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# Charles Perkins Centre Catchlove Sylvan Mid-Career Researcher Bridging Fellowship

## Guidelines

### Overview

Mid-career researchers can find themselves at a pinch point in their academic careers, facing vulnerabilities due to the increasingly unpredictable research funding landscape, limited administrative support, and escalating responsibilities. This combination exposes high-potential MCRs to an increased risk of leaving academia - a risk that has become exacerbated recently due to shifts in the global political and research funding climate.

Thanks to our long-time friends and supporters, Dr Barry Catchlove and Professor Louise Sylvan, the Charles Perkins Centre (CPC) is able to administer an MCR support scheme. This initiative is designed to help our best mid-career researchers remain in academia and overcome a shortfall in research funding.

The scheme will be competitive, delivered to meet the circumstances and strategic needs of individual recipients, and augmented by mentoring and support from senior CPC researchers.

### Aim

This program aims to support our best independent mid-career researchers experiencing gaps in funding. This funding can be used to support salary and/or direct research costs.

### Eligibility

- Candidates must be mid-career researchers (5 - 15 years post-doctoral, as per the [ARC guidelines](#))
- Candidates must be University of Sydney employees or formally recognised academic affiliates with an active University RC (Responsibility Centre) to receive the award.
- Candidates must be independent mid-career researchers (i.e., in their current role they are establishing or developing their own research program rather than primarily supporting a supervisor-funded project).
- Candidates must be active members of the Charles Perkins Centre for more than 18 months:
  - o 'Member of the Charles Perkins Centre' displayed in candidate's University Academic Online Profile.
  - o Charles Perkins Centre must be listed as an affiliation in publications from the last 18 – 24 months (Up to five publications that acknowledge the CPC must be listed in the application form)
  - o Acknowledgement of the Charles Perkins Centre in other research outputs such as media.
  - o Active involvement in CPC-initiated activity such as a project node, theme, domain, committee membership or other initiative/s.
- Candidates who have received significant funding support (i.e. >\$50,000) from the CPC to support their own research program in the last 12 months are ineligible to apply.
- Candidates whose research programs are currently supported by a major grant or Fellowship are ineligible to apply.



## Process

- Candidates must complete [this form](#) and attach the relevant supporting documents.
- Supporting documents:
  1. Letter of Nomination, co-signed by candidate's Head of School and a Senior CPC Leader (Professor at the Charles Perkins Centre, actively engaged with the Centre's research program and strategy). This should be brief (up to 1000 words) and include the following:
    - Summary of research program and relevance to the CPC mission. Multidisciplinary projects and programs will be favourably considered.
    - Brief description of track record relevant to opportunity (include year of PhD conferral)
    - Explain how this bridging grant will maximise the candidate's chance to remain in academia. Include details on near-miss category 1 funding applications where relevant.
    - Plans for securing additional funding. Faculty and school co-contribution will be favourably considered.
  2. 2-page CV + appendix containing a list of CPC affiliated publications.
  3. PhD Graduation Certificate with the year of conferral.
- Applications will be assessed by members of the CPC's Executive Committee. Conflicts of interest will be managed during the assessment process.
- Applications are due on Friday 6 March 2026.

Please contact [cpc.re@sydney.edu.au](mailto:cpc.re@sydney.edu.au) if you have any questions.

## Value and duration

Awards have a maximum value of up to \$100,000 each. Up to three awards will be available in 2026.

Successful applicants will receive the award as an internal grant recorded in IRMA. A Project Code will be created and linked to a Responsibility Centre nominated in the application. Applicants will be required to provide relevant division, FOR, SEO, and TOA codes.

Funds must be spent by 1 December 2026, and expenses reconciled in accordance with the University's year-end processes. Funds will be administered through an auto-reimbursement process. Funds matching actual expenditure from the previous month will be transferred monthly into the established account by Corporate Finance. The transfer of funds will cease when the awarded amount is reached or **on 1 December 2026**, whichever comes first. Any unspent funds will be forfeited.