Research Contract Advisor

HEP Level 7

POSITION NUMBER	971996
ORGANISATIONAL UNIT	Research Service, VU Research
POSITION REPORTS TO	Senior Research Contract Advisor
OVERALL PURPOSE	The overall purpose of the Research Contract Advisor is to provide specialist contract management and advisory support for the review, negotiation and administration of research related contracts and agreements entered into by Victoria University. The position will facilitate the timely execution of research funding, collaboration, consultancy and commercial agreements ensuring compliance with university policies, legislative requirements and funding obligations. Working under the broad direction of the Senior Research Contract Advisor, and with the ability to work autonomously on standard matters, the role provides advice to researchers and professional staff on contractual matters, supports contract negotiations and approval processes, contributes to the continuous improvement of contracting procedures and systems, and maintains the integrity of contract records and reporting information. The position also supports the development and delivery of guidance materials, and training to support engagement with stakeholders on research contract management best practice.
ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT AND RELATIONSHIPS	**Within the University the position:** ◆ works closely with the researchers, Research Institute/Centre Executive Directors, and professional staff ◆ works with all Office of the General Counsel, Finance Services, Procurement, Risk and Compliance, Advancement **Outside the University the position liaises with:** ◆ Funding agencies and other stakeholders
LOCATION/CAMPUS	The position is currently located at the Footscray Park Campus of the University. The position and incumbent may be relocated to any other existing or future University work locations where it conducts its operations.

KEY CAPABILITIES

Victoria University is committed to building core capability across VU through investment in our staff, our systems and our processes. We will develop the capabilities of our staff to:

Deliver – Excellence Results-driven, accountability, problem solving focus.

Engage – Customer service mind-set internally, externally and particularly for students.

Collaborate and Partner – Build successful relationships, communicate effectively, influence and negotiate.

Innovate – Entrepreneurship, growth, continuous improvement, digital transformation.

Lead – Inspire direction, lead change, manage and develop people.

OUR ORGANISATION

Victoria University (VU) is a dual sector (higher education and TAFE) tertiary institution based in Melbourne, Australia. VU has academic colleges, each covering a broad discipline of study, and several research institutes and research centres. The University has campuses in Melbourne's CBD and western region, and a campus in Sydney and Brisbane. It also offers courses at partner institutions throughout Asia. Over 40,000 students, including around 14,000 international students, study VU courses worldwide. In 2026, VU celebrated its 30th anniversary as a university, which also marked its 110 years as an educational institution.

Commitment to Protecting Country:

Victoria University honours its deep diversity as a foundation for collaboration and social progress. We will demonstrate sensitivity in respecting First Nation perspectives. We will ensure that we respect our Indigenous voices and commit to sustainable Protecting Country. We will take leadership responsibility, in all that we do, to improve the health and wellbeing of our local and global communities, and the planet that we share.

Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion at VU:

Victoria University believes that diversity of the workforce adds value to the University and creates a stronger, richer working environment for everyone. We are committed to making reasonable adjustments to ensure that our employees have positive, barrier-free work environments that accommodate their access needs. Employees who require adjustments are encouraged to discuss their needs with their line manager.

The University is a Child Safe organisation. The incumbent in this role will be required to hold a current Working with Children Check (WWCC).

ORGANISATIONAL UNIT

VU Research was established in 2017 and has the mandate to oversee a university-wide approach for enhancing the quality and impact of research and research training at VU. The organisational objective for VU Research is to be known as a global solutions hub based in the west of Melbourne, working with our partners in co-defining and co-creating research to address the needs of our communities locally, nationally and globally.

The Research Contracts Advisor position is located in the Research Services office within VU Research. The Research Services office has three main units:

- Research Funding, Contracts and Development: provides specialist support across the research funding lifecycle, including pre-award and post-award activities, facilitating the development and submission of high-quality grant, fellowship, contract research, bid and tender applications.
- Research Performance, Reporting and Infrastructure: supports the development and implementation of the University's research strategy, manages the provision of the University's research performance reporting, data, and analytics and insights, and the management of biosafety and animal research infrastructure and operations and plays a lead role in providing access to, visibility and management of essential research infrastructure.
- Research Governance: supports the functions of the Animal Ethics Committee (AEC), Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC), and Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC) and leads the management and support for the University's research integrity policy and procedures

MAJOR TASKS AND ACCOUNTABILITIES

- Under the general direction the Senior Research Contract Advisor, review, draft, negotiate and administer a broad range of standard and template-based agreements research-related agreements, including confidentiality agreements, consultancy agreements, funding agreements, material transfer agreements, data sharing agreements, contract variations and other research contract instruments ensuring compliance with University policies, procedures and legislative requirements.
- Provide specialist advice and guidance to researchers, institutes, centres and professional staff on research contract requirements, Intellectual Property provisions, publication rights, compliance obligations and contractual processes, escalating complex, non-standard or high-risk matters to the Senior Research Contracts Advisor when required.
- Draft, negotiate and administer post-award contract management activities under the direction of the Senior Research Contracts Advisor, including variations, novation, extensions to support the effective management of research agreements throughout their lifecycle.
- Undertake preliminary assessments of international research agreements, collaborations and partnerships to identify foreign arrangements, research security, compliance and government requirements. Provide guidance to stakeholders, coordinate due diligence activities, and escalate complex, sensitive or high-risk matters to the Senior Research Contracts Advisor as appropriate.
- Support the preparation and submission of documentation required for notification, assessment, and reporting of foreign arrangements to relevant government bodies where applicable.
- Liaise with the Office of General Counsel on matters requiring legal advice, supporting the preparation of documentation, responses and recommendations to facilitate timely resolution of contractual and compliance issues. Develop and maintain effective working relationships with internal stakeholders, including Research Services, Graduate Research Office, Research Institutes and Centres, Finance, Risk and Compliance, Office of the General Counsel and other University business units, to facilitate efficient and consistent contract management processes.
- Establish and maintain productive relationships with external organisations, including industry, government agencies, funding bodies, community organizations, research institutes and international collaborators, ensuring consistent and compliant management of research contracts, with guidance from the Senior Research Contract Advisor as required.
- Undertake contract administration to support the effective functioning of Research Contracts and reporting activities, including: maintain accurate contract records, databases and reporting systems to enable effective functioning of Research Contracts and reporting actives.; triaging and logging incoming requests from the contracts inbox or intake queue; entering and maintaining contract register records; coordinating execution, distribution and filing of agreements; tracking milestones, deliverables, reporting dates and expiry or renewal dates; and preparing routine correspondence and standard-form documents.
- Maintain, develop and enhance the Research Contracts SharePoint site to ensure the provision of accurate, current and accessible information, resources, templates and guidance materials, and process documentation that support the effective management of research agreements and compliance obligations across the University
- Assist in the development and delivery of guidance materials, training, and communications to build stakeholder awareness of research contracting, foreign arrangements and international collaboration compliance requirements.

  Contribute expertise to the effective operation of the Research Contract function and support to the Senior Research Contract Advisor in achieving service objectives and continuous improvement initiatives

TYPICAL/MAJOR CHALLENGES

- Interpreting and applying University policies, funding rules and contractual frameworks to standard, complex or non-standard situations, where established precedents may require adaptation to achieve an appropriate outcome.
- Navigating complex foreign interference, foreign arrangement and research security requirements when assessing international research collaborations, ensuring compliance with legislative and government obligations while supporting effective research partnerships.
- Exercising sound judgement and working autonomously on standard and template-based agreements within approved parameters, while recognising the circumstances requiring escalation.
- Negotiating and influencing diverse internal and external stakeholders with competing interests while maintaining productive relationships and achieving timely agreement execution.
- Managing multiple concurrent matters and deadlines, with standard turnaround of 14 business days for template-based agreements.

LEVEL OF SUPERVISION

Operates under broad direction from **Senior Research Contracts Advisor** and may be required to manage other administrative, technical and/or professional staff.

PROFESSIONAL AND ORGANISATIONAL KNOWLEDGE

- Knowledge and understanding relating to research funding administration and knowledge of internal policies, regulations and procedures of the University and government departments.
- Aptitude or ability to work with relevant University systems and databases.
- Awareness of quality assurance policies and procedures and other relevant legislative requirements.

KEY SELECTION CRITERIA

Essential:

1. Knowledge or Training equivalent to a degree with 4 years subsequent relevant experience or extensive experience and management expertise, or an equivalent combination of relevant experience and/or education/training.
2. Demonstrated experience in a professional advisory, contract management or research administration role, preferably with higher education, research, government or public sector environment.
3. Demonstrated ability to review, draft, negotiate and administer a broad range of research funding, commercial and other contractual agreements, identifying contractual risks and

providing practical advice and recommendations to stakeholders.

4. Demonstrated ability to interpret and apply, legislation**s**, contractual obligations, organisational policies and governance frameworks relevant to research funding, research contracts, intellectual property and compliance requirements, or the capacity to develop this quickly in a new environment.
5. Demonstrated experience in reviewing and administering research and commercial agreements, identifying contractual and compliance risks, applying relevant policies and procedures, and preparing recommendations for senior review where necessary.
6. Highly developed written, verbal and interpersonal communications skills, including the ability to build relationships, negotiate outcomes, influence stakeholders and communicate complex contractual and compliance matters clearly and professionally.
7. Demonstrated ability to manage competing priorities, complex workloads and deadlines with a high level of accuracy and attention to detail and client-focussed service delivery under broad direction.
8. Demonstrated ability to work collaboratively within a professional team and independently under broad direction, contributing specialist expertise, continuous improvement initiative and the achievement of organisational objectives.
9. Demonstrated capacity to understand and comply with employer policy and practices in all aspects of work and conduct, including OH&S and Anti-Discrimination responsibilities and complete/attend relevant training.

Desirable:

1. Demonstrated understanding of the university research environment, including research governance, funding and compliance requirements.
2. Demonstrated experience developing guidance, training materials and process improvements, together with knowledge of research contracting, research security and international research requirements.

Pre-Employment Requirement:

- Evidence of eligibility to work in Australia including evidence that any required immigration visas have been obtained
- All VU Employees must provide responses to the University's Gender Base Violence Pre-screening Questionnaire

---

P&C Use Only:

Date Updated	15/10/2026	**Date Classified**	15/10/2026