



Griffith
UNIVERSITY

GRIFFITH SPOTLIGHTS
GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS

1. Spotlights Overview and Intent

Griffith University strives to have greater research impact globally. This will require support for some audacious research ideas. Coalescence of critical research expertise to support or refute a novel concept or to inform policy or technology development in a reasonable time frame is a worthy goal. Griffith Spotlights will contribute to delivery of the Griffith Research & Innovation Plan (2021-2025) by investing in courageous research ideas.

Griffith Spotlights will promote a strong culture of cutting-edge research across the University by supporting interdisciplinary projects that build capacity and reputation in areas of emerging strength. The full spectrum of interdisciplinarity will be allowed, from limited to extensive disciplinary overlap. Applications are welcome from all disciplines.

Distinct from Griffith Beacons, Spotlights will support a range of activities ranging from nurturing emerging ideas to opportunities for knowledge mobilization. A common theme will be that they bring together diverse, agile teams that build on the expertise and perspectives of a range of disciplines to undertake leading-edge, bold research that pushes the boundaries in fundamental or applied knowledge. An element of risk will be tolerated. Spotlights will provide proof of principle results or critical seed findings – with a clear path to enabling future success in competitive, external grant schemes and/or to establishing substantial research partnerships with external organisations.

The intention of this initiative is not to replace existing structures. The two-year strategic investment will provide support for Griffith researchers to embrace new collaborations, pursue unprecedented ideas, develop new areas of strength for the University, and establish the framework for future growth and external funding.

2. Qualities of Griffith Spotlights

Spotlights will demonstrate the following qualities:

- ***Innovative and original.***
 - There should be a unique aspect or creative element to each Spotlight's approach that challenges convention or changes the narrative for the greater good. This is an opportunity to take a giant leap forward: taking care not to think incrementally, but rather to be bold, Griffith Spotlights should offer significant, enduring impact.
 - Their bold, breakthrough vision for tackling one of the world's most urgent topics should bring us much closer to the articulated version of an ideal world in a matter of years rather than generations.
- ***Future competitiveness and impact.***
 - Seed support for Spotlights will be for 2 years – a timeline to ensure significant progress can be made towards positioning the Spotlight for success in securing additional funding and/or significant external partnerships.
 - There should be evidence that the Spotlight will have impact based on a track record of past success, a demand from those that would be affected, and justified confidence that results can be sustained in the future.
 - A clear vision, including intended outcomes, should be articulated for where the research agenda will be at the end of the funding term and the strategy for achieving the expected goals and Measurable Outcomes (see Section 3).
- ***Excellence in leadership and diversity.***
 - Griffith Spotlights will build on demonstrable excellence and disciplinary expertise, and are expected to have (the potential for) significant collaboration with high performing research groups internationally.
 - Spotlights will be led by researchers committed to delivering excellence and impact, creating a vibrant research culture and who are aligned to the University's values. This includes nurturing high-quality higher degree research students and growing the link between pedagogy and research.

- In addition to relevant discipline diversity, solutions delivered via the Spotlights 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.
- Spotlights will bring together researchers for a clearly articulated purpose that connects to our institutional strategy. The Spotlight itself must articulate this purpose as a coherent narrative that is articulated within a strategic plan that is aligned with University strategy.

3. Measurable Outcomes

There is a high expectation that Griffith Spotlights will result in a step-change in the profile of specific areas of Griffith research. As such, measures of success will be diverse, including but not limited to:

- Enhancing reputation through influential outputs and other impact measures, such as:
 - invited submissions to key decision-making bodies, publications in high esteem outlets, highly cited journal articles etc.;
 - demonstrable impact on local communities;
 - formation of new alliances and partnerships;
 - profile as national/international leaders in the relevant field.
- Preparation for attraction of research income and infrastructure investments
 - with a specific view towards securing significant follow on funding from major competitive grant schemes and/or external funding partners.

4. Griffith Spotlight Leader and Members

Each application will include the named leadership team of the Griffith Spotlight, drawn from existing researchers within the University – this includes mid-career researchers. The Spotlight Leaders are expected to devote a proportion of their time to the Spotlight and aligned research.

There is a need for proposals to demonstrate authentic collaboration and interdisciplinarity in their approach to the problems identified under the Spotlight theme. As such, each application must include a diverse 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.

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

5. Funding and Eligible Expenditure

The University will invest up to \$200k per year for up to 2 years in support of each Griffith Spotlight. There is no single model proposed for delivery under the Griffith Spotlight initiative. However, this funding is a “grant in aid” and is intended to support specific operational costs or capital investments. Beyond this, significant flexibility is allowed for deployment of budget to support achievement of the goals of this program.

The following are eligible types of expenditure:

- Operational funds, for conduct of research.
- Significant equipment/infrastructure costs will be considered where no other funding source is available, and the investment will enable a step-change in research capabilities.
- Costs to engage with national and international partners, including where necessary travel (consistent with Griffith University travel policies).

Participants’ time will be part of the Groups’ commitment to the Spotlight (relevant approvals must be obtained for any participant’s time commitment to the Spotlight that goes beyond their normal research allocation). Griffith Spotlights will be eligible to apply for specific support for personnel from the Griffith University Postdoctoral Research Fellowship scheme (with relevant contributions from the local area(s)) and for PhD scholarships from the central University allocation.

It is not intended that funding will be provided for Spotlights to establish a “shopfront” or physical presence. Academic Groups from which Spotlight Members are drawn will be expected to support their researchers’

involvement in Spotlights 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.

6. Assessment Process

Applications for the establishment of Griffith Spotlights will be assessed on how well they meet the Qualities of Griffith Spotlights (section 2) and A three-stage process will be used to identify and award funding support for the Spotlights.

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 Spotlights and award support for Griffith Spotlights. 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 three Griffith Spotlights will be approved in 2020.

7. 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

Release of Guidelines	Early June 2020
<i>NOI's submitted to Office for Research</i>	30 July 2020
Shortlisting of proposals to proceed to full applications.	end August 2020
<i>Submission of full proposals</i>	15 October 2020
Assessment by Executive Group completed	End October, 2020
Notification of outcome	15 November, 2020

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

8. Conditions of Award

Key Initial Milestone

The first milestone for the Griffith Spotlight will be to submit to Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research)/ Executive Group, for approval, a detailed proposal for the operation of the Spotlight before 15th December 2020.

Progress and review

While two-year funding will be approved for these initiatives, annual continuation will be subject to satisfactory progress against a research plan and agreed milestones. Annual reports and recommendations to continue



support will, be considered by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research), with the support of Research Committee, with recommendations to the Vice Chancellor.

9. Privacy Statement

Griffith University collects, stores and uses personal information only for the purposes of administering the Griffith Spotlights 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>.