REDI DEVELOPING AUSTRALIA'S MTP SECTOR WORKFORCE

Powered by MTPConnect

Researcher Exchange & Development within Industry (REDI) initiative

REDI Fellowship Program

GUIDELINES | MAY 2021

Australian Government
Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources
Industry Growth Centres
MTPConnect
MedTech and Pharma Growth Centre

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DEFINITIONS

Contracting Entity
The Contracting Entity is the organisation that signs the MTPConnect REDI Fellowship Agreement. This can either be the Sponsor or Employer. It is up to the Employer, Sponsor and Fellow to decide who is the best party to contract with MTPConnect.

Employer
The Employer is the workplace that the Fellow is currently working and will return to work after the REDI Fellowship industry placement is complete.

Eligible employers are universities, medical research institutes, hospitals and technology transfer organisations.

Fellow
The Fellow is the person who will be funded through this program.

Eligible Fellows are medical technology, biotechnology and pharmaceutical sector researchers, academics, clinicians and professionals (technology transfer organisation professionals, entrepreneurs, business development/commercialisation staff, administrators and executives) from academic/public research organisations/hospitals/technology transfer organisations.

Fellowship Agreement
An agreement between the Contracting Entity and MTPConnect.

A Fellowship agreement is a legal document which details the relationship between MTPConnect and the Contracting Entity. Included in the agreement will be an activity schedule and reporting requirements.

Sponsor
The Sponsor is the company/organisation where the Fellow will be located during the REDI Fellowship and will lead and submit the application.

Eligible Sponsors are industry organisations defined as research intensive organisations such as:

- biotechnology, pharmaceutical, medical device and digital health companies with a head count of a minimum 20 EFT (equivalent full-time) staff
- specialised best practice organisations such as:
  - Venture Capital (VC) firms
  - Regulatory affairs consultancies
  - Medical affairs consultancies.

For clarity, universities, medical research institutes and hospitals are ineligible Sponsors for this program.

1. OPPORTUNITY, OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES

Australia's medical technology, biotechnology and pharmaceutical (MTP) sector supports around 70,000 Australian jobs and contributed more than $5 billion in Gross Value Added (GVA) to the Australian economy in 2019. Its future is dependent on the skills of its workforce.

The REDI Fellowship Program is an initiative of the Researcher Exchange and Development within Industry (REDI) program, made possible by the Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF) and operated by MTPConnect.

The REDI Fellowship Program provides industry with the opportunity to access academics and clinicians for distinct medical research projects involving discovery, translation and commercialisation.

1.1 About the Medical Research Future Fund

As part of the 2014-15 Budget, the Australian Government announced the establishment of the MRFF, a $20 billion fund to support medical research and medical innovation to improve the health and wellbeing of Australians. The MRFF was established through the *Medical Research Future Fund Act 2015*.

MRFF funding targets identified national priorities (the Australian Medical Research and Innovation Priorities) determined by the independent Australian Medical Research Advisory Board consistent with the *Medical Research Future Fund Act 2015*. Investments made from the MRFF cover the entire research pipeline from basic to applied research with a focus on the translation and commercialisation of discoveries. The Medical Research Future Fund Funding Principles underpin the MRFF and ensure it continues to support investments that are priority driven, strategic, collaborative and contestable with a focus on maintaining research integrity.

The intended outcomes of the MRFF are:

- Life changing discoveries such as new treatments, drugs and devices;
- Continuous improvement and innovation in the health system that benefits all Australians;
- Strengthening domestic research capacity through support, collaboration and the development of expert talent;
- Positioning Australia's health and medical research sector at the forefront of the innovation economy; and
- Improving Australia's reputation as a global leader in health and medical research.

1.2 About the Researcher Exchange and Development within Industry (REDI) Program

MTPConnect deploys the REDI program for the MRFF, leveraging the expertise of our research, training and industry partners to drive skills development and workforce training, through deployment of an integrated, three-pillar plan. The four-year REDI program, initiated in June 2020, will:

- Deliver systemic improvement to Australia's MTP workforce by providing industry experiences and skills development for researchers, clinicians and innovators;
- Develop an industry-ready workforce with the skills necessary to keep pace with a rapidly changing sector;
- Provide a skills development blueprint across the MTP value chain through a 'root and branch' skills gap analysis; and
- Create new training, mentoring and industry placements over the life of the program.

Pillar One: Expansion of Proven Programs
MTPConnect is partnering with training, mentoring, internship, entrepreneurship and incubator organisations to support expansion of their proven training programs to deliver deeper impact by addressing known skills gaps. Expansion of the training programs will create more industry placements, mentoring and researcher exchange programs and will reach greater numbers of early and mid-career researcher and clinical researchers. Partner organisations include:

- GSK Australia;
- MedTech Actuator;
- Industry Mentoring Network in STEM (IMNIS) program;
- Medical Device Partnering Program (MDPP); and
- ANDHealth.

Pillar Two: Identifying unknown skills gaps and implementing new programs
REDI is delivering a forward-looking 'root and branch' analysis of the MTP workforce to provide a deep understanding of current and future skills gaps. The analysis is an essential step in preparing Australia's MTP workforce to meet future demands. Informed by MTPConnect's 2020 Sector Competitiveness Plan and linking with national MTP industry and research bodies, the analysis forms the foundation for a contestable program of new initiatives to fill skills gaps not currently addressed. Partner organisations include:

- The George Institute for Global Health; and
- Victorian Comprehensive Cancer Centre (VCCC).

Pillar Three: Industry placements, internships and fellowships
To ensure workforce skills align with industry needs and drive industry-research-clinical-entrepreneurship connections, the REDI program is providing targeted short, medium and long-term industry placements, internships and fellowships for clinicians, researchers, academics and MTP professionals, enabling high-performing individuals from these cohorts to gain industry experience. Industry placements will focus on discovery, translation and commercialisation of relevant research.

REDI partners with other organisations for short- and medium-term industry placements.

- APRIntern; and
- The Bridge and BridgeTech programs.

For long-term fellowships and internships, REDI will administer its own Fellowship Program – The Researcher Exchange and Development within Industry (REDI) Fellowship Program (which is the focus of these guidelines). The REDI Fellowship Program will increase and enhance industry: academia collaborations, knowledge sharing and skill development.

2. KEY FOCUS

These guidelines are aligned with REDI Pillar 3: Industry placements, internships and fellowships.

Fellowships and internships are a great way to accelerate innovation, expand networks and challenge Fellows in new and varied ways. The breadth of learning is both deep and experiential, which increases retention of skills and knowledge which is easier to translate and replicate in other work environments.

The REDI Fellowship Program will foster greater collaboration between research and industry through Fellows spending time embedded in industry (Sponsor). The aim is for expansion of a Fellow's skill sets and to bring these back to their place of ongoing employment, embedding high-level commercial and entrepreneurial experience in the research sector.

MTPConnect will run an open and ongoing call for REDI Fellowships (REDIF) until October 2022, or until the funds are fully committed. Applications are sought from Sponsors who have identified:

- a Fellow;
- a specific project with well-defined outcomes;
- support from the Fellow's employer; and
- a set term for the industry Fellowship (maximum term is 12 months, although in exceptional circumstances up to 24 months will be considered).

Outcomes

The focus is to ensure that the Fellow has access to a solid network within the Sponsor to learn from and share experiences with. The REDI Fellowship Program is intended to accelerate relationships, drive projects towards commercial outcomes and provide industry relevant skills to the Fellow. Relationships are expected to be sustained beyond the Fellowship period with an expected ongoing collaboration. Fellows also need to identify how they will apply their newly acquired industry-based knowledge and skills to their research workplace when returning from the Sponsor.

Duration

There are three durations of REDIF offered:

- 12 months full time;
- 6 months – 12 months full time; or
- 6 months -12 months where the Fellow spends 50% of time working with the Sponsor.

For exceptional circumstances REDIF of up to 24 months may be considered.

Following the Fellowship, Fellows are expected to return to their Employer's workplace for a period of time at least equal to the length of their Fellowship. This will ensure the implementation and dissemination of industry-based knowledge and skill. Fellows will need to continue to submit reports for a period of one (1) year after the Fellowship.

Value of Funding

The REDIF can provide up to a total of AUD$250,000 per Fellow, per annum.

The REDIF grant covers/contributes to salaries and on-costs (including superannuation) for the period of the REDI Fellowship. Additional costs, such as relocation costs, may be covered if there is a requirement to relocate for the REDIF.

MTPConnect will be guided by the Sponsor/Employer as to which party is the Contracting Entity and to whom the grant is paid.

3. APPLICATION PROCESS

SmartyGrants application to the REDIF opens on **Tuesday 15 December 2020** and is an open call until October 2022 (or until the funds are fully committed).

Submitting applications

Application to the REDIF is through a single-step application process. All parties are encouraged to read the REDI Fellowship Program Guidelines and other documentation found on the **REDI webpage** before preparing an application.

All questions and clarifications should be submitted via email to redif.application@mtpconnect.org.au

MTPConnect will host an Information Session Webinar shortly after the opening of the application process. The session will be made available as an on-demand video with the other application documentation.

The Sponsor must submit an application through the online application portal SmartyGrants prior to the submission deadline. REDIF operates a continuous submission and assessment process. Applications can be received any time before a Submission Deadline (see below) and will be rigorously assessed within three months of a Submission Deadline. Funding outcomes will be announced in line with the table below. Announcements will be made within six months of an application submission. MTPConnect reserves the right to accelerate the assessment process.

Submission Deadline	Announcement Date
1 March 2021	30 May 2021
1 July 2021	30 October 2021
1 November 2021	28 February 2022
1 March 2022	30 May 2022
1 July 2022	30 October 2022
17 October 2022	15 December 2022

Applications will be judged on the selection criteria outlined in *Section 6*. It is encouraged to maintain a working copy of the application offline. A copy of the application questions is provided in *Appendix 1*.[1]

[1] Appendix 1 reflects the Smartygrants form at the time of publishing this REDIF guideline. Sponsors/Employers/Fellows must read the online REDIF Smartygrants form to ensure they have access to the most current application criteria.

Applications must provide a proposed budget that includes the Fellow's salary and superannuation costs, relocation support (if applicable), travel/health insurance costs (if applicable) and other expenditures in line with the criteria outlined in *Section 7 Use of Funding*.

Applications requiring further assistance should contact **Jarrod Belcher, Director REDI Program** on +61 402 456 301 or at REDIF.application@mtpconnect.org.au.

Reviewing applications

Eligible applications will be reviewed by industry, academic and health experts. They will evaluate the application based on defined scoring criteria. MTPConnect reserves the right to seek clarification from the Sponsor, Fellow or Employer about aspects of the application and to negotiate on the details before final awarding of a REDI Fellowship.

All applications received will be acknowledged automatically upon submission. The main contact will be provided with an Identification Number to be referenced in all future communications in relation to the application. Notification of the application outcome will be delivered in line with the timelines in this document.

An unfunded application that has been modified following feedback from REDI can be resubmitted. This will be treated as a new application.

Successful applications

Successful applications will receive a written offer which will include specific conditions attached to the grant.

The Federal Minister for Health may publicly announce the REDI Fellowship recipients/projects and may include name of the Employer, Sponsor, project title and description and amount of funding awarded. Details of recipients/projects may also be published on the MTPConnect and Department of Health's websites.

Although the REDI Fellowship Program operates under an open and ongoing call for proposals, Fellowships must be completed by December 2023.

Please note that at any time, MTPConnect reserves the right to alter the application process, scoring or withdraw the call for applications.

4. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To be eligible for consideration, applications must satisfy all the requirements set out in this Guidelines document.

For an application to be deemed eligible for REDIF funding, it must:

1. Be from a Sponsor who is sufficiently resourced to support the growth of the Fellow;
2. Have a Fellow who is an Australian citizen or an Australian permanent resident with their Employer having an Australian Business Number (ABN) and being:
   a) a medical research institute;
   b) a university;
   c) a hospital;
   d) a corporate Commonwealth entity; or
   e) a corporation.
3. Have a project that is applicable to the medical technology, biotechnology or pharmaceutical sector;
4. Have a defined project with clear goals and outcomes in line with the Fellow's expertise;
5. Have support from the Employer for the Fellow to undertake this program;
6. Meet any applicable timing, formatting, system or other similar administrative requirements imposed by MTPConnect;
7. Advise that the proposed funding recipient will adhere to the terms and conditions of funding set out in an agreement as determined by MTPConnect; and
8. Be received in full on or before the closing date. Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted.

An application may be considered ineligible and excluded from further consideration if it does not meet all eligibility criteria, including but not limited to:

1. Does not meet the objectives of the program;
2. Does not have a Sponsor, Fellow, Employer and project clearly identified; and
3. Contravenes an eligibility rule or other requirement as set out in this Guidelines document.

5. THE SELECTION CRITERIA

The following selection criteria will be used to assess applications to the REDI Fellowship Program.

Proposal Selection Criteria		Weighting
Section 1:	***Sponsor*** The application will be evaluated based on: a. Demonstrable interest in the focus of the project topic; b. Support mechanisms and mentoring available for the Fellow; and c. Resources to support the project and Fellow.	**20%**
Section 2:	***Project*** The application will be evaluated based on: a. Clear goals and methodology for the project; b. Major milestones to be achieved; c. Major risks and mitigation strategies; and d. Technical feasibility.	**30%**
Section 3:	***Fellow*** The application will be evaluated based on: a. Track Record/ CV and patent/ publication record (aligned with career path)[2]; b. Experience in the areas covered by the project; and c. Demonstrated ability/plan for re-integration back into their Employer's workplace at the completion of the Fellowship.	**20%**
Section 4:	***Value*** The proposal will be evaluated based upon how the Fellowship will: a. Accelerate the Fellowship project towards completion; b. Increase or establish on-going and future collaborations; c. Provide the Fellow with industry relevant skills; and d. Impact Australia's medtech, biotech and pharmaceutical industry. The REDIF Program is not intended to be a replacement for funding already secured from other sources.	**30%**

[2] Fellows with career interruptions will not be disadvantaged. Career interruptions may include international relocation, carers' responsibilities, maternity, parental, medical, disability, unemployment, non-research employment - a period of time commensurate will be applied.

6. USE OF FUNDING

REDIF funding will be paid upon execution of a Fellowship Agreement between the Contracting Entity and MTPConnect.

The REDIF Program provides Fellowships of up to a total $250,000 to support:

- Fellow's salary plus on-costs (including superannuation)
- Other agreed and eligible costs may include:
    - Education/ training allowance of up to $8,000 for related education/ training programs;
    - Interstate relocation costs of up to $6,000 for an individual or $9,000 for a family;
    - International relocation costs of up to $12,000 for an individual or $18,000 for a family;
    - Education allowance for dependent children of $1,368 per month (K-12) if international relocation is required; and
    - Travel/ Health insurance (international only).

The maximum payment available through a REDI Fellowship is AUD$250,000 per Fellow, per annum exclusive of GST.

Commonwealth Funding provided through the REDI program can only support eligible expenditures incurred on eligible activities undertaken during the term of the Fellowship Agreement. Not all costs incurred during a Fellowship may be eligible for funding and, where needed, these costs must be funded by the Fellow, Sponsor or Employer.

10. THE PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT & IP

The Contracting Entity (determined to be the Sponsor or Employer on a case by case basis) must enter into a legally binding Fellowship Agreement with MTPConnect.

The MTPConnect REDI Fellowship Agreement must be fully executed before any payments can be made. The Fellowship activities must not commence until the Fellowship Agreement is executed.

The Contracting Entity must provide MTPConnect, through the Fellowship Agreement, a non-exclusive licence to any reporting material provided to MTPConnect during the course of the REDIF.

In exceptional circumstances, the Fellowship Agreement may be extended for up to an additional 12 months, provided the Fellowship is completed by December 2023.

11. PROJECT SPECIFIC LEGISLATION, POLICIES & INDUSTRY STANDARDS

The Contracting Entity is required to comply with all relevant laws and regulations, including those specified in the Commonwealth Grant Agreement between the Commonwealth and

MTPConnect (a copy of which will be made available to successful recipients). Together, the Sponsor and Employer may be required to complete a risk assessment and undertake clearance checks to demonstrate and ensure that its personnel are in compliance with legislative requirements for working with children and vulnerable persons.

To the extent that the project involves collecting and using personal information, the Contracting Entity will be required to comply with privacy requirements; including obtaining appropriate consents for the collection, storage and use of personal information.

It is a condition of the funding that the Contracting Entity meets these requirements and these requirements will be set out in the MTPConnect REDI Fellowship Agreement with MTPConnect.

MTPConnect may be subject to Freedom of Information (FOI) requests and, if such a request is made, MTPConnect will consult with the Contracting Entity before any decision is made to release the application or supporting documentation.

12. FUNDING ACQUITTAL & REPORTING

The Contracting Entity will be required to submit the Fellow's quarterly project reports to MTPConnect that demonstrate delivery of the project and compliance with the Fellowship Agreement.

MTPConnect will monitor the progress of the Fellowship and report on this progress to the Commonwealth. Funding will be tied to the Fellow meeting agreed upon milestones and reporting obligations. MTPConnect will make payments according to an agreed schedule set out in the Fellowship Agreement. Payments are subject to satisfactory meeting of agreed milestones.

Contracting Entities will be required to submit the Fellow's reports in line with the MTPConnect REDI Fellowship Agreement. The quarterly reports must include data/feedback based on the Impact Assessment Framework. MTPConnect will monitor the progress of the project and may conduct site visits or request information or records to confirm details of reports as necessary.

APPENDIX 1 Application Guidance Notes

In line with the selection criteria the following question fields are provided below:[3]

General
Project Parties (Fellow, Employer and Sponsor)
Project title
Proposed project term (Start date/ End date)
Brief project description (No more than 200 words)
Fellow's employer letter of support (1-page PDF)
Financial details

Selection criteria section 1
Sponsor interest in the project including past focus, resources and support mechanisms for the Fellow to enhance their skills and gain industry experience (500 words)

Selection criteria section 2
Expected impact of the Project (500 words)
Project Work-plan (500 words)
Project risk assessment
Sustained project development strategy (250 words)
Supporting documentation (1-page PDF, no more than 6 figures)

Selection criteria section 3
Fellow Curriculum Vitae including publication/ patent records (no more than 20 pages)
Fellow interest in the project including past focus, how this grows Fellow's skill set and why this would not be developed without the REDI Fellowship (500 words)
Expected application of Fellow's new skills back in the Employer's workplace (250 words)

Selection criteria section 4
Analysis of impact of REDI Fellowship funding on this project (250 words)

[3] Appendix 1 reflects the Smartygrants form at the time of publishing this REDIF guideline. Sponsors/Employers/Fellows must read the online REDIF Smartygrants form to ensure they have access to the most current application criteria.