

Appendix 1: 2026/27 ILD Funding Applications Category Descriptors

The following category descriptors are used as a guide to scoring an application against each of the assessment criteria: 1) Alignment with FEHHS/ILD priorities-includes Quality and Feasibility; 2) Significance and/or Innovation; and 3) Applicant/Team Quality & Capability, relative to opportunity. While the category descriptors provide The ILD Competitive Funding Panel reviewers with some benchmarks for appropriately scoring each application, it is not essential that all descriptors relating to a given score must be met. The descriptors are a guide to a “best fit” outcome. The process of consistently referring panel members to these descriptors is vital to ensuring equity, thoroughness and process consistency. Please note that some applications can score high in some areas and low in others, but a weighted overall score will be created.

When evaluating PGRs in the applicant/team quality and capability, track record can be evaluated based on their academic achievements, research outputs, presentations, and contributions to the research community, alongside their progress in the degree itself where this is provided by the supervisor.

Adapted from NHMRC Project Grant Category Descriptors

Category	Alignment with FEHHS/ILD priorities- 50% includes Quality and Feasibility	Significance and/or Innovation - 25% Significance of the expected outcomes AND/OR Innovation of the concept	Applicant/Team Quality & Capability relevant to this application 25%
4 Excellent	The research plan/conference abstract/networking: - is clearly defined, coherent and well developed - has a strong study design - is feasible with all required tools, techniques and expertise - Is interdisciplinary and has excellent fit with the ILD/FEHHS strategy, plans and values (University values)	The planned research or research to be presented at conference: - will result in a significant advance in knowledge in this field which addresses an issue of importance - is likely to result in fundamental outcomes underpinning societal and economic issues (real world or grand challenges/UN SDGs) - is likely to translate into fundamental or commercialisable outcomes that will transform practice or policy - will likely be the subject of invited plenary presentations/keynotes at national and international meetings/conferences - will likely result in influential publications (3*/4*) or is likely to lead to external funding applications, outputs, support timely completion of doctorate and/or strengthen pathways to impact - is highly innovative in concept - will use advanced approaches to enhance outcomes. - Likely lead to new collaborations, innovations, or advancements in knowledge	Relative to opportunity, the applicant/team: - has expertise that is highly relevant to the proposed research both in terms of its depth and/or breadth - has a combined record of research and practice achievement that is excellent by international standards commensurate with their field and career level relative to opportunity - research achievement may include contributions to translational outcomes such as patents, commercial outputs, and public policy or implementation of change in practice - has research quality and productivity as exemplified by Q1 outputs and high volume of total outputs for the team - is experienced with excellent national and/or international reputations in the field of research relevant to the application - may involve early career members who are strong contributors to the overall team quality & capability or will have the capacity to do so due to the availability of strong mentoring - has early career members with outstanding national and international reputations relative to opportunity

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3 Good	The research plan/conference abstract/networking: - is generally good overall, and solid in its scientific plan, but may not always be clear in its intent and may lack some focus - raises only minor concerns regarding the study design - is feasible and only raises minor doubts about the feasibility in some areas - some interdisciplinarity and fit with the ILD/FEHHS strategy, plans and values (University values)	The planned research or research to be presented at conference: - may incrementally advance knowledge in the field which addresses an issue of some importance - may result in fundamental outcomes in the sciences, social sciences and/or humanities underpinning grand challenges, real world problems/UN SDGs - some minor concerns regarding feasibility but still translate into fundamental or commercialisable outcomes that will transform practice or policy - is unlikely to be the subject of invited plenary presentations at international meetings but findings could be presented at international gatherings as oral or poster - may result in some 2* outputs or may lead to some applications for external funding and/or strengthen pathways to impact, support completion of doctorate - is solid in concept - will use mainly standard approaches. - may lead to some new collaborations, innovations, or advancements in knowledge	Relative to opportunity, the applicant/team: - although good or potentially good in some respects, raises some significant concerns regarding the depth and/or breadth of expertise relevant to the proposed research - has a combined record of research achievement that is average by national and international standards commensurate with their field of research and career level relative to opportunity - research achievement may include contributions to translational outcomes such as patents, commercial outputs, and public policy or implementation of change in practice - research quality as exemplified in the top publications of each investigator - research productivity as exemplified by total outputs for the team - has good and growing national and/or international reputations in the field of research relevant to opportunity - may involve some early career members who would have the potential to add to the team with mentoring, but there is little or no evidence of a mentoring framework to support them.
2 Marginal	The research plan/conference abstract/networking: - is somewhat unclear in its scientific approach and goals - contains some major design flaws - raises major concerns about the feasibility and thus the likelihood of successful completion. - Not interdisciplinary and poor fit with the ILD/FEHHS strategy, plans and values (University values)	The planned research or research to be presented at conference: - addresses an issue of some importance - may result in some publications but unlikely to be ≥2* - is unlikely to lead to successful bids for external funding or new collaborations, limited impact - may have some innovative and novel aspects, while others underpin or extend existing knowledge.	Relative to opportunity, the applicant/team: - has made contributions to the field of research but there are significant concerns regarding the depth and breadth of relevant expertise - has a combined record of research achievement quality (as exemplified by publications and productivity (totality of outputs) and/or translation into practice, that places them at an average level for their peers/cohort

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1 Poor	The research plan/conference abstract/networking: • is not clear • does not seem to be feasible • is unlikely to be successfully completed. • is not aligned to ILD/FEHHS	The planned research or research to be presented at conference: • does not address an issue of more than marginal concern • will not advance current knowledge in the field • only follows behind previously well documented and studied concepts or previously well used approaches. • will not lead to outputs, new collaborations, innovations, or advancements in knowledge	Relative to opportunity, the applicant/team: • is heavily underpowered in terms of relevant expertise required to successfully complete the research program • is not productive to any significant extent in relevant fields • members are not well known nationally or internationally in the relevant research fields.