



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MELBOURNE

Melbourne Social
Equity Institute

COMMUNITY FELLOWS PROGRAM

INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS 2020

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Melbourne Social Equity Institute's Community Fellows Program aims to meet the research needs of community organisations to conduct small research-related projects in collaboration with university researchers.

The program is targeted at small to medium-sized community organisations (up to 200 employees) that currently have very limited capacity to conduct research.

Through the Community Fellows Program, the Institute aims to support community organisations to undertake research projects that promote social equity and enhance the work of their organisations.

Projects could involve conducting a scoping report, literature review, data analysis or a small research project that lead to positive outcomes such as improved service delivery, the development of new services, improved ability to advocate effectively or the improved capacity to undertake future research projects.

Each Community Fellow will be assigned an academic mentor from the University of Melbourne with relevant expertise. The Melbourne Social Equity Institute and the academic mentor will work with the Fellow to design a feasible project and the mentor will meet with the Fellow regularly over the course of the project.

Additional support will be provided by the Melbourne Social Equity Institute to assist the Community Fellows while they conduct and disseminate their research findings.

During their Fellowship, participants will be given opportunities to develop their research skills through a comprehensive research training program, and to participate in a range of academic and professional development activities. Community Fellows will be provided access to library and internet facilities and a University email address.

Previously, the Institute has also provided a hot desk space with access to a PC or MAC, however, this will need to be reviewed in line with the University's COVID-19 policy in early 2021.

A grant of up to \$5000 will be available to community organisations to enable the participation of the Community Fellow in the program.

The grant provides a contribution towards time release for the Community Fellow. A Collaboration Agreement will be created specifying project details, levels of financial support and expected outcomes.

A total of **at least ten Community Fellowships** are expected to be offered, to commence in **early 2021**.

In addition to a general pool of Fellowships which can align with any aspect of social equity research, this year the Institute is collaborating with a number of research groups at the University of Melbourne to provide specific fellowship opportunities, which include:

- Two Fellowships for people who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. The Fellows should also be from an Indigenous community organisation or be focusing on an Indigenous topic. The Fellows will be jointly supported by the Melbourne Social Equity Institute and the **Indigenous Knowledge Institute**.
- One Fellowship that looks at ways to improve the ability of people with disability to participate fully in society. People with disability are strongly encouraged to apply. The Fellow will be jointly supported by the Melbourne Social Equity Institute and the **Melbourne Disability Institute**.
- One Fellowship specifically in the area of environmental and social sustainability and resilience will be jointly supported by the Melbourne Social Equity Institute and the **Melbourne Sustainable Society Institute**.
- Two Fellows from African backgrounds will be supported by the Melbourne Social Equity Institute through the University of Melbourne's emerging African Research and Engagement in Australia initiative.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR THE COMMUNITY FELLOWS PROGRAM?

People applying to be part of the Community Fellows should:

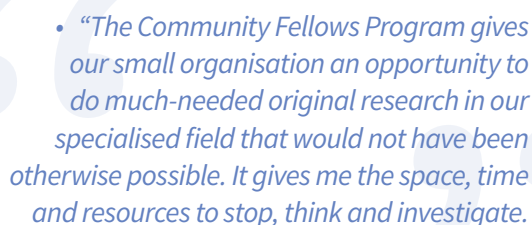
- be current staff members of a small to medium sized community organisation (up to 199 employees*);
- work at a community organisation that is involved in work that promotes social equity and works with marginalised communities;
- have the capacity to conduct the research project (with guidance and support from the academic mentor);
- be able to speak and write in English;
- be able to spend time on the University of Melbourne's Parkville campus;
- be able to commit between 100 and 200 hours work on the project (depending on its complexity);
- have a demonstrated ability to develop and maintain relationships with diverse stakeholders;
- have a commitment to sharing knowledge and supporting ethical research;
- have experience in managing and completing projects.

Community Fellows do not need to have prior research experience, although some Community Fellows may have worked on other research projects or have some research related qualifications.

Applicants with substantive research positions and/or PhDs will not usually be considered as suitable Community Fellows because the initiative is seeking to develop research capacities in organisations that do not currently have this in-house expertise.

Organisations with in-house research and evaluation capacity will not usually be considered for this initiative. We are also not able to fund local or state government departments or units. However, we will consider projects by state schools that support or host community-focused projects.

** For the purposes of this program, we define a 'small to medium' sized organisation as per guidelines provided by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (small: 0-19 staff; medium: 20-199 staff).*



• “The Community Fellows Program gives our small organisation an opportunity to do much-needed original research in our specialised field that would not have been otherwise possible. It gives me the space, time and resources to stop, think and investigate.

HOW DO I APPLY?

Visit <http://go.unimelb.edu.au/k8jj> to download the application form.

Applications close at 12pm on Friday 23 October 2020.

Once applications have been shortlisted, the Melbourne Social Equity Institute will identify suitable Academic Mentors at the University of Melbourne. The Institute's ability to support a project is dependent upon finding a suitable academic mentor.

If you have any questions about the Community Fellows Project or the application process please contact:

Charlene Edwards
Executive Officer
Melbourne Social Equity Institute
charlene.edwards@unimelb.edu.au
+61 466 771 001

To read about previous Community Fellows Projects visit
socialequity.unimelb.edu.au/community-fellows-program





Melbourne Social Equity Institute

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social-equity@unimelb.edu.au



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