

Research Boost – Support for Researchers

Purpose:

To approve the implementation of the Research Boost initiative aimed at supporting researchers in applying for major external funding.

Background:

There is a cohort of researchers in the Centre who are not permanent staff and are funded through various grants and contracts, including industry partnerships. These researchers are often early in their careers and represent the future scientific workforce in New Zealand. Supporting them aligns with our KPIs to TEC to support early and mid-career researchers and transition researchers into the next stage of their career.

Problem Statement:

These researchers face significant risk if they miss a grant round, potentially losing their positions. Additionally, time spent preparing grant applications can detract from current research obligations and publication output. If these researchers miss a grant round, they will often be lost for the science sector in Aotearoa, meaning a potential knowledge gap for Te Whai Ao and loss of momentum on some projects

Proposal:

The Research Boost provides up to three months of salary (used flexibly over six months or up to NZ\$40,000) and up to NZ\$5,000 in OPEX to support the preparation of a major funding application. Currently, sixteen awards are available under the remaining DWC tranche.

Key Features of the Research Boost:

- One-time award per applicant.
- Flexible use of salary over six months.
- Must be used to prepare a major funding application.
- This funding does not attract overheads and the host institution needs to acknowledge that.
- Requires HoD and PI support.

Consultation:

Director, Deputy Director, and Deputy Director Science wrote the policy.

Heads of Physics and Chemistry Departments from Auckland, Otago, Canterbury, and Victoria, as well as the Dean of Science (Auckland) and PVC-Science (Otago), have reviewed and support the initiative.

Approved by the DWC Governance Board on 23 October 2025.

Implementation:

Communication Strategy: Policy distributed by email, posted on the DWC website, and discussed in Science Team Meeting.

Contact:

If you have any queries regarding the content of this policy or need further clarification, contact the Business Support Coordinator, dwc@otago.ac.nz.