

Strategic Research Funding Scheme – Near-Miss Grants

In 2005 the Research Portfolio Committee critically reviewed the current form of support for research and research training to ensure that the funds are used in the most effective manner. The Strategic Research Funding Scheme was introduced to provide incentives for research to apply for external competitive funding to build their research and also to enable researchers to strategically develop new research areas and collaborations leading to future external funding. This scheme has two components, a “Near-Miss” Grant round and a Pilot Grant round.

Near-Miss Grant Round

The Near-Miss Grants will be awarded to researchers who were ranked in the top categories of unsuccessful ARC Discovery Projects, NHMRC Projects and ARC Indigenous Research Development Scheme (IRDS) applications. This funding is to act as a general incentive for researchers as well as assisting the research team to further develop their research with the aim of submitting another external grant application. For 2006, of the funding allocated for the Strategic Research Funding Scheme, up to \$450,000 will be allocated to the Near-Miss Grant Round.

The conditions for the award of a Near-Miss Grant are:

- The Near-Miss grant will be awarded to the team on the external application through the first CI who must be a conjoint/employee of the University of Newcastle and the administering institution on the application must be the University of Newcastle;
- No internal application would be required for the Near-Miss Grant round;
- Unsuccessful NHMRC applications ranked in category 5 or above and ARC unsuccessful applications ranked in the top 20% would be awarded a fixed proportion (20%) of the amount requested in the first year from the ARC/NHMRC with an upper-limit awarded of \$20,000;
- Unsuccessful NHMRC applications ranked in category 4 and ARC unsuccessful applications ranked in the top 21-30% would be awarded a fixed proportion (10%) of the amount requested in the first year from the ARC/NHMRC with an upper-limit awarded of \$10,000 depending upon sufficient Near-Miss Grant funding;
- Unsuccessful IRDS applicants would be awarded a fixed proportion (10%) of the amount requested in the first year from the ARC with an upper-limit awarded of \$10,000;
- Funding can be used at the discretion of the research team as long as it furthers research at the University of Newcastle and leads to further external grant applications;
- It is the responsibility of researchers to ensure that all ethics and safety clearances are in place prior to any research requiring such clearances commences;
- Funding will be awarded immediately after the results of the annual competitive grant rounds are known. Funding will be available for use until the end of March in the following year. For example, 2006 recipients can use the funding from 1 January 2006 until 31 March 2007;
- The first named CI will be required to submit a report on how the funding was used to advance the research together with details of further applications at the end of June in the following year (ie reports from 2006 recipients will be due 30 June 2007);
- There is no limit on the number of Near-Miss grants a researcher can hold.