

Queensland-Smithsonian Fellowships

Guidelines 2020

About the program

The Smithsonian Institution, established in 1846, is a group of museums and research centres administered by the United States of America (USA) government. The Smithsonian Institution is the world's largest museum and research complex comprising 19 museums and the National Zoo, with research facilities in the USA, Panama and elsewhere. The Smithsonian has close ties with 168 other museums in 39 states, Panama and Puerto Rico. These museums are known as Smithsonian affiliated museums.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) exists between the Queensland Government and the Smithsonian Institution, which aims to foster the exchange of skills and knowledge to help grow Queensland's science, educational and cultural capabilities.

As part of the MOU, the Queensland-Smithsonian Fellowships were developed.

Fellows receive Queensland Government funding to travel to a Smithsonian facility and undertake a project that will facilitate the interchange of knowledge and skills between Queensland and the Smithsonian Institution.

Program aims

The Queensland-Smithsonian Fellowships support a diverse range of projects, including those in the natural sciences, the arts, education or museum management.

The program enables Fellows to increase their knowledge and skills in their chosen field, and apply these to benefit their work and the Queensland agencies that employ them.

Proposed Fellows must work in an area of mutual interest with the Smithsonian Institution that is aligned with the target investment areas outlined below.

Queensland Government funding of up to **\$25,000** (excluding GST) is available for the nominated fellow to travel to the USA for a project ranging from 8–16 weeks in duration.

Target investment areas

Fellowship proposals addressing the following target investment areas are sought.

- Protecting our biodiversity and heritage: marine and terrestrial.
- Developing clean, sustainable energy production.
- Building resilience and managing climate risk, particularly in tropical environments.
- Ensuring sustainable water use, including collecting water quality data to inform research.
- Developing and applying digitally-enabled technologies, including advanced modelling.
- Growing the public value of arts, in particular, community access and understanding of art.
- Strengthening the cultural tourism role of museums in attracting visitors to a region.

Eligibility criteria

The applicant organisation

Applications are invited from Queensland agencies (the applicant organisation) that employ staff who work in an area of interest to one or more Smithsonian Institution agencies. The Queensland applicant organisation **nominates the proposed Fellow** (an employee of the agency) in the application. The applicant organisation **must pay the Fellow's salary** while the Fellow undertakes the fellowship.

The Fellow

To be eligible the proposed Fellow must:

- be an Australian citizen, or have Australian residency
- reside and work in Queensland
- be employed by a Queensland based research, educational or cultural agency—including, but not limited to, universities, schools, museums, galleries, or government research organisations
- provide evidence that the nominated Smithsonian Institution agency/agencies will accommodate the Fellow and provide basic administrative support for the duration of the Fellow's visit.

Other conditions

- The fellowship is awarded for an individual (the

proposed Fellow) to travel to a Smithsonian Institution facility. Applications seeking travel for more than one nominee will not be considered.

- Fellowship funding is not transferrable, including to other employees of the applicant organisation or persons associated with the Fellow.
- Fellows must complete the fellowship within 12 months of notification of the award.
- Incomplete applications and ineligible applications will not be considered.
- Applications to support previous recipients of a Queensland-Smithsonian Fellowship will not be considered.

Using the Fellowship funds

The Queensland Government will release the fellowship payment to the applicant organisation (the Queensland employer) to administer the grant funding. The fellowship funding is to be used for travel costs and living expenses, and is comprised of:

- Travel costs of up to \$5,000 (excluding GST) for one return international economy airfare and associated travel costs. The applicant organisation will be required to supply a financial acquittal statement for the travel component of the fellowship, and will have to return any unused funds

Note: Associated travel costs includes domestic travel to secure visas, internal flights within the USA, and other travel while overseas (if applicable).

- A living allowance of \$1,250 per week (excluding GST) to cover cost of living expenses, including accommodation, meals and incidental expenses. Funding is available for a minimum of 8 weeks and a maximum of 16 weeks duration (\$20,000 maximum).

No additional funding will be provided. The applicant organisation will have to refund some of the fellowship funding if the duration of the Fellow's overseas visit is reduced, as there will be a reduction in the living allowance entitlement.

All costs associated with additional time spent at the host institute(s)—that is, any time that exceeds the approved duration on the fellowship—must be borne by the Fellow and/or the applicant organisation. In addition, all costs exceeding the total approved funding must be borne by the Fellow and/or the applicant organisation.

Assessment process

Eligible applications will be assessed and rated against the program's assessment criteria (below), and ranked in order of merit by an assessment panel comprised of members with relevant professional backgrounds.

The Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science, and Minister for the Arts approves the recipient of this fellowship.

Assessment criteria

The application will be assessed in a competitive process on its merits against the following criteria.

1. The proposed Fellow's skills and track record

The application must outline how the proposed Fellow has the relevant skills and professional track record to conduct the fellowship.

2. A Smithsonian placement that strengthens the proposed Fellow's skills and knowledge

The application must clearly outline:

- the proposed project to be undertaken
- why the nominated Smithsonian Institute(s) is/are critical to the project
- how the proposed Smithsonian placement(s) will enhance the Fellow's skills and knowledge.

3. Benefits for Queensland

The application must outline how the proposed fellowship:

- will translate into tangible benefits/outcomes for Queensland
- will benefit the applicant organisation
- is aligned to one or more of the program target investment areas outlined in this document
- will foster an ongoing exchange of knowledge and skills between Queensland and the Smithsonian Institution.

Fellowship agreement

If the application for funding is successful, the applicant organisation will enter into a legally binding financial incentive agreement with the Queensland Government. The agreement consists of the application, the program guidelines and the Queensland-Smithsonian Fellowships Financial Incentive Agreement Terms and Conditions.

If successful with an application:

- the applicant organisation must not enter into any legally binding arrangements with other parties which prevent the Fellow from meeting obligations under the Queensland-Smithsonian Fellowships financial incentive agreement
- the Fellow will be required to: make every reasonable effort to be present at a fellowship announcement function, if organised, and be amenable to giving presentations to interested parties after the report is submitted.

Privacy

The Queensland Government collects and collates information from the application form to evaluate applications for the program. Only authorised Queensland Government officers and approved grant assessors have access to this information.

Applicants should note that broad details of successful proposals, agreed outcomes, progress

and the level of funding awarded may be published by the Queensland Government. Some information may be used to promote funded projects.

Personal information will not be disclosed to any other third party without consent, unless required by law or for the purposes of Information *Privacy Act 2009*.

For audit purposes, the Queensland Government is required to retain the applications and other supplied support material. The provisions of the *Right to Information Act 2009* apply to documents in the possession of the Queensland Government.

How to apply

Applications for the Queensland-Smithsonian Fellowships close on Monday 9 March 2020 at 1.00pm AEST. The application consists of:

- a completed online application form
- a scanned (PDF) signed letter of endorsement from the applicant organisation supporting the proposed fellowship, and confirming that they will continue to pay the proposed Fellow's salary while they undertake the fellowship
- scanned (PDF) evidence of support from the hosting Smithsonian Institution group(s) clearly stating their support for the proposed fellowship, and their commitment to host the proposed Fellow's visit (e.g. signed letter, fax or email).
- a signed Financial Incentive Agreement Terms and Conditions declaration, which is available at www.science.des.qld.gov.au. It must be printed; signed by the relevant parties; scanned as a PDF; and uploaded with the application form. The declaration page must be signed by: the nominated Fellow and an authorised representative from the applicant organisation.

The applicant organisation and/or proposed Fellow:

- must advise the Queensland Government of changes which are likely to impact on the fellowship
- may be contacted during the assessment process to clarify information provided in the application and/or to request further information to enable the assessment of the application
- may be required to attend an interview.

All applications must be submitted via the online SmartyGrants website at <https://des.smartygrants.com.au/QSF2020>.

There is no implicit guarantee of approval at any stage in the process, and the applicant organisation will be notified in writing of the outcome of the application.

Contact

For further information:

Email: science.grants@des.qld.gov.au

Phone: 13 QGOV (13 74 68)