

Melbourne Social Equity Institute

Guidelines for Equitable and Fair Remuneration for Community Research Participants

The Melbourne Social Equity Institute has produced these guidelines to support the equitable, appropriate and consistent remuneration of non-University of Melbourne / non-academic individuals who participate in research projects, as co-researchers, advisors or subjects. Remuneration should be reserved for the unwaged or those who are participating outside of their current work duties. The remuneration offered should not be the primary motivation for participating in the research project and must strike a balance between fair compensation and undue inducement.

The national minimum wage is currently \$19.49 per hour (2020 rate). Remuneration should, at a minimum, cover this rate in recognition of lost wages or earning capacity. Participants should not be out-of-pocket due to their involvement in the research project, so travel/parking expenses should also be covered. Some individuals may have accessibility costs that will also need to be factored in, for example, providing a cab charge for a wheelchair accessible taxi, a paid inclusion support worker or carer, or providing childcare. When considering remuneration rates, the Institute has consulted other sources and guidelines, such as the Australian National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS) applicant guidelines.

Recommended Remuneration Rates for 2020 and 2021

Level of Engagement	Payment method	Indicative Hourly rates	
		2020	2021
Research participant - participation in a focus group or research workshop	Coles/Myer voucher (or similar) – the value of the voucher should not exceed \$200	\$31.34	\$32.28
Research participant – one-on-one research interview	Coles/Myer voucher (or similar) – the value of the voucher should not exceed \$200	\$36.56	\$37.66
Lived experience research advisor – participation on a project reference group or advisory panel. This rate includes preparation / pre-reading time	Coles/Myer voucher (or similar) – the value of the voucher should not exceed \$200.	\$41.78	\$43.03
Community / peer researcher	This engagement should be established through the University's normal HR procedure for casual academic contracts.	\$43.55	\$44.86

Remuneration might compromise an individual's arrangement with Centrelink. This should be taken into consideration when negotiating with an individual. Feel free to contact the MSEI for advice on how we have previously dealt with this situation.

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