

BCEC Research Grants Scheme 2016 – Call for Proposals

Instructions to Applicants

1. Statement of requirement

1.1 Background

The Bankwest Curtin Economics Centre (BCEC) is an independent economic and social research organisation located within Curtin Business School. The BCEC was established in 2012 through the generous support of Bankwest (a division of the Commonwealth Bank of Australia), with a core mission to undertake high quality, objective research on the key economic and social issues of relevance to Western Australia and the nation.

The BCEC's research and engagement activities are designed to influence economic and social policy debates in state and Federal Parliament, regional and national media, and the wider Australian community. Through high quality, evidence-based research and analysis, our research outcomes inform policy makers and commentators of the economic challenges to achieving sustainable and equitable growth and prosperity both in Western Australia and nationally.

The BCEC capitalises on Curtin University's reputation for excellence in economic modelling, forecasting, public policy research, trade and industrial economics and spatial sciences. BCEC researchers have specific expertise in economic forecasting, quantitative modelling, microdata analysis and economic and social policy evaluation.

In addition to conducting research through its own staff, the BCEC is interested in supporting and promoting relevant research being conducted by other researchers at Curtin University.

The BCEC is therefore inviting proposals from Curtin University researchers to conduct research aimed at supporting and informing the research priorities of the Centre. Funding for a number of research projects is available through a competitive selection process. It is anticipated that the majority of grants will be between \$25,000 and \$75,000 per project, although other amounts may be considered. Grants will commence in early 2017 and should normally be completed in 6-12 months. Applicants are strongly encouraged to develop proposals that also involve Centre staff (following discussion with the Centre Director).

Instructions to applicants are contained in this document. The *2016 BCEC Research Proposal Template* can be found at the [2016 BCEC Grant Advertisement webpage](#), which applicants should complete and **submit by email by 5pm on 13 October 2016**, to:

Professor Alan Duncan

Director, Bankwest Curtin Economics Centre, Curtin University

Email: bcec@curtin.edu.au

1.2 Research Priorities

Applicants are invited to submit proposals for research that relate to one or a number of the Centre's core research priorities, covering the following economic and social issues:

- Income and wealth
- Productivity and innovation
- Education and skills
- Participation and employment
- Population and ageing
- Gender and diversity
- Health, wellbeing and disadvantage
- Housing and infrastructure
- Cities and regions
- Policy evaluation
- Tax and welfare
- Trade and industry

Proposals are particularly sought on the following research focus areas: (i) productivity and innovation; (ii) education and skills; (iii) health, wellbeing and disadvantage; and (iv) cities and regions. However, it should be emphasized that the chosen focus areas for research are not exhaustive, and applicants are encouraged to submit proposals on other research questions that align to the Centre's broad research priorities.

All applications will be considered against the Centre's selection criteria and evaluated on merit. Attached as Appendix A is a list of past and current projects awarded by BCEC from 2014.

1.3 Who can submit proposals

BCEC invites proposals from suitably qualified and experienced researchers employed in Curtin University. Researchers or research teams would be expected to have a mix of skills including:

- A proven ability to conduct quantitative and/or qualitative research.
- Demonstrated research and analytical expertise in economics or a related discipline.
- Ability to disseminate findings to lay audiences.
- An understanding and appreciation of the WA economy and the economic and social policy issues facing the State.

It is not essential that funded research projects should be framed to have an exclusively WA focus. Applicants are nevertheless invited to describe how their research may be leveraged to contribute to our understanding of WA economic and social issues policy issues. Research projects which involve national or international collaborations, expertise and comparative work are welcomed.

Successful applicants will be required to enter into a project agreement with BCEC of up to 15 months duration, commencing in early 2017. Researchers must be capable of providing consistent high-quality and timely research services for that period.

Researchers can submit (or be listed on) more than one proposal, but funding a researcher for more than one project at a time will only occur in exceptional circumstances. BCEC is keen to encourage

collaborative proposals which also involve researchers employed at BCEC. Prospective applicants should discuss this possibility with the BCEC Director before including Centre staff on their proposal.

1.4 Outputs

BCEC is seeking from applicants a detailed outline of the research project and outputs proposed, including milestones and deliverables.

An important aspect of BCEC's research is the dissemination of research findings to appropriate audiences. Deliverables from the research project will include, as a minimum, a non-technical end-of-project final report that communicates research findings in a way that can engage external stakeholders. In addition, other deliverables should include project progress reports, working paper/s (published through the BCEC working paper series) and/or journal article submission/s (each of which should acknowledge funding from BCEC).

A commitment to work with BCEC regarding the dissemination of findings from the project will be considered favourably. This could include a willingness to attend and/or present at a public dissemination event (a research workshop, seminar or other public launch event) as appropriate to the subject and nature of the research outputs. Applicants should also be aware that research findings from BCEC-funded projects may be disseminated through media releases as appropriate to the research topic and outcomes.

1.5 Funding available

Funding for several research projects is available through a competitive selection process. It is anticipated that the majority of grants will be between \$25,000 and \$75,000 per project, although other amounts may also be considered.

Funding allocations will not necessarily be of equal value between each of the successful applicants. BCEC reserves the right to negotiate budgets with preferred applicants based on BCEC's overall requirements.

1.6 Related research

Applicants should not duplicate existing research. However, they are encouraged to ensure proposals build on the current body of knowledge, including their own current research.

1.7 Timeframe

It is anticipated that the successful applicants will be engaged to provide research services to BCEC for between 6 and 12 months, commencing in early 2017, although longer research projects may be considered. A timeframe for delivery of project milestones will be required.

1.8 BCEC contracts

Acceptance of a proposal will be subject to negotiation and execution of a project agreement with the BCEC, overseen by the Office of Research and Development. BCEC may accept the whole or part

of the proposal offered. The final project will be defined in negotiation with the successful applicants.

1.9 Quality assurance processes

The following is a summary of the range of quality assurance processes undertaken by BCEC. These processes should be taken into consideration when planning projects, timelines, outputs and dissemination activities:

- Progress reports and discussion with BCEC at negotiated points during the term of the research project will be required, including reporting on specified milestones. The progress reports provide BCEC with an opportunity to review and comment on the scope of the research, the methodology and research instruments being used, and any emerging issues.
- For end-of-project final reports, BCEC will require submission of **edited** drafts, which will be reviewed by the BCEC Editorial Committee and possibly an independent reviewer of BCEC's choice. Written feedback will be given to the researcher to act upon prior to submission of final drafts. Research teams should allow between 4-6 weeks after submission of their draft report for comments and feedback to be returned.
- Reports will be required to be written in an 'easy to read' and accessible manner. For examples of such writing style, refer to <http://business.curtin.edu.au/our-research/centres-and-institutes/bankwest-curtin-economics-centre/our-reports/>. A report template will be provided to ensure that BCEC house style is followed.
- While many reports are rich in content they often require extensive editing before publication. **Where appropriate, BCEC may request that researchers arrange for an editor to proof read the final report before final submission.**
- For all projects that are quantitative in focus, researchers must have a system for assuring the quality of the data they report and for **conducting final data checks prior to submission of the report to BCEC**. If the program of research involves developing and conducting a survey, researchers are to lodge the final data set to BCEC, with a view to making the data available to future researchers.
- BCEC requires ongoing dialogue with researchers regarding progress and direction of projects, including discussions about how impact of the research can be maximised.
- In negotiation with BCEC, researchers may be invited to make presentations at seminars, workshops, report launches, meetings or other BCEC events. Where BCEC has requested this, the researchers will be asked to provide their time and BCEC will cover reasonable associated costs.

This list is not exhaustive and BCEC reserves the right to negotiate additional requirements where appropriate at the time of contracting.

1.10 Research ethics

Where ethics approval may be required, projects undertaken by researchers should be guided by the Universities Australia Joint Statement and Guidelines on Research Practice and Curtin University policy and procedures. For most qualitative research, we would expect researchers will be required

to obtain ethics clearance for projects, and the outcomes of this process will form part of the contract milestones.

1.11 Selection process

The BCEC Director, in association with senior Centre staff and the BCEC Advisory Board, will be responsible for the selection process, and will evaluate all proposals against the selection criteria (Refer **1.12 Selection criteria**). Those proposals not satisfying essential selection criteria will not be considered.

Applicants will be notified of selection outcomes in December 2016, and project agreement negotiations will be initiated in early 2017.

Successful applicants will be provided with a letter of offer from BCEC (Letter of Offer) in the form appended to this document and marked Appendix B. The Letter of Offer sets out the obligations of the successful applicant, as Principal Investigator.

1.12 Selection criteria

Applicants must address each of the selection criteria. Please refer to the Guidelines for Proposals in section 2 and the proposal template provided with this information kit. In evaluating proposals against these selection criteria, the selection panel will:

- assess the overall risk to BCEC of engaging the researchers identified in the proposal. This will include an evaluation of prior or current work undertaken for BCEC, with a focus on the quality and timeliness of such work;
- consider the extent to which the proposal builds on previous or concurrent research;
- take into account the balance of proposals across the research priorities.

Selection criteria

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>a. Proposed research project</p> | <p>a. The overall purpose and scope of the proposed research and the extent to which it adds to current knowledge.</p> <p>b. The alignment and contribution of the research proposal to the BCEC's research priorities.</p> <p>c. The extent to which the project promotes understanding and appreciation of the WA economy and the economic and social policy issues facing the State.</p> |
| <p>b. Research questions, methodology and timeframe</p> | <p>a. The quality and suitability of the proposed research method against the research questions proposed.</p> <p>b. The approaches are clearly specified and realistic.</p> <p>c. The added value of the proposed research, and its relation to any previous research on the topic.</p> <p>d. The existence of clear and achievable milestones.</p> |
| <p>c. Research experience, expertise & related research</p> | <p>a. The skills and experience of the researcher(s), including the role of each researcher in the project proposal, and their time commitment. If appropriate to the research topic and method, applicants may consider including external partners/collaborators in the research proposal.</p> |

| | |
|---|--|
| | b. Evidence of the applicants' understanding of research methods relevant to the proposed project. |
| d. Project quality assurance and risk management | <p>a. Evidence of effective project management, quality assurance and risk management processes to ensure production of timely, relevant and high quality research.</p> <p>b. The availability of research team members for the project in light of other commitments they may have.</p> <p>c. Demonstrated willingness to work co-operatively with BCEC and external partners.</p> <p>d. Capacity to adhere to timelines.</p> |
| e. Value for money | a. The total budget will be considered against the overall quality and depth of the research project proposed. |
| f. Research dissemination | a. Demonstrated ability and willingness to communicate research findings in a form suitable for public dissemination to an intelligent, policy-aware and non-technical audience. |

2. Guidelines for proposals

2.1 Proposal format requirements

The *2016 BCEC Research Proposal Template* to accompany this information kit is provided at the [2016 BCEC Grant Advertisement webpage](#).

Proposals should be compact and focused tightly on the intended research question, and presented according to the following guides:

- ideally no more than 8 pages (excluding coversheet and researchers' CVs)
- short CVs of no more than one page per CV
- single space typing
- standard margins (as set in the template)
- 11-point Arial type face
- A4 page size only
- using the coversheet on the proposal template (a covering letter is not required)
- submission of proposal in both PDF and Word document formats.

2.2 Proposal content guidelines

Guidelines for completing each section of your proposal are offered here. It is the responsibility of applicants to ensure proposals meet the requirements for criteria outlined in **1.12 Selection criteria** of this information kit.

Proposals must be clear, concise and sufficiently comprehensive to allow full analysis of the proposed research without reference to additional material. The proposal should be written for a broad audience.

All sections must be completed for your proposal to be considered.

Sections 1-4: Outline of overall research program and intended purpose and outcomes

This section must cover the overall scope and depth of the proposed research, including:

- A brief abstract of the research project.
- An outline of the proposed research project and outcomes. Highlight the importance of the proposed topic to the aims and mission of the Bankwest Curtin Economics Centre, and how it relates to the research priorities identified in section 1.2.
- Key research topics and questions to be addressed – ensure your questions relate directly to the project purpose.
- Methodology – projects involving applied research can make use of either primary or secondary sources wherever possible. Where proposals include a bid to collect new survey data, a case should be made for the reasons why new data collections are desirable.
- Timeframe – outline a proposed and realistic timeline for the conduct of the project. This should include project milestones which can be reported against in progress reports. The timeframes for the projects will depend on the nature of the research proposed but should not exceed 12 months. Projects that can be delivered in shorter timeframes are welcome. In preparing their proposals, applicants should take into account any potential delays which may be required for ethics approvals.
- Deliverables – describe the proposed products and outputs intended from the project. These will normally include a research report but other materials or presentations are encouraged.

Section 5: Research experience and expertise

Proposals must provide names of individual researchers (including the Lead researcher) on the research team, with brief statements of their affiliations, research and analytical skills, their role on the project, and their suitability and availability to conduct the research proposed.

Research proposals must not duplicate existing or current research conducted by the applicant or others, although it can build on such research.

A brief CV (limit one page per each individual) can be provided in an appendix.

A proposal submitted by a research team will only be considered if:

- a single point and lead contact for the research team is specified; and
- the proposal clearly specifies the details of all members of the research team.

Section 6-7: Project and risk management

Detail how project management processes will provide the necessary capacity to deliver a timely well-managed research program, including a statement of School/departmental support.

Detail the quality assurance processes that would be in place to ensure research is rigorous and timely. If the proposal is for a program that includes major quantitative components please identify what steps you will take to check the data.

A risk management plan should identify possible risks associated with the conduct of the research and preparation of outputs. Researchers should consider how other commitments will affect the conduct and completion of BCEC funded research.

Applicants should also consider how research teams propose to manage internal team arrangements to ensure communication, coordination, mentoring of new researchers, quality assurance and timeliness.

At a minimum, the risks associated with the following key areas must be identified, analysed and strategies detailed to mitigate impact on BCEC projects.

- The possible loss of key researchers (including proposed leave or secondment arrangements, other work commitments)
- Project management and coordination (especially important for research teams where members are spread across organisations/states)
- Adherence to timelines

Section 8: Budget

It is anticipated that the majority of grants will be for projects between \$25,000 and \$75,000, but other amounts may be considered. BCEC reserves the right to negotiate differing amounts with preferred applicants based on BCEC's overall requirements.

Using the table provided in the template, the detailed budget items must cover:

- Research staff – indicate daily rate and number of days to be spent on the research project. Those stated as principal researchers should contribute a significant proportion of the time allocated to the research.
- BCEC staff – indicate (following discussions with the BCEC Director) if BCEC staff are to be included in the proposal, with an estimate of their (in-kind) costs based on the number of days they are expected to spend on the project (*this information can be provided by the BCEC Administrative Coordinator*)
- Clerical and other support staff – indicate daily rate and number of days to be spent on the BCEC research project.
- Specify any costs associated either with attendance at workshops or conferences, or with hosting a BCEC research workshop/event at Curtin.
- Specify any quality assurance costs (i.e. editing, proof reading reports). Note, if substantial editing is still required, BCEC will withhold funds to cover this expense.
- Specify any expected travel and accommodation costs to fund visits to Curtin by external project researchers.
- Data extraction / data gathering costs.

Funds cannot be used for the purchase of computers.

Curtin University has waived normal overhead costs for the BCEC and as an internal grant BCEC would expect a similar commitment from applicants.

The budget does not need to include costs for the production and printing associated with research reports.

Appendix A

| NAME OF PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR | PROJECT TITLE |
|--------------------------------|--|
| DR GARTH KENDALL | Intergenerational Wealth Transfers, Health and Wellbeing Outcomes |
| PROF MARK HARRIS | The health and wellbeing of West Australians |
| DR TOM HOUGHTON | Energy poverty in WA: A comparative assessment of drivers and effects |
| DR DELIA HENDRIE | Cost of Employing and Retaining Adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder |
| A/PROF GREG COSTELLO | Housing Affordability - Land supply and new housing in WA |
| A/PROF JEREMY GALBREATH | WA wine exports: Building an economic future with China |
| PROF ALAN FENNA | Age, Income, Wealth and Inequality in Australia: Evidence from HILDA |
| PROF GARY MADDEN | The Economic Impact of Broadband Speed versus Penetration |
| DR ROSLYN CAMERON | Minimising skills wastage and maximising the health of skilled migrant groups |
| DR PETER HOSIE | Testing the 'Happy-Performing Managers Proposition' on Western Australian Managers |
| PROF JOHN BURGESS | Developing sustainable career pathways for aged care personal care workers. |
| PROF MARK HARRIS | Apprenticeship completions: Firm effects and training quality |
| PROF KERRY BROWN | Prospects for SW-Western Australia integrating tourism and agri-food systems. |
| DR DELIA HENDRIE | Are childhood experiences and social inequalities linked to adolescent health? |
| A/PROF CHRISTOPH PFORR | The impact of Airbnb on WA's tourism industry and economy |
| DR AMANDA DAVIES | Unlocking the potential for working closer to home |
| DR STIAN THORESEN | Pilot: Small Business Enterprise models of employment for disabled people |
| DR JULIAN INCHAUSPE | The Insertion of Australia and WA in International Gas and Oil Markets |
| DR KELLY BURNS | The nexus between equity markets and housing prices in Australia. |

Appendix B

Letter of Offer

{Researcher Name}
{Department}
{School}
{Curtin University}

Dear {Researcher}

Letter of Offer to undertake a project under the Bankwest Curtin Economics Centre – SCRIPT Project RES ##### ‘{Project Title}’

Congratulations on being awarded funding by the Bankwest Curtin Economics Centre to conduct the above-mentioned project.

In return for the awarding of funds towards this project, the Centre requires an undertaking from you as the Principal Investigator (PI) under the approval of your Head of Area, prior to the project commencement and transfer of funds. These undertakings are detailed below.

1. The PI agrees to ensure that the project is conducted in accordance with this Letter of Offer, the Project Details Schedule and Project Proposal, annexed.
2. The PI agrees to ensure that all those involved in the project conduct themselves in a professional manner.
3. The PI is responsible for providing reports and any other deliverables as per the Project Details Schedule and Project Proposal.
4. The PI and other investigators on the project will be expected to present their project findings at one BCEC event during or at the end of their project.
5. The project funds:
 - a. must be placed in a project-specific cost centre and any interest earned must be expended on the project;
 - b. must only be expended as agreed under the budget, and excludes marketing and travel unless specified in the budget;
 - c. may be forfeited in the event of late or non-completion of the project as per the agreed project plan.
 - d. must be acquitted at the end of the project. Please note that records relating to the funds must be maintained in accordance with Curtin policies and the requirements of the State Records Act (WA).
6. The PI agrees that the deliverables from the research project will include, as a minimum, a non-technical end-of-project final report that communicates research findings in a way that can engage external stakeholders. A final report template will be provided by BCEC
7. The PI confirms that penalty payments will be incurred where the final report is overdue unless negotiated in advance with BCEC. Penalties are calculated as follows:
 - 10% of total award if 15 days overdue
 - 20% of total award if 30 days overdue
 - 50% of total award if 60 days overdue
 - 100% of total award if greater than 60 days overdue

8. The PI agrees to ensure that the research complies with all relevant statutes, laws, and professional codes of conduct, and complies with Curtin University's policies and procedures, including but not limited to those governing financial management and ethics.
9. The PI must comply with all requirements of the Privacy Act as if Curtin were an agency as defined in the Privacy Act.
10. The PI must obtain a signed agreement from all researchers involved in the project to assign any intellectual property produced, while conducting the project, to Curtin.
11. Acknowledgement of the funding contribution made by the Centre must be made in all project-related publications and promotional materials. In particular:
 - a. The acknowledgement must be prominently recorded and commensurate with that given to state or local government, corporate or other sponsors;
 - b. Any formal statement issued in relation to any aspect of the project including speeches, media releases, brochures, should make reference to the Centre's contribution; and
 - c. Where there is an official opening or launch associated with the project, the Director of the Centre must be notified in advance and must be able to include in the invitations such persons, representing the Centre and/or Bankwest, as the Director requires.
12. The PI shall provide a copy of any publication, scholarly and otherwise, associated with the project, to the Centre upon publication.

Once again, congratulations on securing this funding. I look forward to a successful outcome from this project.

Yours sincerely

Professor Alan Duncan
Director, Bankwest Curtin Economics Centre and
Bankwest Research Chair in Economic Policy
Curtin Business School

cc. Jennifer Liddle, Team Leader Research Support

As Principal Investigator (PI) I acknowledge that I have obtained necessary approvals to undertake this Project and will conduct it in compliance with these conditions.

Signature: _____

Name: _____

END OF DOCUMENT