GUIDELINES: Microscopy Australia Access Scheme

Overview	*The Microscopy Australia Access Scheme improves access to advanced microscopy and microanalysis facilities by subsidising rates for eligible Australian-based researchers.* *Microscopy Australia already provides subsidised rates, enabled by the National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy (NCRIS). Successful applicants receive a further reduction in these rates to enable research outcomes.* *Scheme overview:* • *2026 open call – applicants can submit at any time (moving to two rounds per year in 2027)* • *maximum subsidy per application – up to $20,000 with matching funds* • *applicants can request in-person or remote (fee-for-service) access*

Eligibility

Open to all Australian-based researchers, including those based at commercial entities, universities, medical research institutes, publicly-funded research agencies, hospitals, government departments, and philanthropic organisations. Microscopy Australia staff members are not eligible to apply, but instead should consider the Staff Shadowing Program.

Eligibility for Industry Applicants:

- must be from entities that meet the general eligibility criteria for the R&D Tax Incentive
- applicants from start-ups, spin-outs and SMEs will be prioritised
- applicants accessing Facilities for the first time, trying a new technique, or proposing a new project are encouraged to apply

Eligibility for Researcher Applicants:

- the technique, instrument, and/or expertise required **must not be available locally** (if inability to access is related to staff capacity, waiting lists, or instrument downtime, this must be a duration of 3 months or more)
- early career users (<5 years post-PhD) and those working in regional or remote areas are strongly encouraged to apply
- PhD student projects are eligible, however, the supervisor must act as the applicant

***NOTE**:*

Projects must commence after award. Retrospective applications will not be considered.

Previously successful applicants are required to provide a strong justification for further support.

Process

Determine which Facility you require access to by referring to Technique Finder, the Microscopy Australia website, or individual Facility websites (see Appendix A). If you need assistance in determining what capability you require, please complete an Enquiry Form so that we can connect you to the most appropriate Scientific Contact. Prior to submitting an Application Form, **all applicants must have discussed their proposed project and intention to apply for this scheme with the Scientific Contact at the relevant Facility**.

Application Form

When submitting an application, **a price estimate or quote from the Facility must be attached to support project costings**. Applicants can submit under one of five categories:

- Industry (applicants from start-ups, spin-outs, and SMEs, as well as proposals for new projects* are encouraged)
- Researcher | regional and/or remote*
- Researcher | ECR (<5 years post-PhD)*
- Researcher | PhD candidate supervisor
- Researcher

*Applications under these categories will be prioritised for support.

Assessment Criteria

Applications will be assessed on merit:

- applicant 10% (role, expertise, track record relative to opportunity)
- project 30% (significance and innovation, quality of methods and workflows)
- need 20% (availability of instrumentation and/or required expertise with specialist knowledge, or new industry project)
- benefit and impact 40% (what will be achieved or leveraged, both by the project and for the applicant)

Review Process

- the Panel Chair will distribute applications to the relevant Review Panel
- the Panel will assess and rank the applications, with letters of offer distributed to successful applicants and relevant Facilities
- during 2026 relevant Panels will meet once every month to review submitted applications
- allow up to 6 weeks from the date of submission for notification of outcomes

	Members
MicroAU	Dr Lisa Yen, Panel Chair
Life Sciences	Prof Filip Braet and A/Prof Melanie Rug
Physical Sciences	Prof Richard Tilley and Prof Jian-Min Zuo
Environmental and Earth Sciences	Prof Sarah Harmer and Dr Chris Gibson

Requirements

Successful applicants must:

- ensure they have relevant independent travel, accident, and other insurances (if not covered by their organisation) prior to conducting off-site research
- work directly with the relevant Facility to book and access the required instrumentation
- successfully complete all mandatory training as required by the host Facility
- ensure subsidised access and a written report are completed within 12 months of award
- acknowledge Microscopy Australia and the relevant Facility in all publications, presentations, and other outputs: "We acknowledge [name of Facility or Linked Laboratory], [name of university or institution], a member of the Microscopy Australia (ROR: 042mm0k03) network enabled by NCRIS."

No awarded funds are paid directly to applicants. The Facility will pass on the subsidy by way of reduced fees. Awarded subsidies are not transferable between projects or Facilities, without written approval, and are not redeemable for cash.

Further Information

For general information about the scheme guidelines, application form, and processes, please contact: Shiree Heath.

For project development and requirements, please contact: info@micro.org.au.

APPENDIX A – Participating Facilities

State	Facility/Linked Laboratory	Institution	Scientific Contact
QLD	Central Analytical Research Facility	Queensland University of Technology (QUT)	Jamie Riches
QLD	Centre for Microscopy and Microanalysis	The University of Queensland (UQ)	Na'ama Koifman
NSW	Electron Microscope Unit	UNSW Sydney (UNSW)	Richard Tilley
NSW	Microbial Imaging Facility	University of Technology Sydney (UTS)	Louise Cole
NSW	Sydney Microscopy and Microanalysis	The University of Sydney (USyd)	Filip Braet
ACT	Centre for Advanced Microscopy CT Lab	The Australian National University (ANU)	Felipe Kremer
VIC	Monash Centre for Electron Microscopy Ramaciotti Centre for Cryo-Electron Microscopy	Monash University (Monash)	Flame Burgmann Georg Ramm
TAS	Central Science Laboratory	University of Tasmania (UTas)	Sandrin Feig
SA	Adelaide Microscopy Future Industries Institute (Mawson Lakes)	Adelaide University (AdelU)	Chris Gibson
SA	Flinders Microscopy and Microanalysis	Flinders University (Flinders)	Sarah Harmer
WA	Centre for Microscopy, Characterisation and Analysis	The University of Western Australia (UWA)	Luiz Parra Avila
WA	John de Laeter Centre	Curtin University (Curtin)	David Saxey