



GRIFFITH BEACONS GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS

1. Beacons Overview and Intent

Griffith Beacons seek to leverage our expertise to deliver impactful outcomes and thought leadership in response to some of society's most complex and consequential problems, through innovative interdisciplinary research. They are intended to give Griffith a competitive edge in a thematic area of research.

Griffith has a long history of delivering high quality, collaborative research that helps to define and tackle issues of significance. Griffith Beacons will build upon that foundation and amplify our ability and commitment to tackle problems of great consequence locally and globally, building future research capacity in the process.

Our Beacons will create diverse, agile teams that draw together the strengths and perspectives of a range of disciplines and partnerships to undertake leading-edge, outcomes-focused research programs. They will raise the profile and reputation of Griffith research and form highly visible instances of the public value that we deliver through our expertise and partnerships. They will also inform the development of distinctive interdisciplinary course offerings that are attractive to prospective students, adding to our reputation.

The intention of this initiative is not to replace existing structures, but rather to draw researchers together from across the University to engage in thematically coherent, interdisciplinary programs of work. While the Beacons are driven primarily by a research agenda, they will also offer opportunities to develop teaching and engagement activities related to their foci.

Further, Beacons are intended to be distinct from Centres & Institutes and not merely augment their activities.

Substantial, multi-year strategic investment will provide support for Griffith researchers to embark on ground-breaking research to tackle some of the world's pressing problems. The intent is not to simply add additional funds to what is already being done at Griffith. The investment is intended to stimulate new conversations and collaborations, by drawing researchers together from across the University in response to some of society's most complex and consequential problems. Importantly, this platform will support the creation of meaningful and enduring partnerships with external organizations – facilitating the impact and sustainability of Beacons well beyond the initial period of seed funding.

2. Attributes of Griffith Beacons

Griffith Beacons will focus upon and tackle some of the most important and complex problems facing our communities, nation and world. Effectively addressing these challenges will typically require bringing together teams that draw upon expertise and ideas from many spheres and disciplines. Griffith Beacons will be sufficiently wide to be flexible and allow for multi-disciplinary engagement but not so broad as to be meaningless. The higher-level themes that are ultimately selected as Griffith Beacons will be readily identified internationally.

Beacons will demonstrate the following attributes:

- **Significance in impact, scale and reach.** The challenges to be addressed through Beacons should be of a complexity and scale that cannot readily be addressed through our existing structures and support mechanisms. Griffith Beacons should be articulated from the outset in terms of what will be delivered and the measurable benefits to be realized. From design to delivery, the demonstrable impact to be delivered through the operation of the Beacon should be a defining feature.
- **Alignment & distinctiveness.** Beacons should align with and leverage existing research strengths at Griffith, especially where we can bring to bear distinctive capabilities, resources and strategic assets to deliver innovative approaches and outcomes. Typically, we would anticipate engagement of research teams that transcend Group, Institute and Centre structures and that will draw out specific strategic advantages afforded through Griffith's research community. Beacons will comprise researchers with demonstrated capacity to deliver high-quality outcomes and, either at inception or through operation, will attract new expertise.
- **Interdisciplinarity.** The approach to outcomes delivery through the Beacons will draw upon and build the capacity, profile and reputation of more than one field of research, by leveraging diverse perspectives

and methodologies. Beacons will cross Academic Group 'boundaries' to assemble diverse disciplines, oriented around a large problem that has both a societal impact and the potential to make contributions to individual fields of research. High quality interdisciplinary research is grounded in deep disciplinary expertise.

- **Diversity.** In addition to relevant discipline diversity, solutions delivered via the Beacons will draw upon diversity of researchers in terms of backgrounds, genders and career stages. The commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion should be explicit, with clear goals and actions with respect to gender, sexuality, indigenous populations, racialized populations, and persons with disabilities. By their nature, Griffith Beacons are also a vehicle for researcher development and capacity building through training, mentoring and support. PhD candidates will be an integral part of each program; a commitment to research training will be inherent and Beacons will employ mechanisms to develop a cohort approach to postgraduate researchers. Beacons will also encourage mobility, particularly the engagement of high caliber international visiting researchers.
- **Interconnection with education.** Just as the Beacons will draw upon our distinctive research expertise, they will also map onto diverse aspects of our teaching programs. They should engage Griffith students in innovative ways. In formulating each of the Griffith Beacons, we aim to build long term capabilities and creative solutions. Opportunities should be identified to integrate aspects of the programs with curriculum and/or provide experiential learning opportunities for undergraduate and/or postgraduate students.
- **Engagement of external partners and collaborators.** The types of issues that Beacons are envisaged to address cannot be solved in isolation. Engagement through both new and established partnerships, collaborators and networks will enhance capability and profile, while also affording more effective knowledge translation pathways. There should be strong external partnerships as an intrinsic part of each Griffith Beacon, with priority given to proposed Beacons that can demonstrate industry, government, community and international linkages.
- **Sustainability through co-investment.** Griffith pump-priming support for Beacons will be for 5 years – a timeline to ensure significant progress can be made, recognizing the scale and complexity of the problems that they address. There will be no recurrent funding beyond the initial support period. Priority areas for this support will need to demonstrate capacity to generate income that will help to leverage these funds within the initial five years, to build relationships and to sustain this effort over a longer period of time (via grants, philanthropy, industry and government support), irrespective of where within Griffith those funds are administered.
- **Outstanding leadership and governance.** Highly effective leadership of each Griffith Beacon will be central to their success and as such, both the academic standing and demonstrated experience in leading large, complex initiatives will factor into assessment of proposals. The structure and composition of the leadership team as a collective will be considered. The named leader of Griffith Beacons could be drawn from existing senior researchers within the University or proposals may seek to fill this role through targeted recruitment of internationally recognized leaders in the appropriate field(s). Each Griffith Beacon would also be expected to establish an international advisory board.

3. Assessment Criteria

The assessment process is outlined in Section 7 below.

Assessment will consider **the alignment of proposals with the Attributes of Griffith Beacons**, as described above, in terms of the following:

- A compelling view of the problems to be tackled;
- The specific, measurable outcomes that would be delivered and associated KPIs;
- The demonstrable capability that would be assembled to deliver those outcomes;
- The distinctive aspects that make Griffith the place from which this work should be led;
- Proposed leadership and governance;
- High level budget and financial overview;
- External partner organisations targeted for funding together with probability of funding based on prior track records; and
- Pathway to leverage seed funding and to secure continuation/ sustainability beyond the initial 5-years.

4. Griffith Beacon Leader and Members

Each application will include the named leader of the Griffith Beacon who is expected to be drawn from existing senior researchers within the University or through targeted recruitment of internationally recognized leaders in the appropriate field(s). The Beacon Leader is expected to devote at least 80% of their time to the Beacon and aligned research.

There is a need for proposals to demonstrate authentic collaboration and interdisciplinarity in their approach to the problems identified under the Beacon theme, and to be outward looking, including external collaborators and partners. As such, each application must include a diverse, cross-Group team who will demonstrate truly collaborative interdisciplinary approaches to the problems to be tackled. A significant core of essential Griffith researchers with demonstrated alignment with the selection criteria will be required. Endorsement by the relevant Group PVCs is required for each of the named key participants.

Beacon membership is not intended to replace Research Centre/Institute membership.

5. Measurable Outcomes

In their operation as outcomes-focused initiatives, there is a high-performance expectation of Griffith Beacons. Measures would be diverse, including but not limited to:

- influential outputs
 - such as invited submissions to key decision-making bodies, publications in high esteem outlets, highly cited journal articles etc.;
- creation of new avenues for influence
 - new alliances and partnerships formed, establishment of policy development roles, major thought leadership etc.;
- the attraction of research income and infrastructure investments
 - with a specific view towards leveraging seed funding and to ensuring the sustainability of the Beacon beyond 5 years; and
- translation of outcomes
 - such as demonstrable changes in policy and/or practice; stakeholder uptake of a delivered output; savings through interventions; distinctive course offerings to a large number of Griffith students etc.

6. Funding and Eligible Expenditure

The University will invest between \$750k – \$1m per year for 5 years in support of each Griffith Beacon. There is no single model proposed for delivery under the Griffith Beacons initiative and significant flexibility is allowed for in deployment of budget to support achievement of the goals of this program.

It is expected that participants will use the leverage created by the Beacon funding to draw in further external support. Known additional support from other sources should be identified.

Griffith University contributions in support of Beacons may be made up of a combination of salary support, including HDR Scholarships and Postdoctoral Fellowships. Beacon alignment will also be considered in competitive applications for HDR Scholarships and Postdoctoral Fellowships in normal competitive rounds.

Griffith Beacon support will provide for the leader's salary and may contribute to release of a proportion of time for the leadership team to fulfil their obligations; in general, the central contribution will not be used to offset researchers' salaries. Participants' time will be part of the Groups' commitment to the Beacon (relevant approvals must be obtained for any participant's time commitment to the Beacon that goes beyond their normal research allocation – including, where appropriate, agreement of support for teaching relief).

It is not anticipated that Beacons investment would be used to leverage additional Griffith cash contributions.

Management and administrative support should be included to ensure the efficient and effective operation of the Beacon and a level of business and development support should also be factored into the proposal.

The following are eligible types of expenditure:

Personnel

- 6.1 The salary of the Beacon Leader can be requested, consistent with their current level of remuneration.
- 6.2 Teaching relief for key Beacon Members.
- 6.3 Postdoctoral Fellowships – at a minimum level of Research Fellow 1.4 including oncosts (See <https://www.griffith.edu.au/staff/human-resources/pay-conditions-and-benefits/salary-rates-and-payroll-information>)
- 6.4 PhD Scholarships and/or top ups
 - Based on the appropriate stipend rate.
 - Scholarship applicants to be assessed as eligible for scholarship (HIE) in order to be allocated a ring fenced GUPRS/GUIPRS scholarship in a normal scholarship round.
- 6.5 Administrative support.

Travel and Operating

- 6.6 Costs to engage with national and international partners, including where necessary travel (consistent with Griffith University travel policies).
- 6.7 Operational funds, including the development of the Beacon website development and communication plan and costs associated with the public launch.

It is not intended that funding will be provided for Beacons to establish a “shopfront” or physical presence. Instead, the Academic Groups from which Beacon Members are drawn will be expected to support their researchers’ involvement in Beacons by providing office space and laboratory (as required), computing and general office support as normally provided to academic staff and the normal financial and operational support for PhD students.

Significant equipment costs will be considered where no other funding source is available, and the investment will enable a step-change in research capabilities.

7. Assessment Process

A three-stage process will be used to identify and award funding support for the Beacons

Stage 1 will entail the Submission of Notices of Intent (NOI’s) to the Office for Research. Subject to the range and nature of submissions received, initial review of submissions by the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research) and Deans (Research) may lead to proposed realignments and/or mergers to achieve synergies. A subset of up to a maximum of six applications will be chosen to proceed to Stage 2 – development of the full proposal.

Stage 2 – Full Proposal. Members of the proposing team may be invited in for a discussion as part of the process either alone or with members of other teams. The input of internal and/or external advice may also be requested by the DVCR and Deans (Research) group, as required. The final list of proposals will be recommended to proceed to Stage 3.

Stage 3 – The University’s Executive Group will assess the short-listed submissions relative to the attributes of Griffith Beacons and award support for Griffith Beacons. Members of the proposing team may be invited in for a discussion as part of the process either alone or with members of other teams. The Executive Group may draw upon internal and/or external advice, as required.

It is expected that 2 Griffith Beacons will be approved in 2020, for commencement in 2021.

8. How to Apply, Closing Dates and Outcomes

Submissions are to be prepared on the Template provided. The guidelines and template form are available from the Office for Research website at:

<https://www.griffith.edu.au/research/research-services/research-grants/funding-opportunities/internal-grants>

A separate Research Grant Application Cover sheet is not required.

Applications are to be emailed to D.Garklavs@griffith.edu.au by 5pm on the deadline.

Closing date and timeline

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| Release of Guidelines | Last week of April 2020 |
| <i>NOI's submitted to Office for Research</i> | 15 July 2020 |
| Shortlisting of proposals to proceed to full applications. | mid August 2020 |
| <i>Submission of full proposals</i> | 15 October, 2020 |
| Assessment by Executive Group completed | mid November, 2020 |
| Notification of outcome | End November, 2020 |
| Submission of Operational Plan (Milestone 1) | 5 February 2021 |
| Approval of Operational Plan by Executive Group | By end of February 2021 |
| Public Launch | To be negotiated |

Office for Research Contact: Daina Garklavs (x 57380 or D.Garklavs@griffith.edu.au)

9. Conditions of Award

Key Initial Milestone

The first milestone for the Griffith Beacon will be to submit to Executive Group for approval a detailed proposal for the operation of the Beacon by 15 January 2021. This will be achieved by bringing together confirmed and prospective key participants and partners and with assistance from the research development and/or business development team undertake a fuller environment scan to confirm the distinctive foci of the Beacon; develop the detailed research program; define key milestones and associated measures of success, identify other potential partners, refine the budget and its justification; agree on the final leadership structure that aligns with the goals of the Beacon; and identify the proposed advisory board composition.

Progress and review

While multi-year funding will be approved for these initiatives, annual continuation will be subject to satisfactory progress against a research plan and agreed milestones. Formal review of Griffith Beacons will be undertaken annually by a panel convened by the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research) and will include a combination of written progress and outcomes report, financial report and interview of the leadership team.

Submission of an annual Operational Plan and a progress, or final report, and financial report for the preceding year will be required by 1 March each year, reporting against the approved research plan and milestones.

Annual reports and recommendations to continue support will, be considered by the Research Committee, with recommendations to the Vice Chancellor.

10. Privacy Statement

Griffith University collects, stores and uses personal information only for the purposes of administering the Griffith Beacons Program, assessing grant applications and reporting to University senior management. The information collected will not be disclosed to third parties without your consent, except to meet government, legal or other regulatory authority requirements. For further information consult the University's Privacy Plan at <http://www.griffith.edu.au/about-griffith/plans-publications/griffith-university-privacy-plan>.