

# 2026 GUIDELINES

## VICE-CHANCELLOR'S EARLY CAREER RESEARCHER OF THE YEAR

OFFICE OF THE DVCRE  
MAY 2026

The *Vice-Chancellor's Early Career Researcher of the Year Award* is designed to reward excellence by early career researchers who have achieved, or are currently achieving, exceptional research excellence and impact. The award celebrates the success of our up and coming research talent. Applicants may wish to demonstrate their contribution to Monash University's strategic plan, including but not limited to the following areas of achievements: international collaborations, external funding, awards/ prizes, interdisciplinary research, Indigenous leadership in research, challenge-led/ mission-oriented research, and research culture.

The Vice-Chancellor's Research and Enterprise Excellence Awards are among Monash University's most prestigious honours for outstanding research staff at all levels. Awards include:

- Vice-Chancellor's Early Career Researcher of the Year Award (HASS and STEM; one award in each area)
- Vice-Chancellor's Researcher of the Year Award (HASS and STEM; one award in each area)
- Vice-Chancellor's Research Professional of the Year Award
- Vice-Chancellor's Research Team of the Year Award (HASS and STEM; one award in each area)
- Vice-Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Research Infrastructure
- Vice-Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Enterprising Research
- Vice-Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Research Commercialisation
- Vice-Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Research Engagement and Impact
- Vice-Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Graduate Research Supervision (HASS and STEM; one award in each area)

The Vice-Chancellor's Research and Enterprise Excellence Awards give university-wide accolades and profiles for individual research staff, their teams, faculty and projects, as well as broader recognition of their achievements.

Winners are announced and will receive their award from the Vice-Chancellor at the Vice-Chancellor's Excellence Awards event.

## 2026 KEY DATES

Activity	Date
Vice-Chancellor's Research and Enterprise Excellence Awards guidelines released.	21 May
<b>Nominations open.</b>	<b>12 June</b>
<b>Nominations due.</b>	<b>14 August</b>
Endorsement from Dean/ Head of organisational unit.	August
Nominations considered by the selection panel/s and recommendations made to the Vice-Chancellor and President.	August/ September
<b>Winners announced at the Vice-Chancellor's Excellence Awards event.</b>	<b>23 November</b>

## TERMS OF AWARD

The award recipient(s) will receive a trophy and certificate(s) from the Vice-Chancellor and President during the Vice-Chancellor's Excellence Awards event on 23 November.

# EARLY CAREER RESEARCHER OF THE YEAR AWARD CRITERIA

## ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The following criteria apply to this award:

1. To be eligible to apply for the Vice-Chancellor's Early Career Researcher of the Year Award, you must be:
  - a. A Monash University employee with a substantive appointment within a faculty or sub-faculty with a nomination endorsed by the Dean (usually the recipient of the current year's equivalent faculty award) (pathway 1)\*\*; or
  - b. A Monash University employee without a substantive appointment within a home faculty with a nomination endorsed by the Head of organisational unit (pathway 2)\*\*.
2. Continuously employed by Monash University for at least twelve months at the time of nomination.
3. Previous winners of current or past iterations of the award are eligible to apply, provided they can demonstrate distinct, significant achievements.
4. Previous commendation recipients of current or past iterations of the award are eligible to apply, provided they can demonstrate evidence of substantial progress since their last nomination.
5. The definition of an Early Career Researcher for this award is an academic staff member who
  - a. has been awarded a PhD or equivalent research qualification **on or after 1 January 2021**, or
  - b. who has the equivalent of no more than **five** cumulative years of research experience, allowing for career interruptions arising from professional or personal matters.

Significant career interruptions resulting from the following will be considered:

  - maternity or parental leave;
  - carer's responsibility;
  - illness;
  - non-research employment (not exceeding three years).
6. Applicants must be meeting the relevant faculty-defined research performance expectations for their level and/or receive approval from the Associate Dean Research (or equivalent) for their nomination.

If applicable, relevant circumstances will be taken into consideration and achievement will be assessed relative to opportunity. Please see the Achievement Relative to Opportunity [website](#) for more information and examples of relevant circumstances.

*\*\* Nominations must be endorsed by the Dean (for Pathway 1) or the Head of organisational unit (for Pathway 2). However, nominees are no longer required to upload a written endorsement with the nomination form. Following submission, the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise) will forward the nominations to the relevant Dean or Head of organisational unit for endorsement.*

*Note, Academic staff who are currently subject to formal disciplinary, misconduct or performance management processes, or who have had a disciplinary action outcome, or have been found in breach of the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research within the past 24 months, are ineligible to receive a Research and Enterprise Excellence Award.*

## SELECTION CRITERIA

Applicants will be assessed on the information provided in their nomination submission.

### 1. Demonstrated Research Excellence and/or Impact

Applicants must demonstrate that they have achieved exceptional levels of sustained research excellence and/or impact. The Vice-Chancellor's Early Career Researcher of the Year Award is based on research and impact achievements over the past two to five years.

This could include Scholarly, Sectoral and/or Societal Impact.

Excellence and scholarly impact, for example:

- Research publications that are independently assessed as being of high quality, leading to knowledge impact;
- Demonstrated originality/quality of research;
- Quality supervision of HDR students as evidenced by completions, completion rates, or publications arising from student co-authored publications;
- Interdisciplinary research collaborations with Monash and other universities;
- Invited talks and keynotes from scholarly organisations.

Sectoral impact, for example:

- Interdisciplinary research collaborations;
- Uplifting capability of partners;
- Systems changes;
- Research-to-policy changes;
- Adoption of research findings by sectoral partners or groups;
- Peer recognition by invitations to speak at non-academic conferences or meetings of learned bodies.

Societal impact, for example:

- Research that has had verifiable benefit for communities and/or wider society (demonstrated via quantitative or qualitative means).

### 2. Research Role Model

The skills, qualities, values and approaches that the nominee demonstrates.

## DEFINITIONS

### Challenge-led/ mission-oriented research<sup>1</sup>

Challenge-led, mission-oriented research endeavours are characterised by their inherent complexity and transdisciplinary nature, which pose significant hurdles to their realisation. They build on and extend fundamental, curiosity-driven, discovery research models.

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<sup>1</sup> French, M. A., Pinyon, Z., Emes, K., Ryan, M., Georgiou-Karistianis, N., Jasieniak, J., and Brown, R. R. (2024) University-led mission-oriented research and innovation: A Framework for catalysing large-scale transdisciplinary research. Monash University; Melbourne, Australia.

# VICE-CHANCELLOR'S RESEARCH AND ENTERPRISE EXCELLENCE AWARD PROCESS

## NOMINATION PATHWAYS

### Nomination Pathway 1

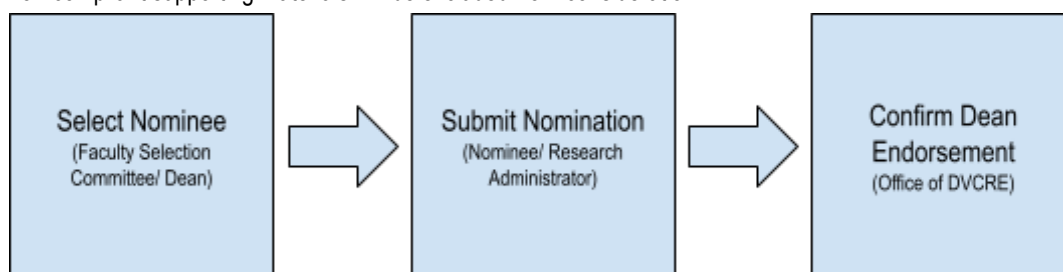
Most University employees are nominated to a home faculty.

In these instances, the nominee/s for a Vice-Chancellor's Research and Enterprise Excellence Award must participate in their home faculty's Research Award process (Pathway 1)\*\*.

This usually involves receiving the equivalent faculty award. However, this is not a requirement and deans can make nominations directly to each of the Vice-Chancellor's Research and Enterprise Excellence Award categories.

The Dean's endorsement confirms that the nominees meet the award's eligibility criteria, including compliance with disciplinary/ performance and ethics and integrity criteria.

Where applicable, nominations may include a one-page supporting document, this must contain one hyperlink only. Non-compliant supporting materials will be excluded from consideration.

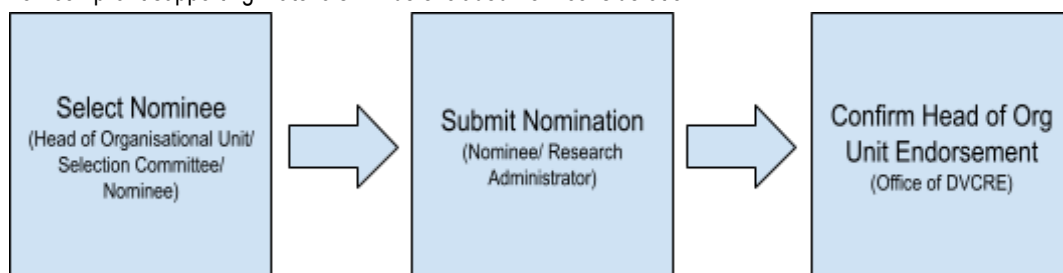


### Nomination Pathway 2

If the nominee/s are based outside of a faculty, nominations to the Vice-Chancellor's Research and Enterprise Excellence Awards require endorsement from the Head of organisational unit (Pathway 2)\*\*.

The Head of organisational unit's endorsement confirms that the nominees meet the award's eligibility criteria, including compliance with disciplinary/ performance and ethics and integrity criteria.

Where applicable, nominations may include a one-page supporting document, this must contain one hyperlink only. Non-compliant supporting materials will be excluded from consideration.



**\*\* Nominations must be endorsed by the Dean (for Pathway 1) or the Head of organisational unit (for Pathway 2). However, nominees are no longer required to upload a written endorsement with the nomination form. Following submission, the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise) will forward the nominations to the relevant Dean or Head of organisational unit for endorsement.**

**Note: Only one nomination per category for each organisational unit will be accepted. The number of nominations is limited at a portfolio and sub-faculty levels (e.g. DVCRE Portfolio, COO Portfolio, Sub-Faculty of Translational Medicine and Public Health) for non-faculty organisational units. For nominations from the Faculty of Medicine that sit outside of a Sub-Faculty, this will be considered a separate organisational unit for the purposes of the Awards.**

*Note: To provide clarity regarding nominations from the Faculty of Medicine, endorsement will be provided by the Executive Dean, in line with the timeframes and requirements of other faculties. However, nominations from each Sub-Faculty will first be submitted to the relevant Sub-Faculty Dean for endorsement, via an internal process to be determined by the Faculty of Medicine.*

*Note: Nominations from Monash University Malaysia (MUM) staff members proceed to a check by MUM HR prior to proceeding to the selection process. Additionally, MUM and Monash University Indonesia (MU) nominees will need a dual approval from their respective campus president and their relevant organisational leader or Dean.*

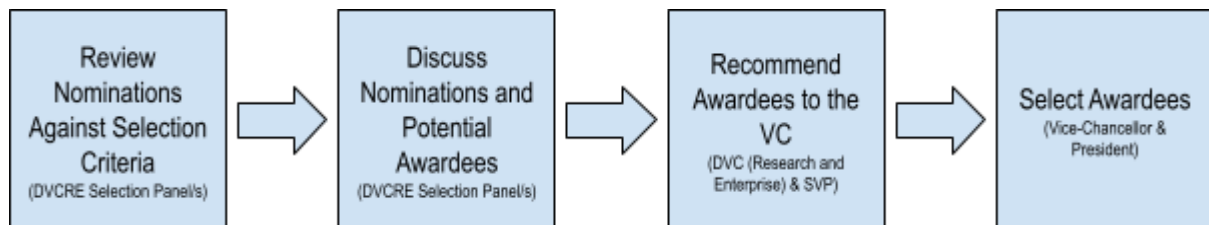
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## SELECTION PROCESS

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise) convenes a selection panel/s to assess each application against the selection criteria.

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise) then recommends to the Vice-Chancellor recipients for the Research and Enterprise Excellence Awards.

Then the Vice-Chancellor selects recipients for each category.



## Further information

Monash University  
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Clayton, Victoria 3800  
Australia

E: [OfficeODVCRE@monash.edu](mailto:OfficeODVCRE@monash.edu)

*\*For advice on whether or not a researcher has a substantive appointment within a home faculty, please contact your HR Business Partner or you may find this information on the researcher's employment contract.*

[monash.edu.au](http://monash.edu.au)