TORONTO - MELBOURNE RESEARCH TRAINING GROUP
2024/25 CALL FOR PROPOSALS

The University of Toronto (U of T) and the University of Melbourne (Melbourne) continue to develop their strategic partnership through the Toronto – Melbourne Research Training Group, offering opportunities for research collaboration and engagement.

In 2024, U of T and Melbourne are calling for project proposals from all research areas to establish up to eight (8) pairs of supervisors (PIs), with each supervisory team supporting one (1) joint PhD candidate.

Each recruited PhD candidate will receive a funding package that includes tuition fee waivers/remission scholarships, a stipend, health insurance, and relocation support. Candidates will be enrolled at, and meet, both institutions' academic standards and requirements. They will be co-recruited and co-supervised by collaborative teams through an arrangement known as a jointly awarded PhD through joint education placement (this mechanism is aligned with the existing policies of both institutions).

Candidates will work towards submission of a single thesis that meets both institutions' requirements and undertake a final oral examination. Upon completion, candidates will be eligible to graduate with one degree confirmed by two testamurs/parchments – one from each University, noting the partnership with the other – and participate in the convocation ceremonies at both universities, should they choose to do so.

All recruited PhD candidates must meet the eligibility requirements and be enrolled in the relevant PhD course at both universities.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

The supervisory team must consist of at least two Principal Investigators (PIs), one from U of T and one from Melbourne. The PIs must have the capacity to serve as primary supervisors for a jointly enrolled PhD candidate. Each PI must meet the supervisor eligibility criteria set by their own institution and each PI is responsible for checking their own eligibility to apply.

This call is open to proposals from all research areas and disciplines.

The University of Melbourne

Melbourne academics must be registered to supervise as per the Supervisor Eligibility and Registration Policy. Primary supervisors should be employed at Melbourne beyond the

envisaged submission date of their PhD candidate (2030). If their employment contract does not extend beyond the candidates' submission date, then alternative arrangements must be in place, by either having:

a) A named co-supervisor employed at Melbourne beyond the envisaged submission date of their PhD candidate (2030); *or*
b) A letter of support from the respective Head of Department/Head of School detailing the arrangements in place to ensure continuity of supervision.

For more information, including forms for supervisor registration, please consult the [information for supervisors section on the Graduate Research Hub](#).

Honorary employees whose primary academic affiliation is with Melbourne are eligible to lead an application as a PI if they are a registered Principal Supervisor at Melbourne, and either:

a) Their primary employer has entered into a written agreement for this call, using the provided approval form to fund the Melbourne cash component of the collaborative activity; *or*
b) They participate at their own expense if they are otherwise unaffiliated (for example, they hold an emeritus position).

Melbourne academics must not have outstanding Progress Reports or Final Reports from any other University of Melbourne Researcher Development Scheme.

The University of Toronto

U of T PIs must be Faculty members in continuing appointments, eligible to hold research funds at U of T and have [Full School of Graduate Studies (SGS) Graduate Faculty Membership](#). U of T staff with status-only appointments at U of T are not eligible to participate in the call.

Additional notes for all applicants

Previous recipients may not currently reapply to this scheme but may participate in joint PhD projects as co-supervisors.

Additional colleagues (including other partners in Australia, Canada, or internationally) are not eligible to apply as primary supervisors, although they can participate in the co-supervision of joint PhD candidates. However, involvement of shared external partners that benefit the project, for example through translation support or providing internship opportunities, is encouraged. PIs cannot submit more than one proposal for one (1) joint PhD candidate as part of this call but can co-supervise other projects.

Adherence to respective equality/equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) policies are a core feature of this scheme to ensure that all participants can do their best work, thrive and succeed. Applicant teams should consider how they can take meaningful steps in their future collaborations to foster an environment that values, supports and respects a diverse range of views, knowledge and experiences.

Applicants should consider EDI as it applies to gender, indigenous peoples, disabilities, career stages and sectors.

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

PROJECT STRUCTURE AND FUNDING

Up to a total of eight (8) project proposals will be funded.

Each project must identify U of T or Melbourne as the Home/Lead Institution, defined as the institution where the majority of research is undertaken during the PhD.

For Melbourne, all candidates will receive a [Graduate Research Scholarship](#) for the time they are at Melbourne.

For U of T, all Scholarships/other forms of stipend funding in this call will be funded from the U of T supervisor/department. The Office of Vice-President, International (OVPI) will provide additional funding (up to CAD$ 30,000) to support the project.

- U of T supervisors will be required to provide information about the basic funding package set by their divisions. This funding package will cover the cost of all the required fees (tuition, non-academic incidental fees, and Universal Health Insurance Program UHIP), and will provide a stipend.
- OVPI will provide the top-up (up to CAD$15,000) based on the U of T supervisors requested amount (as per the budget section of the application form), for the period the PhD candidate spends at U of T.
- OVPI top up will not exceed the difference between Melbourne's PhD scholarship and U of T's divisional minimum funding package.
- U of T supervisors are not obliged to increase the funding package in the consecutive years of the PhD program to match potential stipend increases offered by Melbourne. The top up will not be adjusted if the basic funding package is increased by divisions.
- The U of T supervisor will cover U of T tuition for the full duration of the PhD program for a candidate whose home institution is U of T. The OVPI top up will be paid to candidates only during the academic year/s they stay at U of T. The U of T supervisor/department will cover U of T tuition for a Melbourne home candidate only when they are at U of T. The U of T supervisor/department is not required to cover tuition fee for a Melbourne home candidate when the candidate is at Melbourne.

Each candidate must:
- Commence at U of T in Fall (September) 2025 / Winter (January) 2026 / Fall (September) 2026 to complete mandatory coursework and comprehensive exam requirements (commencement date/s as per the [Toronto Graduate School program](#));
- Spend at least 12 months at U of T of which 6 months must be dedicated only to research;
- Spend at least 12 months at Melbourne; AND
- Spend a maximum of 24 months at the Host/Collaborator institution.

Below are some **examples** of training program timelines:

Melbourne Home/Lead Institution:

18 months* Toronto (including coursework and exams)

6-12 months Toronto (research only)

24-30 months Melbourne (research only)

*which can vary according to the program

U of T Home/Lead Institution:

18 months* Toronto (including coursework and exams)

12-24 months Melbourne (research only)

12-24 months Toronto (research only)

*which can vary according to the program

The Graduate Researcher must submit their thesis for examination within four years of full-time enrolment at Melbourne. (This period includes the initial part-time enrolment period at Melbourne while completing U of T coursework requirements.)

Summary of funding for each project:

University of Melbourne	University of Toronto (See ***FAQ for details of Department / Supervisor required contributions)
Tax-free scholarship (stipend) for each candidate when at Melbourne. See the Graduate Research Scholarship page for full details.	Tax-free scholarship/other forms of stipend funding for each candidate when at U of T from U of T supervisor and U of T's Office of the VP International (OVPI can provide up to CAD$ 15,000 additional scholarship support to top up each candidate's supervisor/department stipend at U of T. Further details are provided in the FAQs.)
Tuition-fee waiver/scholarship for each candidate	Tuition-fee waiver/scholarship for each candidate, including fees while at U of T from U of T supervisor/department.
Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) Single Membership for any candidate who is an international candidate and requires a student visa to study in Australia, and *Travel insurance* while on Study Away.	While at U of T, health insurance fee, will be covered by the U of T supervisor/department.
Relocation allowance for all candidates to travel to Melbourne after commencing in Toronto – up to $3,000 AUD.	Relocation/travel allowance for candidates to commence or continue at U of T, or to conduct research in an overseas location, excluding Melbourne, up to CAD$ 10,000 from U of T's Office of the VP International (OVPI)
A $10,000 lump sum* to support Melbourne home candidates and Melbourne PIs for relevant activities, including**: • Candidate travel • PI travel • Workshop costs or virtual collaboration expenses • Graduate recruitment	Support for each U of T PI travel to Melbourne: up to CAD$ 5,000 from U of T's Office of the VP International (OVPI).

The lump sum provided by Melbourne is pooled and allocated to the Academic Lead of the joint PhD program. The Academic Lead is responsible for the funds for the uses described.

**Please note that ineligible costs include: directly incurred staff (e.g. Research Assistants), replacement research/teaching costs, directly allocated costs including applicants' time, indirect costs/estates costs, publication costs, equipment, consumable costs, scholarships, conference attendance, tuition fees and honoraria. Melbourne and U of T reserve the right to determine the eligibility of expenses.*

***See FAQ for U of T Faculty: Contains information tailored to U of T PI applicants to help them navigate the financial and other considerations to develop a proposal.*

PROJECT PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

Before preparing a proposal, please note the following about the structure of the program:
- Up to eight (8) applications will be successful as part of this call. Projects should be co-designed by the participating PIs.
- PIs should ensure that they have the capacity to take on a new PhD candidate in line with their institution's policies and meet the eligibility requirements to participate in the scheme.
- PhD projects should be designed to be submitted within four years of full-time enrolment at Melbourne. (This period includes the initial part-time enrolment period at Melbourne while completing U of T coursework requirements.)

The online application form requests:
- The details of the PIs/research groups involved, including CVs and links to each PIs website.
- An abstract for the PhD project, which will be used for recruitment if the proposal is successful
- An overview of the PhD project, providing:
  - Outline of the project
  - Budget
  - A supervision plan, highlighting why the project requires time to be spent at the partner institution and benefits of doing so
  - The coursework requirement at U of T for the project
  - A GANTT chart showing the division of time to be spent by the candidate at both institutions
- A summary of the collaboration value and potential impact, noting:
  - The extent of the planned collaboration between the PIs beyond joint supervision.
  - How the proposal could lead to the development of a larger network of researchers across both institutions.
  - A plan for leveraging future external funding, if applicable.
- Completion of an ethics and privacy checklist
- All Melbourne applicants must attach an endorsement from the respective Head of School/Department and Associate Dean (Graduate Research).

It is recommended that applications are written in lay terms for reviewers to better understand the project's potential impact and its anticipated outcomes.

For proposals involving a PI from Melbourne's Faculty of Arts: You must also provide a statement addressing how the candidate/s will meet the Faculty's PhD coursework requirements in your application. Please refer to the Faculty's guidelines for additional information. It is recommended to contact the Associate Dean (Graduate Research) for any further guidance.

Key dates:

Submissions open	Monday 22 April 2024
Deadline for project proposal applications	Friday 21 June 2024
Outcome notifications and projects advertised for recruitment	3rd week of September 2024
PhD candidates to commence	September 2025/January 2026/September 2026 (Toronto)

PIs must ensure their preferred candidate has submitted their application to meet the deadlines set by the U of T graduate unit. If the PIs do not meet this deadline, the scholarship and mobility funding will be recalled for use in a future call.

REPORTING AND OTHER CONDITIONS

Melbourne recipients will be required to provide regular updates on project progress during the candidature of their joint PhD candidate. These updates will be requested quarterly by the International Research Training Group (IRTG) Academic Lead. Recipients who fail to participate in regular reporting mechanisms for this IRTG may be found ineligible for participation in future Researcher Development Schemes.

The information shared with Melbourne will be utilised by Office of the VP International at U of T to assess progress and flow funding committed in the new U of T fiscals.

EVALUATION OF PROJECT PROPOSALS

Melbourne and U of T will rank the proposals in order of meeting the selection criteria and agree on the top- ranking projects to award funding.

Selection Criteria

- **Collaborator complementarity** – What is the added value of a new collaboration or building on an existing research relationship? How does the collaboration combine mutual areas of interest and strength?
- **Quality of supervision** – Do the PIs have a track record of supervising PhD candidates to completion? Do the PIs have experience of co-supervising PhD candidates internationally? How will the PIs work together effectively in jointly supervising their shared PhD candidates? What are the beneficial learning outcomes and experiences for the joint PhD candidates?
- **Project design and rationale** – How clearly presented and justified is the basis for, and design of, the joint PhD project? What are the anticipated benefits of involving joint PhD researchers in the collaboration for the project, the PhD researchers, and PIs? What is the benefit of the candidate spending a minimum of 12 months at each institution?
- **Potential impact** – What is the level of originality and innovation in the research proposal? To what extent does the research proposal plan to address significant challenges and what is the anticipated benefit to local or international communities?
- **Capacity for expanded collaboration** – What is the extent of the planned collaboration between the PIs beyond joint supervision? How well does the proposal plan to leverage external funding? To what extent are future collaborations made possible as a result of the proposed activities?

SUBMISSION AND CONTACT INFORMATION

PIs must submit a single, jointly prepared application via the University of Melbourne SmartyGrants Portal by Friday 21 June 2024 1.00 pm AEDT (Melbourne)/ Thursday 20 June 2024 11.00 pm BST (Toronto). Applications should be written in English and for an audience proficient, but not expert, in the field. The Melbourne administration team will transfer all submitted applications as pdf to the U of T research co-ordination office after the deadline. There is no need for U of T PI's to submit an application directly to the U of T administration in parallel.

All applications must attach endorsement from the respective Head of School/ Department and Associate Dean (Graduate Research) [Melbourne] and Department Chair [U of T]. Melbourne applicants must ensure that the endorsement is attached to the application using the approval forms provided on the Researcher Development Schemes website. Melbourne applicants who hold an Honorary position must also complete the Honorary declaration form.

For U of T PIs, a letter or email from the chair of the U of T department where the PhD candidate will be enrolled should confirm:

- That PI holds a continuing appointment at U of T

- The Primary Supervisor can hold research funds at U of T and the department will assist with setting up accounts to flow funds if the applicant is awarded funding
- The Primary Supervisor can supervise the PhD candidate with a Melbourne counterpart. If the U of T Primary Supervisor does not have full SGS membership, the chair's letter will need to reference how this is being addressed
- If there is any coursework after candidacy, how the department will assist the Primary Supervisor to ensure the mobility of the PhD candidate is not impacted by this
- The U of T department/Primary Supervisor will cover U of T tuition for the duration of the PhD for a candidate whose home institution is U of T and non-academic incidental fees, Universal Health Insurance Program (UHIP) and stipend when the candidate is located at U of T. For candidates who choose U of T as their home institution, U of T supervisor will also cover U of T tuition fees while the candidate is in Melbourne
- The department will help the Melbourne co-supervisor obtain status-only appointment and SGS membership at the U of T department for the co-supervision of a PhD candidate and for the duration required to fulfill that co-supervision.

When reaching out to the U of T chair requesting their support, please copy in the departmental Associate Chair Graduate and relevant admission staff.

The link to apply is: https://ricunimelb.smartygrants.com.au/MELTORPHD2024

Submission and Melbourne contact details:	U of T contact details:
The Researcher Development Schemes team Research, Innovation and Commercialisation (RIC) The University of Melbourne res-devschemes@unimelb.edu.au	**Rikki Zhao** **Director, China Partnership** Office of the Vice-President, International The University of Toronto rikki.zhao@utoronto.ca