

Guidelines and Selection Criteria
Deakin Science and Society Network (SSN)
Project Incubator Grant 2025

A. Goals of Scheme

The Deakin SSN Grants Scheme supports proposals for activities led by a Deakin University early or mid-career academic researcher (EMCAR). The Scheme is aimed at incubating new interdisciplinary research collaborations between STEM and HASS researchers. Incubator Grants are appropriate for interdisciplinary team projects and typically bring together Chief Investigators from multiple disciplines.

Project activities should be targeted at one or more of the following:

- To provide Deakin EMCARs with resources, tools and training to conduct high quality and impactful interdisciplinary research
- To increase the feasibility and impact of new interdisciplinary research projects
- To support external grant success for Deakin EMCARs

The scheme specifically seeks to support collaborations between researchers in STEM disciplines (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) and the HASS disciplines (humanities and social sciences).

Projects that involve collaboration between STEM-only researchers or between HASS-only researchers are unlikely to be successful in their applications.

Successful applicants will be expected to attend an SSN grantee induction session in early November 2024 and give a presentation at an SSN Work-in-Progress research day in 2025.

B. Selection criteria

Eligibility:

1. The first listed Chief Investigator must be an EMCAR employed at Deakin University. EMCAR researchers are defined as having up to 15 years full-time equivalent (FTE) experience post PhD conferral. Level E researchers are not eligible to apply as first listed investigator. Investigators from outside Deakin University may be listed as collaborators.
2. The first Chief Investigator must be employed at Deakin for the expected duration of the project (i.e., throughout 2025). Certification from relevant business units will be requested from shortlisted projects.
3. The first Chief Investigator of an SSN Incubator Grant cannot be someone who was a first Chief Investigator of a previous successful SSN Incubator Grant.

Project evaluation criteria:

1. The project must address a significant problem of social importance.
2. The project must be designed to lead towards a Category 1-4 grant application or other commercial tender within 18 months of the award.

3. The project's aims, methods and/or design must demonstrate an interdisciplinary approach to the problem. This may include:
 - Researchers from different disciplines working together in a team
 - Researchers collaborating to bring different perspectives to solve a problem
 - Researchers utilising methods normally associated with one or more disciplines to solve problems in another discipline
 - One or more researchers translating innovative 'blue-sky' or applied research outcomes from one discipline into an entirely different applied research discipline.
4. The project's outcomes and outputs must be feasible within the project's plans and budget.
5. The project must be aligned with at least one of the research themes of the Deakin Science and Society Network:
 - Environmental Challenges
 - Healthy Futures
 - Indigenous Knowledges
 - Data Cultures

For descriptions of the research themes visit the SSN [website](#).

C. Guidelines

The project application should address the following question (as in the online form)

Significant problem addressed by project (max 500 words):

- Briefly describe the significant problem your interdisciplinary team seeks to address.
- Why is it important (including potential benefits and links to industry challenges where relevant)?
- Why does it require an interdisciplinary approach?

Interdisciplinary project proposed (max 500 words):

- Briefly explain the project aims, methods and design.
- What is new or innovative about this approach to the research problem?
- What is interdisciplinary about this approach to the research problem (i.e. what are the respective contributions of the HASS and STEM researchers)?
- Briefly outline any preliminary work, if any, that has been completed so far on this project (e.g. meetings with potential collaborators, lab work, etc.)

Expected grant outcomes (max 100 words):

- Briefly outline the expected external grant outcomes from the seed funding (i.e. applications for Category 1 or Category 2-4 grants and/or other funding schemes) as well as any expected peer review publication outcomes (i.e. Q1 journal articles, book chapters)

D. Availability of resources and distribution

The Deakin SSN Incubator Grant: applicants can apply for up to AUD\$12,500 per project. We will seek to fund a mix of EMCARs of five or more projects in the 2025 round. To develop the project

management skills of Deakin University EMCARs, any allocated funds will be held in a Deakin University account and managed by the first Chief Investigator (i.e., a Deakin University staff member) in accordance with relevant University policies and procedures.

E. Resource allocation

Applicants can request funding up to \$12 500, and do not need to request the full available amount. The allocated funding can be used in the following ways:

- Recruiting Research Assistants
- Acquiring project materials (surveys, transcription, lab materials, etc.)
- Domestic travel expenses (in line with government and university restrictions)
- Other approved expenses

Please list any contributions from other sources (School, Faculty, Institute, external) in the budget.

Funds should ideally be used to support the development of Deakin University staff members. Applications that require funds to be allocated to travel for external collaborators or items that will be used outside of Deakin University will require strong justification.

In addition to seed funding, the SSN will also offer support in the form of mentorship and feedback on project development. Where possible, it will broker collaborative relationships and assist in further developing the interdisciplinary dimensions of the project.

NOTE: resources allocated from this scheme cannot be used for conference attendance.

F. Application process

- Complete and submit the application form by **MONDAY 14 October 2024 23:59 AEST**
- Include a CV for the Chief Investigator as a single PDF in your submission. Include links to the Deakin Find-an-expert bio/ Deakin profile page or other relevant page for each Investigator within the form. If there is no link offering a sufficient CV, please include CV of collaborators in a single pdf with the Chief Investigator CV.

G. Application timeline

Timelines

- Applications open: **31 July 2024**
- Grant information session and collaborative networking event: **Friday 16 August 2024 via Zoom**. Register [here](#).
- Applications close: **Monday 14 October 11:59pm AEST**
- Final decisions and notification of successful applications: **25 October 2024**.
- Induction for successful grantholders **27 November 2024**

For further information or enquiries, please contact Carina Truys at ssn-info@deakin.edu.au

For a copy of the recording of the grant info session, please write to ssn-info@deakin.edu.au

Potential applicants are encouraged to contact relevant Deakin Science and Society Network [theme leaders](#) if they require guidance on appropriate collaborators and initiatives. Our previous annual reports and newsletters can be found on our website <https://scienceandsocietynetwork.deakin.edu.au/>