

SCHEDULE B: VICE-CHANCELLOR'S CONFERENCE CARE SUPPORT FUND GUIDELINES

Deakin University values collaboration and recognises its importance to advancing research and research careers. Attendance at national and international conferences is integral to fostering new and maintaining existing networks. Researchers with primary caring responsibilities are often disadvantaged in this regard. As part of Deakin's commitment to encourage and support the participation of researchers with these responsibilities, and so as to minimise the impact on their research careers, it aims to provide professional development opportunities for early to mid-career researchers to facilitate them through the promotions process.

Academic staff with primary carer responsibilities sometimes suffer disadvantage because they are limited to attending events during business hours when they can more easily access care for their family member. Any loss of connection with their colleagues can have a significant impact on publication rates, the ability to maintain contact with collaborators and to form new partnerships that could result in furthering their research.

Financial Assistance

The Vice-Chancellor's Conference Care Support fund provides up to \$2,000 to assist researchers who would otherwise be unable to attend local or international conferences, workshops or symposia due to carer responsibilities. Funding can be used for travel for a carer/family member to accompany the researcher or to pay for additional care costs whilst the primary carer is attending a conference, workshop or symposia. Funding cannot be used to cover existing care costs or the staff member's registration or travel costs. The conference attendance of the staff member must be funded in the usual manner.

Limited funds will be available each year and priority will be based upon:

- the status of the event and its relevance to the applicant's career and research program
- the participation of the applicant in the forum, for example as an invited speaker
- the level of the researcher with priority being given to Level B and C
- previous funding received under this program

Eligibility

1. Continuing or fixed-term Academic or Research Only staff who have a minimum 20% workload allocation for research
2. Evidence of Head of School/Institute Director approval to attend the international or national conference, workshop, fieldwork or symposia relevant to their research
3. Evidence that substantiates their role as a primary carer in the form of a statutory declaration.

Definitions

A *researcher* is considered a primary carer when he/she has the primary and sustained responsibility for full-time care of:

- dependent children up to 12 years of age
- an elderly parent or other elderly relative
- a partner, offspring or other relative with disability

“Additional care costs” refers to costs that would not normally be incurred by the staff member that are directly related to the cost of care during the time the staff member is travelling. Examples include after school care costs, a nanny or babysitter or access to childcare provided at the conference venue.

Reimbursement

Recipients will be reimbursed for costs incurred upon returning from the approved conference. An original tax invoice/receipt will be required and reimbursement will occur through the TEMS system. This fund does attract FBT which will be covered by the University, however for more information on the impact of this on personal tax returns please visit:

[https://www.ato.gov.au/General/Fringe-benefits-tax-\(fbt\)/In-detail/Employees/Reportable-fringe-benefits---facts-for-employees/](https://www.ato.gov.au/General/Fringe-benefits-tax-(fbt)/In-detail/Employees/Reportable-fringe-benefits---facts-for-employees/)

Assessment Process

Applications should be submitted to equity-diversity@deakin.edu.au at least 4 weeks prior to travel. The panel will consist of three members and will seek a gender balance where possible:

- The Vice-Chancellor’s nominee
- A senior academic nominated by the applicant’s residing faculty
- Director, Equity and Diversity

Applications will be assessed on a rolling basis, limited funds are available.

Post Travel

Recipients are required to provide a written report six months after returning from the conference detailing the benefits that have been or are being realised as a result of the conference attendance. These can be personal career and/or organisational benefits from the trip. The report should be no longer than half a page and should be emailed to equity-diversity@deakin.edu.au.