

# JMI Policy Challenge Grant



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## **The JMI Policy Challenge Grant program is an annual award established in 2022 to support academics and researchers to make a public policy impact.**

The James Martin Institute for Public Policy (JMI) will award grants to outstanding academics, at any stage in their career, interested in undertaking applied public policy research or translating their existing research for a policy context and audience.

The purpose of the JMI Policy Challenge Grant is to:

- Tackle the biggest public policy challenges through the generation and communication of new insights.
- Foster engagement between academics and policymakers.
- Support improved policy outcomes informed by applied public policy research.

The JMI Policy Challenge Grant is unique: the Institute will offer dedicated support to grant recipients to communicate their insights for a policy audience, and to maximise the impact of their research through targeted engagement with policymakers.

# Grant guidelines

The JMI Policy Challenge Grants can be awarded for:

- new applied research, or
- translation of existing research for a policy audience.

## Can you identify a major policy challenge facing NSW?

Grants will be awarded for projects focusing on **major policy challenges facing NSW** under the **following themes**, where the proposed research has strong potential to catalyse policy innovation and generate public value for the benefit of the people of NSW:

**1. The transition to a net zero economy: democratic, community and political economy aspects**

**2. Creating resilient and dynamic cities and towns**

**3. Building and sustaining the care economy we need**

**4. Boosting industrial capacity for a productive and resilient economy**

**5. Addressing educational disadvantage**

Proposed projects may also address more than one of these themes.

Projects bringing a First Nations focus on any of these themes will be of particular interest.

Projects bringing a focus on under-represented minorities in relation to any of these themes will be of particular interest.

## A First Nations focus

## A focus on under- represented minorities

## Eligibility

## Valuing First Nations perspectives

## Early career researchers

Applications are welcome from academics from JMI's partner universities:

**The University of Sydney**

**Western Sydney University**

**The University of Technology Sydney**

**The University of New South Wales**

**Charles Sturt University**

Project teams consisting of researchers from across JMI's partner universities are also actively encouraged to apply.

While the project leader must be from a JMI partner university, the project team can consist of experts from beyond JMI's partner universities, including from community and non-profit organisations, industry, and CSIRO.

Who can apply:

- Individual academics or project teams (in the case of a team, the project leader must be from a JMI partner university).
- Academics at all career stages, including early career researchers.

Across all policy domains, the Institute highly values First Nations perspectives and is keenly interested in the impact of public policies on First Nations Australians. The Institute therefore particularly welcomes applications from First Nations researchers.

The Institute is interested in supporting early career researchers seeking to make an impact on public policy, including in key leadership roles on project teams. The Institute will seek to award at least one grant to a team led by an early career researcher.

Early career researchers are defined as those who have been awarded their last postgraduate degree within the past five years or have been awarded their last postgraduate degree together with an allowable period of career interruptions (covering caring responsibilities; disability; disaster management and recovery; limited or no access to facilities and resources; medical conditions; non-research positions, not concurrent with research employment; parental leave; unemployment; primary carer of a dependent child (up to two years per child, inclusive of parental leave) and disruption due to international relocation (up to three months)) that would be commensurate with an award of their last postgraduate degree within the past five years.

# Funding

In 2023, the overall funding amount for the entire grant program is \$500,000.

Each grant application must be between \$25,000–\$150,000 excluding GST.

## Eligible costs

Grant funding can be used for the direct costs of research. More specifically, eligible project costs that can be covered by the grant funding include:

- personnel, postdoctoral research associates and research assistants, technicians and laboratory attendants
- access to research and infrastructure facilities and technical workshop services;
- essential field research;
- expert third party services;
- equipment and consumables;
- dissemination of project research outputs and outreach activities;
- specialised computer equipment and software;
- travel costs essential to the project;
- web hosting and development;
- workshops, survey costs, focus groups and conferences;
- data science and analysis costs;
- reasonable essential costs for academics who are carers or who themselves require care, where such costs are directly linked to the execution of grant project activities and these direct costs would not be covered by the home institution.

Please note that teaching buy-out is **not covered** by this grant.

# Grant recipient requirements

Successful recipients of a JMI Policy Challenge Grant are required to agree to the following requirements:

## 1. Publication of JMI Policy Insights Paper

This is a JMI-branded report, of approximately 10–15 pages, which captures the key insights from your research for a policy-focused audience. It must be accessible to a non-academic audience. The report will be published on the JMI website and shared with relevant policymakers and other stakeholders. It will be published under a Creative Commons licence. JMI will provide support to grant recipients to develop their paper, and ensure it reaches relevant policy audiences.

## 2. Participation in research communications

As this is an applied policy grant with a focus on generating public value, the Institute is keen to ensure that research insights are effectively communicated to policy audiences. In that light, all grant recipients must participate in research communications activities, with dedicated support from JMI. JMI will also host an event to announce grant recipients. Depending on the nature of the project, research communications could include:

- a. Researchers being profiled on the JMI website and having their work highlighted.
- b. Op-eds & other short-form outputs – JMI will support grant recipients to share findings via mainstream platforms.
- c. Interviews, videos or podcasts – to showcase key findings and insights.
- d. Policymaker roundtables or select briefings – JMI will work with grant recipients to organise events that provide them with opportunities to present and discuss their findings and share practical insights with relevant policymakers and stakeholders.

## 3. Maximum project timeframe

The project must be delivered within two years from the date the grant is awarded.

Any academic outputs in addition to the above requirements are at the discretion of the grant recipient(s) and are not a requirement of the JMI grant.

# Selection criteria

Grant applications will be assessed against the following selection criteria. All applications must also be relevant to one or more of the themes listed on page 4.

## Essential criteria

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### **Relevance to public policy**

Research must have a demonstrable relevance to public policy in NSW. It should be clear how the research can be applied by policymakers to either an existing policy priority area, or a potential future policy challenge in NSW.

### **Innovative approach to a policy challenge**

The proposed project must demonstrate an innovative approach to tackling a policy challenge. Such innovation could include, but is not limited to, policy reform, institutional change, human-centric design, new methods of program or service delivery, interdisciplinary approaches to public problems, attention on neglected issues or opportunities, stakeholder engagement and community empowerment, or propelling new partnerships to address grand challenges or wicked social problems.

### **Positive impact on a policy challenge**

The proposed project must demonstrate a strong potential to generate public value through improved public policy.

### **Approach to engagement with policymakers**

Applicants must outline their proposed approach to engagement with relevant NSW Government policymakers and practitioners. This must include how the research will be leveraged for public policy impact.

### **Project feasibility**

Evidence should be provided that demonstrates the project team have a track record of achievement relative to opportunity and the appropriate expertise to (i) deliver the project milestones and (ii) foster collaborative partnerships with NSW Government policymakers to drive public policy impact. The robustness of the project design, a clear grounding in peer-reviewed academic research, the outputs and impact of any past applied public policy research or practice, or any other relevant experience of the project team in the policy area of the proposed project will be considered under this criterion.

## Desirable criteria (non-essential)

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### **Interdisciplinary approach and/or team**

The research proposed adopts an inter-disciplinary research approach, or comprises an interdisciplinary team that will approach a policy problem from a variety of different disciplinary perspectives.

### **Potential to build on existing relationships with policymakers**

Where the academic(s) has existing connections with government stakeholders for whom the proposed project could add value, provide details of the existing stakeholder relationship.

### **Additional Funding**

Academics should indicate if they have secured, or plan to secure, any additional funding to undertake the project. Whilst it is not essential, evidence of any co-funding or the ability to leverage additional funding should be provided as part of the application and will be considered favourably.

### **Collaboration between JMI partner universities**

The project involves collaboration across JMI partner universities.

These are additional criteria to help the Institute better understand your project and assess its potential impact, but which your proposal does not necessarily need to demonstrate to be successful. Applicants should only address the desirable criteria if they are demonstrably relevant to the proposed project. For example, some teams may be seeking to establish new relationships with policymakers rather than building on existing ones.

# How to apply

The Policy Challenge Grant has a three-stage application process, intended to limit the amount of time required from applicants.

This three-stage process, cumulatively, constitutes your JMI Policy Challenge Grant application. Each stage of the application process builds on the previous stage, giving the Institute a holistic view of your proposed project.

By clicking the 'Apply Now' button on JMI website's Policy Challenge Grant page, you will be redirected to our online grant portal, where you can submit your application.

## Stage 1: EOIs

**8 Mar – 14 Apr 2023**

Online web-form questionnaire  
accessed via the JMI Grant Portal.

### **Stage 1: Expressions of Interest (EOI)**

**8 March–14 April 2023**

The first stage in our application process is the EOI. Once you have created an account on our grants portal, you will be asked to respond to the short EOI questionnaire.

The EOI questions give us an indication of the nature of your proposed grant project. You will be asked a series of questions designed to help make an assessment of the project's suitability against the selection criteria. You will also be asked for details about your team and the funding amount you seek.

All EOIs will be reviewed and assessed against the essential and desirable criteria. Successful EOIs will progress to the second stage and will be notified via email if they have been successful.

EOIs will open on 8 March and close on 14 April 2023.

Submit your  
EOI at  
[apply.jmi.org.au](https://apply.jmi.org.au)

## Stage 2: Interviews

**22 May – 2 June 2023**

45-minute interviews via MS Teams with JMI Team.

### **Stage 2: Interviews**

**22 May–2 June 2023**

Longlisted applicants will be asked to nominate a preferred interview timeslot via the grant portal, for a 45-minute online interview with JMI staff. Where a research team is applying for a grant, the entire team is encouraged to attend the interview, but this is not mandatory.

During the interview, you will be given the opportunity to share more detail about your proposed project. The JMI team will also have the opportunity to ask you questions about the details of your project proposal.

The interview will also provide an opportunity to learn more about the aims of the JMI Policy Challenge Grant, and the various forms of support the Institute will provide to grant recipients. Applicants that have successfully progressed through the interview stage will be notified via email.

Interviews will be held over two weeks, in the period between 22 May – 2 June 2023. Please ensure that you are available to participate in an interview during this period.

### **Stage 3: Supplementary documents**

**5 June–23 June 2023**

Applicants that have successfully passed through the interview stage will then be asked to submit supplementary documents to complete their grants application. They will be provided an additional three weeks to submit these documents.

Applicants will be asked to submit:

#### **1. A detailed project plan**

You will need to provide details of the key project stages and milestones and key activities over those project stages, including timelines. JMI will provide a suggested template to support with the development of this plan.

#### **2. Detailed project budget**

You will be asked to provide a breakdown of project costs, including allocation of key project resources. JMI will provide a suggested template to support with the development of this plan.

## Stage 3: Additional Docs

**5 June – 23 June 2023**

Submit detailed project documents via JMI grant portal, including project plan and budget.

## Supplementary documents due no later than 23 June 2023

### 3. Any additional documents requested by JMI

During the interview process, the JMI team might require some additional documentation or further detail or explanation of certain aspects of your proposed project. You will be asked to upload any supplementary documentation to the grants portal.

The documents provided to JMI during the supplementary evidence stage will be added to the information submitted during earlier stages and will form part of your overall grant application.

### References

JMI reserves the right to seek a reference or independent expert advice for any individual grant application.

## Assessment & Award

The JMI Research Advisory Group will review all applications that have progressed through to Stage 3 of the application process, and provide advice to JMI's Executive.

The JMI Board approves the final allocation of grant awards.

Grants will be awarded in August 2023.

Successful applicants will be notified via email, and contacted by the JMI team.

The JMI team will then work with the project leader to execute a JMI Policy Challenge Grant agreement. Once this has been finalised, initial funding will be provided and the project will commence.

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## Contact us

For any further JMI Policy Challenge Grant enquiries, please either refer to the FAQs section on the JMI website or contact us via email.

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