



Australian Centre for Accelerating Diabetes Innovations

Are you passionate about a career in diabetes research?

Want to access a world-class network of research professionals, and training resources?

Apply for an ACADI grant!

ACADI PhD and ECR 2026 Grant Funding Guidelines

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Australian Centre for Accelerating Diabetes Innovations

1. Introduction

The Australian Centre for Accelerating Diabetes Innovations (ACADI) is a virtual collaborative diabetes centre uniting over 70 partners spanning all Australian States and Territories.

Our purpose is to deliver novel interventions for timely diagnosis, prevention and treatment of diabetes and its complications. We want to improve the quality of life for the estimated 1.8million Australians living with diabetes by enabling innovations addressing diabetes and its possible complications.

2. Opportunity

ACADI is offering:

- Three Early Career Researcher grants
- Three PhD grants

to students or researchers placed at an [ACADI core partner institution](#), whose work prevents, diagnoses, monitors, manages and/or treats diabetes and its possible complications.

3. Funding available

PhD Funding: Up to \$32,192 allocated for a 12-month period. The grant will be paid directly to the PhD candidate to contribute to living expenses.

ECR Funding: \$40,000 allocated for a 12-month period. The grant will contribute directly to the specified research activity specified in the Research Proposal and Budget submitted with the application, in accordance with the grant conditions.

4. Objectives

The objectives of the funding are to:

- Support PhD candidates and ECRs in the early stages of their career in research related to diabetes and its complications, who demonstrate clear evidence of high research potential and motivation to make a difference to the field of diabetes.
- Build an applicant's track record to enhance competitiveness in bidding for research funds.
- To help achieve ACADI's vision to deliver novel interventions for timely diagnoses, prevention and treatment of diabetes and its complications.
- Grow a national network of diabetes researchers.

5. Applicant eligibility

Applicants can apply from any field, though they must:

- be working on a research project related to diabetes and its possible complications; and
- be an Australian citizen or Permanent Resident.



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PhD applicants must:	ECR applicants must:
hold or have confirmed PhD candidature at an ACADI core partner .	hold or have a confirmed future appointment for a salaried (fixed-term or continuing) academic appointment of at least 0.4FTE at an ACADI core partner , that begins 1 May 2025 or earlier;
be no further than two years (FTE) into a PhD candidature by May 2025	have been awarded a PhD within the last 5 years, from the date of 30 December 2019, and before submission of this ECR application. The award date of a PhD refers to the date specified in the letter received notifying that a PhD has been passed, and must be uploaded with the application.
have written confirmation from the Supervisor that the project, and related consumable expenses, has pre-existing funds allocated.	Applicants who have had career interruptions or who have worked in an academic research organisation for less than 5 years FTE and received their PhD before 30 November 2019 may submit an eligibility exemption request (EER).

Successful applicants will not be eligible in future years.

Preference will be given to applicants who have not previously received funding from any sources, however applicants with some previous or current funding are eligible to apply and the significance and relevance of any previous funding held will be considered by the selection committee



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ACADI's core partners are:

Australian National University	University of Adelaide
Deakin University	University of Melbourne
Dimerix Bioscience Pty Ltd	University of New South Wales
Harry Perkins Institute of Medical Research	University of Queensland
Menzies School of Health Research	University of South Australia
Queensland University of Technology	University of Sydney
RMIT University	University of Tasmania
	University of Western Australia
	Western Sydney University

6. Application eligibility

Applications must be submitted via ACADI's SmartyGrants application portal.

The selection committee will only assess application material that adheres to the page limits. Any excess material will not be provided for review by the selection committee.

Applications will not be checked after submission for completeness or eligibility; this is the responsibility of the applicant. Ineligible or incomplete applications will be excluded and not considered by the Committee.

7. Eligibility Exemption Request

Email acadi-grants@unimelb.edu.au with details of the specific eligibility criteria listed above to have the exemption made for. Applicants will receive further instructions via email.

8. Application Process

All documents uploaded must be in Times New Roman size 12 font, with single line spacing.

Applicants will be required to submit:

- A 2-page Resume/CV.
- A 2-page research project plan, with an additional page listing up to 12 references.
- Answers to the following questions:
 - How will the project accelerate diabetes innovations? What is the potential and timeline for the project to be translated into clinical practice?
 - Please comment on whether the project will collaborate with the Indigenous community, people living with diabetes, industry, academic or health partners?



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- Two written academic references, including contact details.
- Details of other grant funding sources (previous or existing/pending).

9. Selection criteria

Applications will be assessed on:

- 1. The Quality of the Research Project Plan (40%):** ACADI defines 'Research Quality' as the quality of the project aims and the proposed research plan.
- 2. Consideration will be given to how successfully a candidate has addressed the questions:**
 - a. The research potential to accelerate diabetes innovations (20%)** Assessors will review the likelihood that the research proposed will lead to:
 - A demonstrable conceptual advance
 - An important discovery, innovation, or solution to the treatment of diabetes or its complications
 - b. Collaboration (20%)** Assessors will review whether the project intends to collaborate with any partners. Consideration will be given to:
 - Whether the project may lead to ongoing research collaboration.
 - A contribution of economic or social benefit to Australia
- 3. A) ECR applications only - Track record and work experience (10%):** The employment history with relevant work experience of the candidate will be considered.
B) PhD applications only – Academic record and work experience (10%) A copy of the university academic transcript must be uploaded. Relevant work experience will also be considered.
- 4. Special consideration (10%):** Priority will be given to applications that include any of the following elements:
 - a. Research projects that engage or involve people living with diabetes
 - b. Indigenous community involvement or demonstrable impact for Indigenous communities.
 - c. Applicants that come from a non-medical background, such as allied health, science or engineering.

10. Evaluation and assessment

The selection committee will decide on the final recipients to be awarded the grants. The selection committee will rank and list these applications based on the merit of the applications in accordance with the selection criteria.



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11. Timetable

- Friday 6 June 2025, 12pm – Applications open via SmartyGrants
- Friday 18 July 2025, 12pm – Applications close via SmartyGrants
- August 2025 – Notification of grant outcomes

12. ECR and PhD Grant: Reporting requirements

- The successful applicant will be required to provide a written report to ACADI on the outcomes of the funding within 1 month of completion of the ACADI award (unsatisfactory final reports will be referred to relevant Heads of Department/Schools and/or Associate Deans for comment or follow-up action. Please note that failure to provide this report by the deadline may result in future applications to ACADI research programs being ruled ineligible).
- The final report must be approved and co-signed by the recipient's supervisor before submission.
- ACADI may follow-up with an annual request for a career update for up to 3 years post-funding.
- Summaries of ACADI grant projects and final reports may be used externally or published by ACADI.
- ECR only: The ECR is required to provide a financial report. Any unspent funds at the conclusion of the grant period must be returned to ACADI.
- Successful applicants are expected to provide appropriate acknowledgment of ACADI support when communicating research outcomes, including all publications related to research carried out during the term of ACADI award.



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13. ECR Grants only: Budget Items supported

Grant funding may be used for budget items that directly support the research program. Please see the table below for further information.

Budget items supported:	Budget items not supported:
Personnel.	Funding may not be sought or used to fund the ECR's salaries and/or on-costs.
Relief from other duties.	Fees for Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS) or Higher Education Loan Program (HELP) liabilities.
Equipment.	Costs not directly related to research or the project.
Maintenance.	Funds that duplicate or supplement another current grant or research contract.
Travel.	Salaries for research collaborator(s). This does not include salaries for research support staff or technical support staff.
Conference registration fees when presenting or meeting with collaborators.	Society membership fees.
Publication fees – only for peer reviewed PubMed listed journals.	Costs related to submitting other funding applications

14. Conditions of PhD and ECR grant

- The Grant offer must be accepted by the applicant and their Head of Department/School by means of a fully completed and signed Award Agreement Form.

15. ECR Grants only: Conditions of grant

- The ECR is responsible for the project, its concept, the strategic decisions called for in its pursuit, and for the communication of the results.
- The ECR will be the contact person for all administrative matters to do with the project.
- The ECR is responsible for ensuring that the expenditure of the grant is broadly in accord with the budget presented in the application and consistent with the nature and aims of the specific project approved and the objectives of the scheme.
- Funding is for one year only. Funds must be expended 12 months after the award date.

16. Contact us

Any questions? Email us at acadi-grants@unimelb.edu.au