

## DECRA 2018- Travel Budget Advice

There are two areas to budget for travel in the RMS budget table- 'Travel' and 'Fieldwork Expenses'.

**ARC Budget Limits:** The total travel costs for your project may not exceed \$50,000 over the life of the project. Costs related to carrying out fieldwork are NOT counted towards the limit and should be requested under 'Fieldwork Expenses'.

### Important Notes:

- Outline costs clearly, including the origins, destinations and number of days where appropriate.
- Detail each individual case of travel/fieldwork as a different line item, breaking down the costs. For example, do not group trips to separate conferences under the single heading, 'Conference Travel'.
- Travel must be essential to the project and be fully justified in the "Justification of funding requested from the ARC" section of your application.
- For pricing airfares, you can source information from online sites such as [Expedia](#), [Webjet](#), [Qantas](#), [Virgin](#), or for multi destination trips, a quote from a local travel agent such as [Flight Centre](#). It is also acceptable to speak to the school administrator who normally organises travel for your school.
- The [2016/2017 ATO rates](#) can act as a guide for sourcing travel rates and indicate the maximum amount permitted. You should only request what you know you need in order to undertake the travel. ATO rates are primarily aimed at business travel and as such, may seem high for some destinations. Common sense should prevail and if you have experience travelling to certain areas and thus know what a realistic figure would be, this should be used in place of the ATO rates. Detail how your figures were selected in the Budget Justification- this can go to show experience undertaking similar research projects, adding to a 'value for money' proposition and the idea of your track record and hands-on knowledge in this research area. *(Also see 'Notes if requesting less than the ATO/UNSW rate').*

**NEW:** Budget items supported for DECRA now include reasonable essential costs to allow a researcher who is a carer, or who themselves require care or assistance, to undertake travel essential to the Project.

### General Travel (the 'Travel' section of the Budget)

#### Examples of costs that can be included under this category:

- ✓ Domestic and/or international airfares (economy)
- ✓ Accommodation and incidentals (per diems)
- ✓ Other travel related items (such as reasonable local travel within country – e.g. airport transfers, airport buses/trains, taxis, etc.)

#### The purposes for the above travel may include:

- ✓ Conference travel - see 'Conference Travel' section on page 1-2
- ✓ Research visits and collaboration- see 'Research visits & Collaboration Travel' section on pages 2-3

#### Who is eligible to request travel costs?

- ✓ Funding is permitted for the **DECRA candidate and other personnel** (e.g. research support staff, Research Associates, PhD Students, other research collaborators) working on the project. In previous years, travel was permitted for the DECRA candidate only.

### ***Conference Travel (the 'Travel' section of the Budget)***

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Conference travel is an eligible item. You can ask for flights, accommodation, registration and a per diem. Conference travel has to be **very well justified** and informal feedback suggests international travel (particularly conference attendance) is the first place the ARC looks when reducing budgets.

Some Faculties provide a conference budget for researchers. If making use of this, it can be included in your *Strategic Statement from the Administering Organisation* as evidence of support for your project.

Conference Travel would also be described to a certain extent under **'Research Environment'** in the Project Description ("are there adequate strategies to encourage dissemination, commercialisation (if appropriate) and promotion of research outcomes?").

#### **Conference Travel should appear in the budget table with each individual expenditure item detailed:**

*Airfares-Sydney/USA -ICIAM Conference \$2,800*

*Accommodation-USA -6 days @ \$200 per day-ICIAM Conference \$1,200*

*Per Diem-USA-6 days @ \$120 per day-ICIAM Conference \$720*

*Registration- ICIAM Conference \$6,000*

#### **If requesting conference travel from the ARC, some things to make clear in your Justification include:**

- The standing of the conference
- The audience/participants of the conference
- Benefits/importance to the project in attending that particular conference
- Why actual attendance is better than a cheaper alternative that doesn't involve travel
- What additional activities you may be able to undertake in conjunction (meeting with other experts in the research field, side-trip to a University specialising in that research area, etc.)
- Any direct publication outputs as a result of the conference (i.e. a paper) and who will receive this
- Your role in the conference and the significance of that, for example, will you be submitting a paper or presenting a poster as a way to disseminate research results?

#### **Example Justifications for Conference Travel:**

*"(Name of Conference) Conference (\$total cost): This is to attend the (Name of Conference) mid-year Meeting, the largest worldwide conference in the (research field), to interact with international colleagues in the field and related areas. At this conference, the outcome of the project will be presented to the broad scientific community, and discussed with a variety of experts. This travel will be combined with the visit to University of (XXX), to minimize the number of inter-continental flights and ensure this project is as cost effective as possible. Budget includes return economy airfare from (Location) to (Location), 6 nights' accommodation and per diem expenses."*

*"(Name of Conference) Conference (\$total cost): This is to attend the (Name of Conference) General Assembly, to present project results to the international community and discuss with a variety of experts. The (Name of Conference) General Assembly is an important meeting as it is the largest European gathering of scientists from a broad range of (research field) that otherwise would not be reached. To minimise total cost, this travel will be combined with the visit to (Location of Collaborative visit). Budget includes return economy airfare from (Location) to (Location), 6 nights' accommodation and per diem expenses."*

## ***Research Visits & Collaboration Travel (the 'Travel' section of the Budget)***

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You may request research visits & collaboration travel to visit specific people or teams to undertake knowledge sharing specific to your project. This kind of activity should be detailed in the relevant section of your **Project Description**. As per the above tips and examples on conference justifications, research visits/collaboration in conjunction with attendance at a conference in that same area/trip can demonstrate value for money in your proposal.

### **Collaboration Travel should be thoroughly detailed in the budget table, for example:**

*Research Collaboration (return airfare Sydney-Hong Kong @ \$1100, accommodation @ \$150/day x 5; per diem @ \$120/day x 5)*

*Research Visit Australian National University – (Airfare; Melbourne – Canberra Return) - \$180*

*Research Visit Australian National University - (Accommodation; 4 nights @\$183/night) - \$732*

*Research Visit Australian National University - (Meals & Incidentals; 5 days @119/day) - \$595*

*Flight to Singapore (Collaborate with Co-author) - Return Airfare) - \$1500*

### **If requesting collaboration travel from the ARC, some things to make clear in your Justification include:**

- Why is the collaboration essential to the project- i.e. why are you doing it?
- Why have you chosen this method of collaboration (i.e. face to face meetings) and not another?

### **Reasons for face-to-face collaboration may include:**

- Expert knowledge sharing
- Workshopping the design of experiments/analysis

Keep in mind that a DECRA proposal is a sole-investigator project. When justifying travel for collaboration, ensure the balance between you driving the project/providing the intellectual input into the project and what your collaborator might be contributing does not raise concerns with assessors. If there is too much reliance on another party and the travel is not funded or that collaborator is no longer in a position to contribute in the way you envisioned, will the feasibility of the project be questioned?

### **Example Justifications for Research Visits & Collaboration Travel:**

*1-week collaborative visit to (Uni/Institute/Centre), (geographic location) (\$total cost): During this visit CI (your name) will collaborate with (expert name) on Project Aims 1 and 2 of this proposal. (Expert name) is an (Australian/International) expert in (area of expertise), and close collaboration with (him/her) will ensure the success of this project. This visit is seen as an essential part of the project, because the intensive face-to-face collaboration will integrate (his/her) expertise into the investigation of (specific project area), ensuring the latest innovations are applied to the specific problems outlined in this proposal. Return economy airfare to (Location), 5 nights' accommodation and 5 days per diem expenses are requested for this collaborative visit. Quotes for international flights were obtained from Expedia.com.au.*

*Two 1-week visits to (Uni/Institute/Centre), (geographic location) (\$total cost): These visits are to work with the local IT experts on configuring the technical environment (including their super-computer, disks and data cloud) to enable the efficient analysis of the (data type) data. The proposed project involves (brief description of project elements specifically relating to this visit). The close collaboration with IT experts at (Uni/Institute/Centre) will ensure that the computer environment is optimised for the most efficient processing of the (data type) data. Budget includes twice economy-class travel to (Location), and in total 10 nights' accommodation and 10 days per Diem expenses.*

### ***Fieldwork Travel (the 'Fieldwork Expenses' section of the Budget)***

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#### **What is defined as 'Field Research'?**

'Field Research' means the collection of information integral to the Project outside a laboratory, library or workplace setting and often in a location external to the researcher's normal place of employment.

If you are able to justify the necessity for the work in relation to the proposed Project, and the Administering Organisation (i.e. UNSW) can certify the work undertaken, then it can be considered as 'Field Research'. It is at UNSW's discretion to consider what is determined as 'Field Research'.

The main purpose of any travel designated as Field Research must be to carry out the research, not to attend a conference or other related meetings. Fieldwork can include visiting/making use of unique/specialised facilities in Australia or overseas that are not available locally (e.g. archives or specialised libraries) for the purpose of completing your research.

#### **Examples of costs that can be included under this category:**

- International and domestic travel costs to the fieldwork site
- Accommodation and living costs for fieldwork
- Other fieldwork related items (e.g. technical or logistical support, car hire etc.)

#### **Who is eligible to request Fieldwork costs?**

- Funding is permitted for the DECRA Candidate and other personnel working on the project.

***Need Support Staff?*** Research, technical and logistical support staff required to assist with field research may be requested under "Personnel" in the Budget. Salary support for these staff is an allowable item.

#### **Other Important Notes:**

- Costs related to carrying out field research are not considered general travel and therefore the \$50,000 limit on travel over the life of the project does NOT apply to these costs.

### ***Notes if requesting less than the ATO/UNSW Rate:***

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If you have previous experience researching in a particular location and are confident that your accommodation and per diem rates will be below the standard ATO/UNSW rates, it is important to reference your experience when justifying the (lower) rates you have requested. This not only strengthens your case for the project being 'value for money', but adds to the idea of your track record and hands-on knowledge in this research area.

**For example:** *"The accommodation (10 days at \$XXX per day) and per diem rates (10 days at \$XXX per day) requested for my fieldwork travel to XXX are based on my extensive experience working and living in this location whilst collecting sample data for XXX, and are significantly lower than the ATO published rate of \$XXX for this region."*