



NCSEHE

National Centre for Student
Equity In Higher Education



Curtin University

EQUITY FELLOWS PROGRAM

Information Package

2019

Make tomorrow better.

ncsehe.edu.au

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EQUITY FELLOWS PROGRAM

Guidelines

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1 Background, Aim and Objectives

The Australian Government Department of Education (“the Department”) is funding an Equity Fellows Program (“the Program”) under the Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program (HEPPP) National Priorities Pool. The National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education (NCSEHE) at Curtin University has been charged with managing the Program.

The Equity Fellows Program will deliver world class research outcomes (including applied research), and develop the research, research translation, better practice implementation, and knowledge transfer skills of **both higher education equity researchers and equity practitioners**.

The 2019 and 2020 Equity Fellowships will be targeted to address priority equity issues, with **a specific focus on emerging regional and remote issues** such as the economic impact of the drought on disadvantaged higher education students.

Three fellowships, representing fifty per cent of funding will be specifically targeted to regional disadvantage.

Six Fellowships will be awarded during 2019 and 2020. The value of each Fellowship will be up to \$215,000 covering engagement of a Fellow for a period of 12 months (full-time equivalent).

The aim of the Program is to support Fellows to undertake strategic, high-impact, high-profile leadership projects targeted, sector-wide, at improving the access, participation and success in higher education of students from disadvantaged backgrounds. As part of the Fellowship, Fellows will spend some time seconded to the Australian Government Department of Education, which will facilitate two way knowledge transfer, and include time to engage with APS leaders in strategic policy, as well as the opportunity to share key project findings with the department through seminars and workshops.

Equity Fellows, through their projects, are expected to have direct influence and impact on equity in the higher education sector. Applicants must demonstrate how their Fellowship and proposed project aligns with and supports the NCSEHE’s purpose which is to “improve higher education outcomes (including access, participation, retention, success, and completion rates) for marginalised and disadvantaged people through:

- (a) strengthening Australia’s student equity in higher education research quality, capability and capacity
- (b) supporting the building of a robust evidence base
- (c) informing institutional best practice and enhancing on the ground delivery of equity measures, and informing evidence based public policy design and implementation.

Applicants must also demonstrate how their Fellowship and proposed project aligns with the Equity Fellows Program Aims and Objectives.

The Equity Fellows Program will fund Fellowships and through the Fellowships:

- identify priority equity issues that affect the Australian higher education system, and develop and facilitate approaches to address these issues
- strengthen Australia's student equity in higher education research (including applied research) quality, capability, scale, and capacity and build critical mass
- strengthen Australia's student equity in higher education practice and implementation
- enable ground breaking, robust, high-quality, and internationally competitive research that will build the peer reviewed evidence base and contribute to evidence-based policy development and practice
- facilitate interdisciplinary, collaborative approaches
- show leadership in translating high quality equity research to inform practice, and developing, implementing, enhancing, and promoting institutional evidence based best practice that improves access to and participation in higher education for people from low SES backgrounds, including people from regional, rural and remote backgrounds
- raise the profile in higher education institutions of student equity and efforts to widen participation of people from disadvantaged backgrounds
- provide a collaborative arrangement for communicating the research, experience, and knowledge of the sector to inform the department's evidence based public policy design and implementation
- establish and build on national and international partnerships and collaboration in widening participation.

The Equity Fellows Program will:

- provide an exemplary training environment and outstanding interdisciplinary mentorship program to nurture Fellows drawn from both research and practice backgrounds
- build world class capacity and capability in student equity in higher education researchers, developing Australia's next generation of research leaders
- improve the understanding of research outcomes by, and develop the research skills of, equity practitioners, developing practitioners capable of better practice leadership at a national level
- develop the skills to successfully translate and implement research outcomes to improve evidence based on the ground delivery of equity measures
- develop Fellows' understanding of the policy environment, and their effectiveness in communicating with policy makers.

Consistent the National Priorities Pool Investment Plan:

- projects that draw on cross-disciplinary methodologies and expertise (such as, but not limited to economics, econometrics, demography, and statistics), will be welcomed
- all projects must produce outcomes that can be applied nationally and/or be adopted by other universities
- all projects must have the potential to produce publications that are of sufficient quality to be accepted by a peer-reviewed journal, and/or where applicable, to produce Government commissioned reports that are robust and fit for purpose.

2 Roles and Responsibilities

2.1 National Centre for Equity in Higher Education

The role of the NCSEHE is to manage the Program. This includes:

- Organising a Fellows' Forum to facilitate dissemination and discussion of project processes and outcomes.
- Convening a Selection and Reference Committee, one of whose duties is to select the Equity Fellows (see Section 4.1 and related document);
- Entering into a funding agreement with each Fellow
- Liaising with potential applicants to provide preliminary information and advice ensuring that Fellows are supported and mentored by subject matter experts, facilitating access to cross disciplinary expertise, experienced researchers, and equity practitioners who are recognised leaders in their field at national and international levels;
- Liaising with Fellows, once selected, to negotiate and clarify the detail of specific aspects of the proposed projects (including timeline, milestones, objectives and deliverables) which includes assisting in designing an individual program for each Fellow based on individual needs covering such things as, but not limited to, research methodologies, statistical and analytical approaches, media / research communication training, understanding the policy landscape and evidence based policy formulation;
- Assisting in facilitating an expert reference group for each Fellowship Project
- Assisting in facilitating and organising secondments in the Department
- Monitoring the progress of the projects, once underway, and assisting in facilitating collaboration, consultation, and testing of the Fellow's project findings, outcomes and recommendations with the Department as required
- Supporting and disseminating the Equity Fellows' work; by review (including ensuring the report has been peer reviewed, fully proofread and edited for quality assurance) Fellows' Project Reports prior to provision to the Department to ensure that it is of sufficient maturity and quality to be accepted by a peer-reviewed journal and by Government;
- Providing the Fellow's high quality Draft Final Project Report's to the Department prior to the final submission deadline; and
- Conducting an evaluation of the outcomes of the Fellows Program.

2.2 Department of Education

The role of the Department of Education is to:

- Provide Program funding
- Manage the Conditions of Grant for delivery of the Program with the NCSEHE
- Provide guidance on the operation of the Fellowship Program
- Sit on the Selection and Reference Committee
- Host a placement of the Fellow during the period of their Fellowship
- Provide advice and feedback on the Fellows' Draft Final Project Reports.

During the placement, the Department will facilitate the Fellow's access to departmental personnel, and provide general IT access, building access and a physical place of work in the Department. Whenever possible, the Department will also facilitate access to relevant departmental data.

While the Fellow is on placement the Department will be responsible for Occupational Health & Safety. Workers compensation insurance will continue to be provided by the Fellow's home institution.

2.3 Fellow's Home Institution

The role of the Fellow's home institution is to support the application and, if it is successful, to support the Fellowship. The home institution will be required to enter into two formal agreements — one with the NCSEHE and one with the Department. The agreement with the NCSEHE will cover funding and milestones that are to be achieved in the project. The agreement with the Department will cover the details of the placement. The home university will receive funds from the NCSEHE and will be responsible for payments to the Fellow and normal employee arrangements.

3 Conditions

3.1 Eligibility and Nomination Process

Equity Fellowships are open to individuals from both research and equity practice backgrounds.

Individuals who are employed by an eligible higher education institution may nominate for an Equity Fellowship. A list of eligible higher education institutions is available on the NCSEHE website. Nominees must have the strong support of their home institution.

Nominees for an Equity Fellowship should propose a project that supports the aim and objectives of the Equity Fellows Program, as set out in Section 1.

Potential applicants are encouraged to liaise with the NCSEHE (<https://www.ncsehe.edu.au/>) and visit the publications list of previous Equity Fellows (<https://www.ncsehe.edu.au/project/equity-fellows-program/>) and the HEPNP National Priorities Pool publications resource (<https://www.ncsehe.edu.au/project/>) to investigate any potential synergies or possible collaboration with existing Programs, and to avoid duplication.

Previous recipients of an Equity Fellowship are ineligible to apply for a second Fellowship.

3.2 Departmental Placement

A requirement of the Program is that each Equity Fellow spends a period of time within the Australian Government Department of Education in Canberra. The purpose of this placement is to facilitate knowledge transfer and to enhance the ties and understanding between the higher education sector and the Department.

During the placement, the Fellow will work with the branch of the Department of Education responsible for equity in higher education. The Fellow is expected to be a source of advice and knowledge transfer for the staff of the Branch and other staff, particularly those in the higher education and related areas.

The placement is also intended to provide an opportunity for the Fellow to improve their understanding of the policy environment, processes and practices of the Department.

The length of the placement, work schedule, and pattern of attendance will be negotiated with each Fellow although it is envisaged that the placement will be conducted in a single block of time.

The Fellow's home university and the Department will enter a formal agreement covering the details of the placement.

3.3 Selection Criteria

Criterion	Detail	Weight
<p>Alignment with the aims and objectives of the Equity Fellows Program</p>	<p>1. The extent to which the proposed project demonstrates alignment with the aims and objectives of the Equity Fellows Program <u>as outlined in section 1</u> of the document <i>including</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. focus on priority equity issues that affect the Australian higher education system, (noting that there is some dedicated Fellowship funding for regional and remote issues) and approaches to address these issues b. capability to strengthen Australia's student equity in higher education research (including applied research) quality, capability, scale, and capacity c. capacity for high-quality, and internationally competitive research that will build the peer reviewed evidence base and contribute to evidence-based policy development and practice d. capacity to strengthen Australia's student equity in higher education practice and implementation e. contribution to leadership in translating high quality equity research to inform practice, and developing, implementing, enhancing, and promoting institutional evidence based best practice. 	<p>30%</p>
<p>Capacity of the applicant to play a continuing, significant leadership role in equity in higher education research and practice</p>	<p>2. The nominee's demonstrated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. standing, and academic and/or professional track record relative to opportunity b. record of leadership in research, equity practice and/or policy, or both, relative to opportunity c. capacity for development and potential career trajectory d. capacity to make a significant ongoing leadership contribution at a national level to equity in higher education research and practice 	<p>30%</p>

Demonstrated impact of the Fellowship	3. Demonstrated: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. significance and scale of the equity issues identified b. potential value to the sector of the proposed activities, knowledge gain, and knowledge transfer c. viability of the activities and the proposed methodology for achieving the planned outputs and impact d. capacity of the proposed project to generate influence and sector-wide impact particularly through interdisciplinary training, collaboration, and mentoring e. potential for outcomes that can be applied nationally and/or be adopted by other universities f. potential to produce publications that are of sufficient quality to be accepted by a peer-reviewed journal 	20%
Value for money	4. The extent to which the proposed Fellowship project achieves value with public money and delivers outcomes commensurate with, or exceeding, the level of investment, considering the: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. outcomes of the Fellowship proposal in relation to the amount of funding sought b. extent to which the proposed budget is appropriate, clearly justified, and transparent. c. demonstrated potential to achieve the project outcomes in a high quality and cost-effective manner. 	20%

3.4 Use of Fellowship Funding

The Fellowship funding is provided to cover:

- the relinquishing by the Fellow of all normal institutional duties during the period of the Fellowship (normally expected to be 12 months' full-time equivalent, but subject to negotiation of some flexibility and timing, depending on individual circumstances);
- on costs associated with the Fellow's normal salary level;
- resources if required in relation to the specific project to be undertaken;
- travel and accommodation expenses to cover the period of placement with the Department, and travel nationally or internationally as appropriate to the project; and
- attendance at meetings convened by the NCSEHE.

3.5 Reporting and Accountability

Throughout the project, the Equity Fellow will provide to the Selection and Reference Committee, via the NCSEHE, progress reports linked to the milestones of the project.

At the conclusion of the project, the Fellow will provide to the NCSEHE a final report setting out, in full, the activities undertaken during the Fellowship, the outcomes, the impact, and any materials generated.

The final report produced by the Fellow will be reviewed externally before it is published on the NCSEHE website and made publicly available.

Fellows will also provide any publications and materials produced, electronically and in other appropriate formats. Report submission dates will be negotiated with the successful Fellows and recorded in the funding agreement.

Fellows will also be required to give a short report of their placement to the Department.

3.6 Payment

Payments will be made to the home institution in two instalments, one upon execution of the funding agreement (80%) and one on acceptance of the final report (20%). The institution will be responsible for making payments to the Fellow.

4 Selection and Nomination Information

4.1 The Selection Process

The Selection and Reference Committee will review all Equity Fellows Program nominations and select Fellows in accordance with the Selection Criteria set out in Section 3.3. The Selection and Reference Committee comprises a Chair nominated by the NCSEHE, a senior member of the Department and three external members of the higher education sector familiar with the requirements of the HEPPP.

Shortlisted nominees will be invited for an interview with the Selection and Reference Committee, which may take place in person or by telephone. The cost of any travel required to attend an interview will be covered by the NCSEHE.

The final selection of an Equity Fellow rests with the Selection and Reference Committee. Bearing in mind the competitive merit based nature of the program the Selection and Reference Committee reserves the right not to make an appointment if a suitable candidate is not found or to invite applications.

The successful Equity Fellows will be expected to commence in January 2020 or as negotiated in the contract.

4.2 Nomination Instructions

Nomination instructions and the required form are provided in the Application document.

4.3 Lodgement and Processing

Please email your application to ncsehe@curtin.edu.au by 5pm (WST time) **Friday 20 September 2019**.

4.4 Receipt of Nominations

Receipt of all nominations will be acknowledged by email to the nominee, signatory of the institution's letter of support and institutional contact officer.

Equity Fellows Program Application Process

The Equity Fellows Program application must contain a description of the proposed Fellowship rationale, activities, outputs and impact.

The application must include:

- ✓ A nomination cover page, using the *pro forma* provided.
- ✓ A brief covering letter from the nominee.
- ✓ Three pages addressing the issue/s to be examined during the Fellowship, including a broad outline of the proposed program of activities, with a draft timeline showing periods of time at the Department of Education (“the Department”), budget, aims and deliverables, using the Timeline & Fellowship Outputs table provided. (NB: budget rounded to the nearest \$1,000 and excluding GST). It should include provision for time release and travel costs, including travel costs associated with attending Selection and Reference Committee meetings including the Fellow’s Forum and any sectoral engagement activities proposed.)
- ✓ Two pages addressing the selection criteria (refer to section 3.3 of the Equity Fellow Program Guidelines).
- ✓ A one to two page letter of support from the nominee’s home institution which endorses the nomination and how the Fellow will be supported by the institution. This letter would normally be from the Vice- Chancellor or delegate.
- ✓ A copy of the nominee’s curriculum vitae (no page limit), including a high resolution (digital) photograph and summary page.
- ✓ The names and contact details of two referees. Please note that references are not to be included with the nomination.

The proposed Fellows project must include:

- ✓ A period of time during which the nominee will spend with/in the Department’s Canberra office (duration to be negotiated).
- ✓ The submission of interim and final report as specified in the contract with the NCSEHE.
- ✓ Provision for attendance and presentation of the project at a Fellow’s Forum to be held in **November 2020**.

The three pages addressing the project/issues must include:

- ✓ A discussion of the issue/s to be addressed. Please draw on other Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program (HEPPP) / National Priorities Pool/ Office of Learning & Teaching / Discovery/ Early Career Research Award projects if appropriate.
- ✓ Rationale for the issues to be investigated, capacity to deal with the subject matter, and readiness and ability to undertake the Fellowship.
- ✓ A plan of activities to address the issue/s.
- ✓ An approach to identifying and involving other scholars and practitioners
- ✓ An explanation of the expertise to be shared with the Department.
- ✓ The intended outputs from the Fellowship, including a strategy for embedding these outputs and achieving impact.
- ✓ The strategy for profile-building and dissemination of Fellowship output.
- ✓ An outline of the evaluation of the work to be undertaken.
- ✓ A detailed timeline, including an explanation of any concurrent academic activities to be undertaken during the period of the Fellowship.

Nomination Checklist:

- Nomination cover page using the *pro forma* provided.
- Nominee's covering letter.
- Three pages addressing the issue/s to be examined, including:
 - a broad outline of the proposed program of activities
 - a draft timeline (see Timeline & Fellowship Outputs table) showing periods of work and attendance at the Department
 - budget (rounded to the nearest \$1,000 and excluding GST)
 - aims and deliverables.
- Two pages addressing the selection criteria.
- A letter of support from the nominee's home institution.
- The nominee's curriculum vitae (no page limit) and summary page.
- A high resolution (digital) photograph.
- Names and contact details of two referees.

2019-2020 Equity Fellows Program Nomination Form

Nominee Contact Details

Title	
First Name	
Last Name	
Position	
Faculty / Organisational Unit	
Institution	
Institution's Postal Address	
Email Address	
Telephone Number	

Proposed Fellowship Details

Project Title	
Abstract of Proposed Fellowship (Max. 160 words)	
Alignment with the objectives of the Equity Fellowship Program (Max. 300 words)	
Research Focus (Please use key words)	
Educational Issue(s) to be Addressed (Please use key words)	

Equity Fellows Program Privacy Notice

We must comply with the Australian Privacy Principles ('APPs') contained in the *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)* when handling all personal information provided for nomination purposes.

Collection of Personal Information

As part of the nomination process, the National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education (NCSEHE) collects the personal information provided in the Equity Fellows Program nomination documentation.

How We Use Personal Information

Personal information is collected to assess eligibility for a Fellowship, and to undertake statistical analysis in relation to the Equity Fellowship Program. We will also use this information to:

- maintain an ongoing relationship with nominees, and / or
- invite nominees to relevant events and programs.

Privacy Consent

By nominating for an Equity Fellowship, the applicant acknowledges and consents to the NCSEHE disclosing their personal information to others. The NCSEHE may also publish successful nominees' personal information (including photo provided; excluding telephone contact details) in media releases, presentations, and any promotional materials on the NCSEHE website.

The NCSEHE will not use or disclose personal information for any other purpose unless permitted by the *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)*.

The Equity Fellows and their respective institutions will be required to enter into an agreement with the NCSEHE. The conditions of funding will be specified in the agreement. The agreement will specify the outcomes of the Fellowship to be achieved, the payment arrangements, conditions of the funding including financial and performance reporting requirements, requirements regarding variation to agreements, acquittal of funding and other related issues.

Ahead of the Fellows' placements with the Department of Education ("the Department"), Fellows' home institutions will be required to enter into an agreement with the Department. The agreement will specify the length of the placement, work schedule, and pattern of attendance.

Nominee's Declaration

I nominate as an Equity Fellow and agree to the terms and conditions of the Fellowship.

I confirm that I have read, acknowledge and accept the Privacy Notice and Privacy Consent in this form.

Signature		Date	
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Head of Faculty's / Organisational Unit's Support for Nomination and Authorisation

I support this nomination on the basis of the attached documentation. I undertake to support this nominee in the activities associated with the Fellowship in accordance with the attached statement of institutional support.

I confirm that the information above is true and correct and that the nominee named on this form is currently a staff member of this institution.

I confirm that I have read, acknowledge and accept the Privacy Notice and Privacy Consent in this form.

Position			
Faculty/ Organisational Unit			
Signature		Date	

Vice-Chancellor's / Chief Executive Officer's Declaration

I support this nomination on the basis of the attached documentation. I undertake to support this nominee in the activities associated with the Fellowship in accordance with the attached statement of institutional support.

I confirm that the information above is true and correct and that the nominee named on this form is currently a staff member of this institution.

I confirm that I have read, acknowledge and accept the Privacy Notice in this form.

Name			
Institution			
Signature		Date	

Details of Institutional Contact Officer for Fellowships

Name			
Position			
Email address			
Telephone		Fax	