



Charles Sturt
University

Leverage Support

Guidelines

Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor, Research
(Performance and Governance)

For further information please contact: pvcric@csu.edu.au

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Purpose

University leverage is used to support research costs or demonstrate in-kind commitment to a project above what you are requesting from the funding organisation. Requests for leverage support are considered on an individual project basis and should be deemed necessary budget requests that enable the conduct of the research. Eligible leverage costs are outlined in the Guidelines.

Principles

Project support from CSU should be in the form of in-kind wherever possible.

A request for leverage is a request for a significant cash contribution of university funds. Leverage may be considered when:

- The project aligns with the [Research Strategic direction](#), and [University Priority FOR codes](#).
- When the funding program guidelines stipulate a cash co-investment

The maximum cash leverage normally considered is a ratio is 1:4, for example a project costing \$1m in cash may receive a maximum of \$200,000 in cash leverage, with the external cash support of \$800,000.

Priority FOR Code alignment

To ensure the university reaches the strategic goals set, leverage request applications will only be considered where the project FOR code/s align with the Research Strategy.

Each Research Institute and Faculty/School has set Priority FOR code/s. Refer to the table of [University Priority FoR Codes](#) to determine area of alignment.

If you are unsure of the priority FOR codes, please speak to your Head of School or Research Institute Director.

Strategic Alignment

Leverage requests will need to demonstrate how the project meets the:

- University Research Strategy, or
- Research Institute Strategy, or
- Faculty/ School Research Strategy

The Guidelines and Application form the basis for assessment of leverage requests. It is important to note that individual Research Institutes or business units (eg AgriPark) may have different business models that may have further requirements.

Application

Applications for leverage are to be submitted to the area that aligns with the project FOR code/s.

When in-kind support is being requested from a faculty or school, this should be requested and secured, in writing, prior to submitting a request for cash leverage to the Research Institute (RI) or the Pro Vice-Chancellor Research (Performance and Governance) (PVCR). All in-kind support is to be recorded in the leverage application form and BAF.

Leverage Applications submitted without a BAF **will not be considered**.

Applications for leverage submitted after submission of grant application **will not be considered**.

Timeline

Requests for leverage are to be submitted in alignment with the Research Project Request (RPR) form. The request for leverage requires a minimum 3-week turnaround.

It is always recommended to discuss your project and leverage request with the aligned Research Institute Executive Director or PVCRC prior to submitting the leverage request form. Refer to **Appendix A**.

Funding

Maximising the University's in-kind contribution should be the first step in leverage consideration. Where possible in-kind contribution should be secured to reduce cash leverage request. Discuss and secure in-kind contribution with your Head of School / Institute Director / line manager.

A completed BAF must accompany every request for leverage. The BAF provides an annual breakdown of requested cash leverage, approved in-kind and proposed grant funding to be allocated per year, assisting with the assessment and availability of funds.

When preparing an application and BAF, consideration should be given to the cost recovery for use of facilities, such as farming resources.

It is important to consider the annual allocations carefully. Any unspent annual allocation of leverage will be recovered by the funding area and will not be able to be carried forward unless there is a written variation approved by the funding body and endorsed by the contributing area.

HDR Student funding

Tuition, stipend, and operating costs for domestic and international HDR students should be sought via grant funding wherever possible.

[Tuition, stipend, and operating costs.](#)

Leverage support for tuition, stipend, and operating costs may be funded through a combination of:

- Australian Graduate Research Training Program (RTP) funds
- Research Fee Offset Scholarships (RFOS)
- PVCRC or Research Institute budget

RTP is government funding which can be used for domestic tuition, stipend, and operating costs, with a small allocation allowed to support international students. Refer to the [AGRTP Scholarships](#) webpage for funding duration and limits.

[Research Fee Offset Scholarships](#), also known as fee waivers, provide funding for domestic tuition only for eligible Master of Philosophy (MPhil) and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) students. RFOS funded domestic tuition is awarded for set duration after which the full fee applies.

RFOS criteria aligns with University priority FoR codes and the Research Strategy. *That is, a project that aligns with priority FoR codes and the Research Strategy should support an RFOS offering to an eligible student, where their proposed thesis aligns with the same FoR code(s).*

Leverage support for tuition, regardless of the funding source, is considered a cash contribution, although for some funding schemes it may be listed in the application as in-kind.

Refer to the table of costs for tuition, stipend and operating. **Table 1.**

Relocation And Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC)

Dependant on the student, relocation costs may need to be considered.

International students require consideration of funding for OSHC.

Refer to the [AGRTP Scholarships](#) page for funding limits.

Top Up for Stipend and/or Operating.

Where a grant includes funding for a HDR student where the stipend and/or operating is less than the Charles Sturt stipend, a leverage request for 'top-up' may be considered. Where the grant guidelines permit, stipend and/or operating should be sourced from the grant to the same value offered by Charles Sturt.

Table 1. *Subject to change – refer to the [AGRTP Scholarships](#) page for annual funding limits.*

Enrolment Type	Tuition - 2024	Stipend - 2024	Operating Costs* - 2024
Domestic	\$13,000.00 / annum (cash)	\$35,000.00 / annum (cash)	\$2,500.00 / annum (cash)
International	\$13,000.00 / annum (cash)	\$35,000.00 / annum (cash)	\$2,500.00 / annum (cash)

* Operating costs can increase to \$6,300.00 (@2024) for High-Cost FoE. Refer to 1.7 of the [Commonwealth Scholarships Guidelines \(Research\) 2017](#) for table of High-Cost FoE's.

Salary

Academic and General salaries should be requested from the funding organisation wherever possible. However, it is acknowledged that some funding guidelines limit or exclude funding allocation for salaries.

Alternatively, academic, and general salaries should be sought as an in-kind contribution from your Head of School/Institute Director/Line Manager.

Where project or in-kind funding is exhausted or not an option, salary or the balance of salary can be sought via cash leverage.

Refer to the [Staff Cost Calculator](#).

Salary and staff on costs for other partners/third parties will not be considered for leverage.

Travel

Funding for travel should be sought from project funding wherever possible. However, it is acknowledged that some funding guidelines limit or exclude funding allocation for travel.

Where a grant stipulates that travel is not supported, travel may be requested via cash leverage support.

Refer to [Charles Sturt Travel](#) for resources to assist in preparing a travel budget. NB: an itinerary and /or budget is not required from the Travel Office.

It is recommended that in preparing the grant application that consideration be given to conference attendance to promote your project and increase exposure.

Project Specific Equipment

Funding for project specific equipment should be sought from grant funding wherever possible. However, it is acknowledged that some grant criteria limit or exclude funding allocation for equipment.

Large scale equipment *may* be considered where it is required specifically for the project, is not already available for use at any of the university's campus locations, and where it can be demonstrated that it will have significant use beyond the project. Request for Capital Budget should also be considered for large scale equipment for wider university use. Researchers are encouraged to liaise with the Division of Facilities

Management to discuss large scale equipment costs to ensure consideration is given to installation and maintenance, and insurance costs are considered for the duration of the grant.

Equipment required for the project only, with no benefit to the university beyond the scope of the project is unlikely to be considered for cash leverage support.

Stores and Operating

Funding for stores and operating should be sought from grant funding wherever possible. However, it is acknowledged that some grant criteria limit or exclude some operating costs.

Other

At times projects require funding for specific items or events.

Example:

Conference registration fee, where you will be presenting, where project funding excludes and other internal schemes are not available.

Not considered for leverage support.

- Fees for external services
- 'Slush' or 'contingency' funds – your budget proposal should outline ALL costs as required.
- Conference organising costs – eg. inviting project partners from overseas (travel)
- Anything not required for delivery of the project

Typically, requests for cash leverage to support CRC projects, where CRC membership is already funded by the university, will not be considered. Such requests should be discussed with the FoR aligned area before application.

Application Submission

Applications for cash leverage are to be submitted to the area that aligns with the project FoR codes.

Applications received by an area where the project FoR code does not align with that areas strategic FoR codes, will be declined.

Refer to the table of [University Priority FoR Codes](#) to determine area of alignment.

- Applications for projects that will sit within a Research Institute and align with a Research Institute FoR to be submitted via email to the relevant Research Institute.
- Applications for projects that that will sit within a Faculty/School and align with a Faculty/School FoR to be submitted via email to the Pro Vice-Chancellor, Research (Performance and Governance).
- Applications for projects that align with the Global Digital Farm (GDF) or Renewables in Agriculture to be submitted to AgriPark.

Submit completed form with attached BAF and any relevant grant documents.

Email Subject line convention – 'Leverage | <Your Name>'

Email Contacts

Gulbali Institute	gulbali@csu.edu.au
Rural Health Research Institute	RHRI@csu.edu.au
Artificial Intelligence and Cyber Futures Institute	aicf@csu.edu.au
Pro Vice-Chancellor Research (Performance and Governance)	pvcric@csu.edu.au
AgriPark	agripark@csu.edu.au

Approved Leverage Funds

Where leverage is approved, an account code will be provided to manage the leverage funds.

Leverage funds **must be** expended in each year before 1 December, per the BAF.

Expenditure

It is the responsibility of the funding recipient to manage expenditure of funds.

Changes to budget items funded by leverage – leverage funds may only be used for those items approved at the time of the leverage application. Any request to amend allocated budget items must be submitted with 3 months' notice.

Annual allocation – Expenditure, with submitted invoice(s) is required before 1 December within the year the budget is allocated, per the BAF. Annual budget allocations do not automatically roll forward.

Carry forward of unspent funds – requests for carry forward of unspent funds will only be considered in exceptional circumstances. Requests for carry forward must be submitted with 3 months' notice.

Example of what is considered exceptional circumstance for extension:

- Where a timed variation has been approved by the funding body.
- Postdoc extended leave of absence due to illness, parental leave.
- Project delay due to natural disaster, where the project and/or grant has been extended to accommodate.

Reporting

A summary of project progress *may* be requested by the leverage support funding body (RI/PVCR). Where progress reporting is required, the requirement will be advised with template provided.

Appendix A

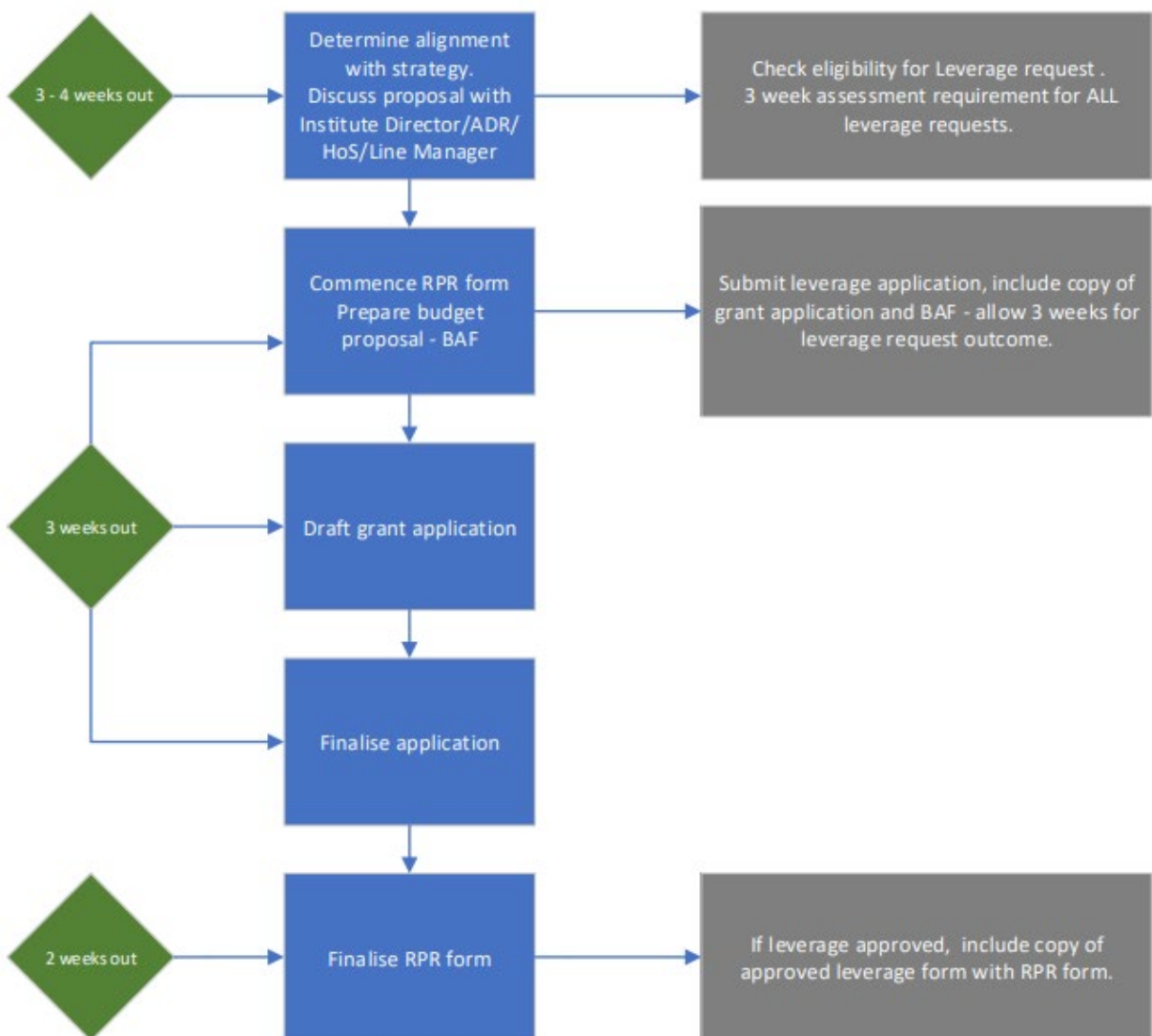
GRANT DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The below timeline supports the minimum timeline required to prepare, submit and gain an outcome of grant submission. Where possible, commence the process earlier.

CRITICAL DEADLINES

RPR form - Research Services require a minimum of 10 business days to process a complete submission.

Leverage - If the grant submission timeline does not allow for a 3 week leverage assessment, leverage may not be considered. Refer to leverage guidelines.



Appendix B – example applications

Example 1 – Request for stipend top up and full operating.

2. Project Funds (AUD)

A. Total amount requested from the funding body (<i>Grant/tender total</i>)	\$ 800,000
B. Total amount subcontracted to third party/collaborators (<i>not requested via Charles Sturt in-kind or cash leverage</i>)	\$ 50,000
C. University Income ($A - B = C$)	\$ 750,000

3. Total Leverage Contribution Requested – Please also attach copy of BAF.

Item description	Details	In-Kind	Cash	*Approved
Academic Salary	Approved by HoS – Research % allocation.	\$ 30,000	\$	\$
General Salary	Approved by HoS	\$ 10,000	\$	\$
Project Specific Equipment		\$	\$	\$
Stores and operating		\$	\$	\$
Other	<i>Include details</i>	\$	\$	\$
Domestic PhD Tuition		\$	\$	\$
Domestic PhD Stipend		\$	\$	\$
Domestic PhD Operating		\$	\$	\$
International PhD Tuition	Tuition requested from Grant Provider.	\$		\$
International PhD Stipend	Grant only funds 28k / year stipend. Stipend top up of 7k/ year requested.	\$	\$ 21,000	\$
International PhD Operating	Grant does not fund PhD operating.	\$	\$ 7,500	\$
TOTAL		\$ 40,000	\$ 28,500	\$

Example 2 – Request for PhD tuition, stipend top up and full operating.

2. Project Funds (AUD)

D. Total Value of Project (<i>Grant/tender total</i>)	\$ 800,000
E. Total subcontracted to third parties (<i>not requested via Charles Sturt in-kind or cash leverage</i>)	\$ 50,000
F. University Income (<i>A - B = C</i>)	\$ 750,000

3. Total Leverage Contribution Requested – Please also attach copy of BAF.

Item description	Details	In-Kind	Cash	*Approved
Academic Salary	Approved by HoS – 0.8 FTE	\$ 200,000	\$	\$
General Salary	Approved by HoS	\$ 10,000	\$	\$
Project Specific Equipment		\$	\$	\$
Stores and operating		\$	\$	\$
Other	<i>Include details</i>	\$	\$	\$
Domestic PhD Tuition	1 x PhD student	\$	\$52,000	\$
Domestic PhD Stipend	Grant only funds 28k / year stipend. Stipend top up of 7k/ year requested.	\$	\$ 21,000	\$
Domestic PhD Operating	Grant does not fund PhD operating.	\$	\$ 7,500	\$
International PhD Tuition		\$		\$
International PhD Stipend		\$	\$	\$
International PhD Operating		\$	\$	\$
TOTAL		\$ 210,000	\$ 80,500	\$

Example 3 – Request for academic salary contribution, travel, PhD tuition, stipend and operating.

2. Project Funds (AUD)

G. Total Value of Project (<i>Grant/tender total</i>)	\$ 800,000
H. Total subcontracted to third parties (<i>not requested via Charles Sturt in-kind or cash leverage</i>)	\$ 50,000
I. University Income (<i>A - B = C</i>)	\$ 750,000

3. Total Leverage Contribution Requested – Please also attach copy of BAF.

Item description	Details	In-Kind	Cash	*Approved
Academic Salary	Level A, 0.5 FTE. In addition to 0.3 FTE approved by HoS – Research allocation	\$ 50,000	\$ 20,000	\$
General Salary	Approved by HoS	\$ 10,000	\$	\$
Project Specific Equipment		\$	\$	\$
Stores and operating		\$	\$	\$
Other	Domestic travel to present at XX Conference. Grant excludes travel.	\$	\$ 3,000	\$
Domestic PhD Tuition		\$	\$	\$
Domestic PhD Stipend		\$	\$	\$
Domestic PhD Operating		\$	\$	\$
International PhD Tuition	1 x PhD student	\$	\$ 52,000	\$
International PhD Stipend	3 years	\$	\$ 105,000	\$
International PhD Operating	3 years	\$	\$ 7,500	\$
TOTAL		\$ 60,000	\$ 187,500	\$