

OPEN UNIVERSITIES
AUSTRALIA

Rapid Development Fund: new resources for university growth



September 2021



Open Universities Australia (OUA) is a Not For Profit organisation committed to working with Australian universities to further expand access to their education offerings and to reach new student audiences.

Over the last three years OUA has supported its University Providers by making available \$3 million to develop degree programs across a wide range of disciplines. The success of the uptake, development and return in student numbers to our University Providers has been more than \$19 million¹.

From July 2020, the Rapid Development Fund (RDF) is changing to give our University Providers greater opportunities to access more resources in a number of different areas.

The RDF will provide access to grants to help universities continue meeting the evolving needs of students by developing new degrees, short courses and microcredentials not yet offered by their university through the OUA marketplace.

Funding is intended to support the design, development and other costs associated with preparing degrees, short courses and microcredentials for online study. Supported by national marketing, these programs will be offered to students via the OUA marketplace.

¹ Data correct as at 30 June 2020.

Flexible options for universities

The RDF offers three grants to support the different development requirements universities may have.



1. Open Degree Development Grant

Grants available to help universities develop online degrees. These are full qualifications to be marketed nationally as a full service listing on OUA marketplace.

Each degree will be funded to a maximum of \$135,000 spread over three to four years.



2. Open Microcredential Development Grant

Offering both the support of a grant and the structure of the OpenCreds framework, universities can access up to \$25,000 in funding and courseware development to support the delivery of online microcredentials. These will be marketed nationally as an OpenCred via the OUA marketplace.

Each OpenCred will be funded to a maximum one-off payment of \$10,000, plus \$15,000 courseware development support from OpenLearning.



3. Open Innovation Development Grant

Grants available to help universities innovate across the areas of marketing, student acquisition and course development.

Funding available for this grant is to be confirmed for the 2021 calendar year, however 2020 saw a soft launch of this initiative with fee free listings of Higher Education Certificates developed in response to the Higher Education Relief Package, connecting with thousands of students nationally.

About the funding criteria

Applications for the Open Degree Development Grant and Open Innovation Development Grant are assessed by OUA.

The Open Degree Development Grant is available to assist universities in fast tracking the development of new degrees, with priority given to proposals which meet the following criteria:

1. Degrees and units at undergraduate and postgraduate level that are currently not in the portfolio but are in demand.
2. Degrees and units at undergraduate and postgraduate level that are in demand and are currently represented in the OUA marketplace by other universities.
3. Where a university can demonstrate clear demand and return on investment for a niche or emerging degree or discipline area.
4. Degrees that can be brought to the marketplace within 6 months.

The criteria for the Open Innovation Development Grant is yet to be determined. These criteria will be developed in consultation with university partners. Consultation will occur in 2020.

These criteria **do not** apply to the Open Microcredentials Development Grant.

Eligibility and application

To access the Open Degree Development Grant, successful applicants will need to demonstrate the funds will be used to develop new degrees that:

- Expand the universities existing offering via the OUA marketplace.
- Meet the criteria outlined previously (unless the application is for the Open Microcredentials Development Grant).

OUA will consider all applications for the Open Degree Development Grant and the Open Innovation Development Grant on a case by case basis.

LOUISE

—
Bachelor of Education
(Secondary Education)
Curtin University



Applications for the Open Microcredentials Development Grant will be assessed jointly by OUA and OpenLearning.

Universities are invited to apply for the Open Microcredentials Development Grant with the freedom to develop OpenCreds in line with their university strategic objectives.

To access the Open Microcredentials Development Grant applicants will need to demonstrate the funds will be used to develop new microcredentials that:

- Are 50–150 hours of accredited or unaccredited learning

How to apply for funding

Each grant has a specific application form which must be completed and submitted to OUA for consideration.



Existing university partner

The Application Form can be obtained by contacting the Key Account Manager dedicated to your university, listed on the back of this brochure. The Key Account Manager can provide further information and advice to assist your funding application.



New university partner

OUA invites universities which currently do not offer degrees to students via the OUA marketplace to apply for the RDF. The Strategic Partnership Manager can provide further information.

See back page for contact information.

Funding is available annually and universities are welcome to apply throughout the year.

Mutually agreed funding milestones

OUA will negotiate a delivery timeline with the successful applicant. It is expected that a series of key milestones will form the project delivery schedule.

Open Degree Development Grant

The milestones and project delivery schedule will form part of the funding agreement. OUA anticipates that a new three-year online degree be introduced over a two-year period.

The release of funding at each milestone will be dependent on meeting specific criteria which will be negotiated with the university prior to the signing of the final funding agreement.

Open Microcredentials Development Grant

A single payment of the full amount and the requirements of the development support offered by OpenLearning will be negotiated with the university prior to the signing of the final funding agreement.

Open Innovation Development Grant

The milestone and funding criteria for this grant are to be confirmed. Further information will be made available following consultation with university partners which is expected to occur in 2020.



To explore new partnership opportunities

Contact the partner team

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