients of the Award are ineligible to reapply in the next funding year following the conclusion of the Award (i.e., 12 months holding the award plus one subsequent award round). Award winners from 2023 and 2024 are ineligible in the 2025 application round.
11. A final report may be requested to assess the outcomes of the Award and to monitor the success of the scheme. Award winners may also be invited to present their work at the SBS EMCRA research symposium (or other SBS events) at the end of the Award period.
12. Award winners will be required to contribute as reviewers for the Awards in the year in which they hold the Award (i.e., Award winners in 2025 will assist with application review in 2026). Exceptions to this requirement can be discussed with the SBS EMCRA committee.
13. Awards are at the final discretion of the Head of School and subject to the availability of funds. Successful awardees will be notified by the Head of School.
14. Applications will be assessed on project quality (80%; Background, Research Plan, Expected Outcomes and Impact, and Feasibility sections) and budget (20%; Budget and Budget Justification sections) in line with the strategic objectives of the scheme.
15. Applications will be reviewed by an independent panel comprised of EMCRA's both internal and external to the University of Melbourne. This process will be overseen by a minimum of two members of the SBS EMCRA professional development sub-committee.
16. SBS EMCRA committee members are eligible to apply for funding through this scheme and review applications. However, no individual can participate in more than one role (applicant, reviewer or organiser) in the same year (or funding round).
17. All applications will receive three independent reviews, and the scores averaged to calculate a final score for ranking. Scores may be subject to calibration to account for disparate scoring standards between reviewers. Any calibration will be undertaken in consultation with the Head of School and/or School Research Committee.
18. In the situation of two or more applications being ranked equal (and there is a tie-break for awarding funding), the following steps will be taken progressively until one application is ranked highest.

a) If only one of the equally-scoring applications is collaborative, that project will be awarded the funding.

b) If more than one (or none) of the equally-scoring applications are collaborative, then a fourth independent reviewer will be sought to review all equally-scoring applications.

c) If a tie-break remains, the Award organisers will consider the individual section scores. The sections will be considered in the following order of importance: (1) Project Plan, (2) Expected Outcomes and Impact, then (3) Feasibility.

d) If multiple applications are still equally ranked after completing the above steps, then the Award organisers will consult with the Head of School and/or School Research Committee on which application will receive the funding.

Envisaged benefits of the scheme

- Increased research output number and/or quality

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- Contributing to career development and leadership
- Assist EMCRA's to build a track record of funding and reviewing
- Strengthening and diversifying future external competitive funding applications
- Supporting innovative research
- Support for EMCRA's at a critical time in their career to help build research momentum

Conditions of funding

Successful grant recipients will:

- 1.If requested, provide a written report following completion of the grant, including evidence of (or plans for) submission of application(s) to any competitive grant(s) based on the seed funding; and completion of a financial report (template to be provided).
- 2.Acknowledge the SBS EMCRA Seed Funding Award in any publications or presentations arising from this funding.
- 3.Commit to present the findings of supported work in a SBS seminar (or similar) event if requested.

Key datesApplications Open: **10:00 am AEST, Monday 2nd June 2025**Applications Close: **5:00 pm AEST, Friday 26th September 2025**Notification of Outcomes: **anticipated in early November 2025**

ContactAll correspondence to applicants will be via email. For further information please contact the SBS EMCRA Association via the following email address: **sbs-emcra@unimelb.edu.au**

Project DescriptionUsing the Project Template, provide details of the proposed project. Ensure that you complete all sections in the project template. Missing sections will forfeit all points for the section score.Requirements: Maximum 2 pages, size 12 Times New Roman font, 2 cm margins. Any figure text and legend(s) should be legible. The completed application is to be uploaded to SmartyGrants in PDF format by the stated deadline.

[Download the Project Template here](#)

General overview of each section:

- 1.**Project Background (20% of score):** Provide a summary of the relevant background information and problem/gaps in current knowledge. Clearly articulate the project aims.
- 2.**Research Plan (25% of score):** Describe the methodology that will be used in sufficient detail for a reviewer to understand the work and assess the appropriateness of the project budget.
- 3.**Expected Outcomes and Impact (25% of score):** Describe the anticipated outcomes of the project as they relate to the aims. Detail how this project advances current understanding in the field (e.g., the knowledge gain) and how it will be used in applying for external funding. A statement must be included about how the Award will contribute to the career development of the primary applicant (and co-investigators, if relevant).
- 4.**Feasibility (20% of score):** Justify the appropriateness of the applicant (and co-investigators for collaborative projects) and their expertise. If relevant, describe access to additional resources and/or personnel necessary to successfully complete the proposed project.
- 5.**References** [not included in 2-page limit]: Provide reference to relevant literature to support the proposed project.

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Budget & Budget Justification (10% of score) The following sections are required and should be input directly into the SmartyGrants application: **Budget:** include a list of all project items and estimated costs. Total budget must not exceed \$40,000. **Budget Justification** [maximum 500 words]: Briefly summarise how the funds will be spent. If requesting funding to support salary* or travel costs*, a justification must be provided as to why this is necessary to complete the proposed project. *The use of Award funds for (i) salary support for primary and/or co-investigators, or (ii) conference-associated expenses, is not permitted in this scheme.

Eligibility

* indicates a required field

Applicants: please note

Before completing this application form, you should have read the award guidelines explained in the previous section.

Incomplete applications and/or applications received after the closing date will not be considered.

This section of the application form is designed to help you, and us, understand if you are eligible for this grant. It is crucial that you complete these questions before any others to ensure you do not waste your time submitting an application.

If you have any questions in regards to these eligibility criteria, please contact **sbs-emcra@unmelb.edu.au**.

If you do contact us throughout the application process, please quote the application number below:

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Application Number

This field is read only.

Confirmation of Eligibility

I, the Chief Investigator (CIA), confirm that I ..

- have read and understand the program guidelines.
- can demonstrate alignment between their project and the aims of this program.
- am an Academic (A or B Level) that is employed no less than 0.5 FTE position in the School of Biomedical Sciences, University of Melbourne.

Please select below: *

☐ Yes

☐ No

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You must confirm that all statements above are true and correct.

Contact Details

* indicates a required field

Privacy Notice

We pledge to respect and uphold your rights to privacy protection under the [Australian Privacy Principles](#) (APPs) as established under the *Privacy Act 1988* and amended by the *Privacy Amendment (Enhancing Privacy Protection) Act 2012*.

Chief Investigator (CIA)

Name *

Title	First Name	Last Name

Email *

Must be an email address.

Phone Number *

Must be an Australian phone number.

School *

Department *

Academic Level *

**Academic Appointment
End Date**

Must be a date.
Must hold an appointment in SBS with (or with a reasonable expectation of) employment extending until the end of 2026

**Academic Appointment
FTE ***

Must be at least 5 characters.
Minimum requirement (0.5 FTE)

**PhD Awarded (if
available)**

Co-Investigators

Primary contact	Email	Academic Level	FTE	Academic Appointment End Date	PhD Awarded	Affiliation
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First Name	Last Name						
First Name	Last Name						
First Name	Last Name						
First Name	Last Name						
First Name	Last Name						
First Name	Last Name						
			Minimum required e.g. 0.5% FTE at the University of Melbourne	Must be a date.	PhD or Date of Highest qualification awarded Must be a date.	Must be no more than 10 words.	

Project Details

Project title:

Must be no more than 20 words.

Provide a name for your project. Your title should be short but descriptive.

Please provide a short summary of your project:

Must be no more than 100 words.

Be descriptive, but succinct. Include a brief summary of what you will do (i.e. the activities you will perform), and what effects you expect to result from your activities (outcomes).

Please complete this [Project Description template](#) and upload the file via the Choose File below.

Project Description

Attach a file:

Please upload a PDF of your Project Description (max 2 pages, excluding references), using the provided template. Include a description of the proposed project, ensuring the following are addressed – Project background, Research plan, Expected outcomes and impact, Feasibility, References (use of headings recommended).

Application privacy

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If awarded the seed grant, the project title and summary may be used in public communications (e.g., email, social media and University websites) regarding the scheme (e.g., public announcement of the winners).

The project proposal (the 2-page document) will be kept private and only shared with reviewers for the purpose of assessing the application.

Budget

Total Amount Requested

\$

What is the total financial support you are requesting in this application?

Budget (GST exclusive)

Please outline your project budget expenditure in the table below. All amounts should be GST exclusive.

Provide clear descriptions for each budget item in 'Expenditure' columns, Examples of expenses could include 'Animal purchase, animal housing, drug treatments, and use of platforms'.

Use the 'Notes' column for any additional information you think we should be aware of.

Please **do not add commas** to figures – e.g. type \$1000 not \$1,000 – this will ensure your figures for each table total correctly.

Expenditure Description	Expenditure Amount (\$)	Notes
	\$	
	\$	
	\$	
	\$	

Budget Justification

Budget Justification

Word count:

Maximum of 500 words. Briefly summarise how the funds will be spent. If requesting salary support or travel costs*, a justification must be provided as to why this is necessary to complete the proposed project. *Note: The use of Award funds for (i) salary support for primary and/or co-investigators, or (ii) conference-associated expenses, is not permitted in this scheme.

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Certification and Feedback

* indicates a required field

Certification

I, the CIA, certify that to the best of my knowledge the statements made within this application are true and correct, and I understand that if this application is approved for this grant, I will be required to accept the terms and conditions of the grant as outlined in the letter of approval.

I agree *

☐ Yes

☐ No

Applicant Feedback

You are nearing the end of the application process. Before you review your application and click the **SUBMIT** button please take a few moments to provide some feedback.

Please indicate how you found the online application process:

☐ Very easy

☐ Easy

☐ Neutral

☐ Difficult

☐ Very difficult

How many minutes in total did it take you to complete this application? *

Estimate in minutes i.e. 1 hour = 60

Please provide us with your suggestions about any improvements and/or additions to the application process/form that you think we need to consider.