



MEL-BER Research Partnership: Call for Proposals 2019

With the launch of the MEL-BER Research Partnership, the University of Melbourne and the Berlin Universities Alliance (BUA) constituted by Freie Universität Berlin, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Technische Universität Berlin and the Charité – Universitätsmedizin Berlin are seeking to identify complementary strengths, leverage existing, and develop new, collaborative research and research training initiatives which reflect the academic standing, research excellence and quality of research training that exists at each institution.

Through this inaugural call for applications, the MEL-BER Research Partnership will provide access to co-funding at Melbourne and each participating Berlin University Alliance (BUA) partner. Priority will be given to proposals that identify a path to external funding and/or help establish Joint PhD opportunities between the participants.

If successful, recipients of funding in Melbourne and Berlin will be required to abide by the policies and practices of their respective institutions for ethical conduct of research; enrolment, supervision and award of Joint PhDs; and reporting and reconciliation of funding and expenditure.

General eligibility criteria:

The 2019 MEL-BER Call for Proposals is open to full-time faculty members from the University of Melbourne (UoM) and all Berlin University Alliance (BUA) partners, from any discipline¹. All proposals must include at least one faculty member from each of the University of Melbourne and at least one BUA partner. Additional external partners (in Australia, Germany or internationally) are welcome but cannot be funded by the MEL-BER Research Partnership.

All applications must demonstrate efforts to achieve gender balance and include early- and mid- career researchers where appropriate. Only new initiatives will be eligible for funding.

Applications that do not satisfy these criteria will **not be eligible** for funding.

¹ Initiatives can include postdoctoral researchers, but the principal investigators must be full-time faculty members. Melbourne applicants must be a salaried employee of the University - Honorary and adjunct academic staff members are not eligible to receive funding under this scheme, although they can fund their own involvement.

Funding pool, number of awards, their duration and funding allocation:

The total pool of funding available under the 2019 MEL-BER Research Program Call is an amount of **up to €500,000**. Awards (one Chief Investigator (CI) at each of UoM and a BUA partner) will be limited to €50,000 in total (i.e. €25,000 from UoM and €25,000 from BUA).

Where other contributions are being made by faculties/units this will be counted as additional to the MEL-BER award.

Proposals from the Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences are particularly welcome.

Each proposal must detail how the research collaboration will generate third-party funding.

Proposals must detail how awarded funding will be allocated for the duration of the collaboration, and how it will continue once the funding period is complete.

MEL-BER funding will be available from 15 May 2019 and must be expended according to the awarded budget, and within the proposed timeframe, unless a variation to this award is approved by both the University of Melbourne and participating Berlin partner institutions.

Eligible costs

- Travel, accommodation and other associated costs for joint workshops, academic and graduate researcher exchanges (including contributions towards academic sabbaticals and other exchange programs where appropriate);
- Material costs of the collaborative research (as contributions towards laboratory or field-based costs for participating academics and/or graduate researchers); and
- Costs associated with the preparation of joint grant proposals to respective national funders, agencies, international bodies, philanthropic sponsors or foundations.

Evaluation Process

All proposals will be jointly peer-reviewed with the MEL-BER Research Partnership Oversight Committee responsible for making the final funding decision.

This evaluation will consider the quality, feasibility, and potential of the proposal, competency and expertise of the team of faculty members involved, cost-effectiveness of the budgetary plan, the plans to obtain external funding in the future, prospects for inclusion of Joint PhDs and the sustainability of the collaboration beyond the term of the Award. It will focus on the effective communication and collaboration between the faculty in each location, and added value of the collaboration, as well as the mobility of researchers (including graduate researchers) between Berlin and Melbourne.

Selection Criteria

- How the collaboration combines mutual areas of interest and strength and builds research capacity at Berlin and Melbourne;

- The potential for this funding to foster ongoing collaboration that will lead to successful joint grant application(s) involving the Melbourne and Berlin collaborators and high-quality journal publications and/or equivalent research outputs.
- The track record of the Berlin and Melbourne Chief Investigators; and
- The gender balance of named investigators and the involvement of graduate-, early- and mid- career researchers.

Requirements of Recipients

- **Project timeline:** All activities should be completed and expenditure reconciled as proposed and/or approved.
- **Progress reports:** Melbourne and BUA recipients must report briefly after six months from the start of the award on the activities to which the grant is being applied, and annually thereafter until project completion. This includes reporting on progress towards obtaining further external support for the project's development.
- **Acknowledgement:** Melbourne and BUA recipients are expected to acknowledge the support of the MEL-BER Research Partnership in any publication or presentations, which should be listed in the progress reports.
- **Payment of the grant:** The payment and post-award financial management will be administered through the Melbourne and BUA recipients respective institutions.

Submission Documents

The completed application must include:

- The financial budget, with amounts specified by category;
- Complete CVs of CIs and a list of prospective recipients on both sides;
- Evidence of approval to submit by their relevant Deans (Berlin) or Heads of Department (Melbourne); and
- A narrative project description of no more than 3 pages, including:
 - An overview of the field of study and general intellectual content of the project suitable for a non-specialist audience; please specifically address aspects that make the project innovative and promising from a long-term perspective;
 - A lay-out of the proposed project and its specific objectives as well as its operations and functions;
 - A detailed plan for the project's long-term third-party funding situation beyond the funding obtained through the award.
 - A description of any additional financial support from sponsoring Faculty/units including any PhD stipends/funding allocated to the proposed activity; and
 - A summary of any additional resources (office or laboratory space, library access etc) required for the project and their availability.

Key dates for 2019

- Applications deadline: 15 April 2019 at 11:59 am (Berlin local time)
- Outcome notification: End of May 2019
- Funding Activity: 1 June 2019 to 30 June 2020

Submission and Contact Information

A single, jointly prepared application must be submitted in English through the application portal (<https://www.berlin-university-alliance.de/mel-ber>) to the BUA, by **11:59am on 15 April 2019 (Berlin local time)**.

BUA submission and contact details:

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For Melbourne applicants please direct any additional questions to:

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