

Academy Fellowships Charter

Overview

Academy fellowships provide a pathway for excellent teachers to raise the capability, confidence, and status of teachers in the practice and science of teaching through applied and self-directed professional learning and knowledge exchange.

Teaching Impact Fellowships award funding to design and implement an improvement project to transform teacher practice and student learning. Through these projects, teacher fellows, as agents of change, will develop and enhance their individual and collaborative expertise by sharing their professional learning and exemplary practices with colleagues in their schools and beyond.

Goals

Academy fellowships support teacher fellows to drive evidence-informed change and enable teacher-led solutions to problems of practice or contextual challenges.

Teaching Impact Fellowships are designed to:

- > support highly skilled teachers to extend and deepen their expertise through job-embedded, self-directed professional learning
- > engage highly skilled teachers in leading knowledge production and developing innovative solutions to professional challenges in context
- > enable highly skilled teachers to share their exemplary practices and actively contribute to the functions and intellectual discourse of both the Academy and the broader education system
- > cultivate collaborative networks of highly skilled teachers to support knowledge exchange and nurture a teacher-driven culture of professional excellence.

Teaching Impact Fellowships

The Academy's Teaching Impact Fellowships (TIF) provide unique, dedicated pathways for highly skilled Victorian teachers to develop their expertise and capacity to be agents of change in school system improvement through applied and self-directed professional learning.

Academy fellowships contribute to the mission, vision and objectives of the Victorian Academy of Teaching and Leadership and the broader dialogue in raising the quality and status of teaching in Victoria. The fellowships enable highly skilled teachers to enhance their pedagogical knowledge and skills to meet the needs of diverse learners and to share evidence-informed practice within and beyond their school.

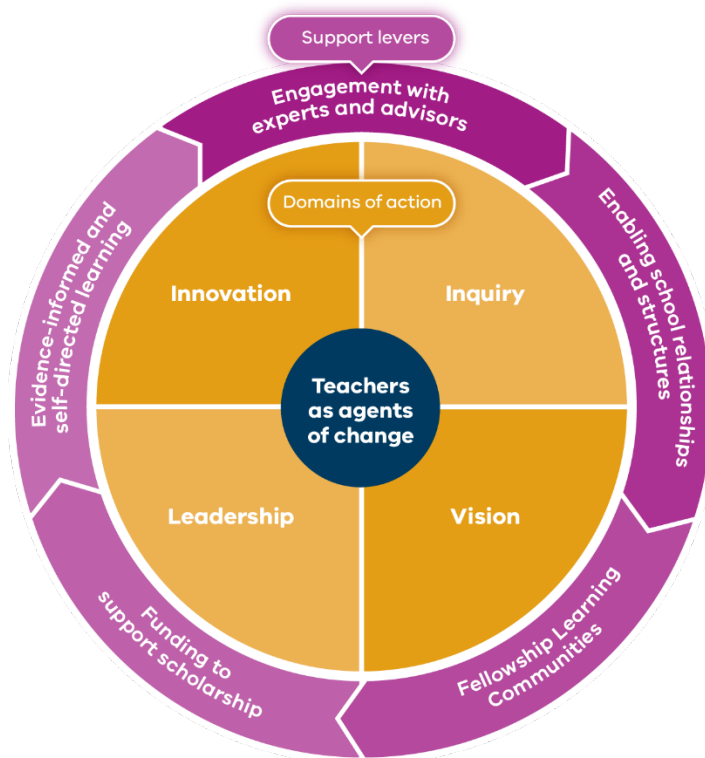
Teacher fellows will design and implement an improvement project to transform teacher practice and improve student outcomes in their classrooms or schools.

Through their project, teacher fellows will develop capabilities as "leaders of learning" and will enhance their individual and collaborative expertise by sharing their professional learning and exemplary practices with colleagues in their schools and beyond.

Teaching Impact Fellowships will be funded for 12 months and are expected to be awarded at the end of Term 4, 2024, with the fellowship beginning in Term 1, 2025. Teacher fellows will undertake professional learning and plan their projects in Term 1, ready for implementation during Terms 2 and 3. A final report detailing learning outcomes will be submitted early Term 4, 2025 with a final presentation of their findings delivered in Term 1, 2026.

The fellowship experience is designed to align with the Academy’s Fellowship Model (see Figure 1).

Figure 1 – Academy Fellowship Model



Teachers as agents of change

At the core of the Academy Fellowship Model is a commitment to enabling and supporting teachers as agents of change by deepening their professional expertise and nurturing their ability to drive evidence-informed improvement.

Domains of action

Teacher fellows will cultivate agency and expertise through the following domains of action, in line with the [Academy Fellowship Model](#):

- > **Vision:** Develop a vision for alternative futures in practice, which is driven by a desire to make a difference to the quality of teaching and learning. This will involve thinking creatively about new possibilities for teaching and learning that are responsive to the evolving and varying needs of students.
- > **Innovation:** Explore, design, implement and evaluate approaches or interventions that enhance teaching and learning. Teacher fellows will be encouraged to think outside the box, and experiment with new practices, in order to improve teaching and learning.
- > **Inquiry:** Engage in evidence-informed, practitioner-led inquiry to investigate professional challenges in context. This will involve a continuous cycle of exploration, experimentation and refinement to improve their practice over time.

- > **Leadership:** Exercise leadership by building collaborative networks that enhance professional expertise in and across schools. Teacher fellows will lead through knowledge production, sharing practice and supporting and influencing colleagues in and beyond their school.

Support levers

Through fellowships, the Academy will provide and activate a range of levers designed to enable and sustain teacher fellows' professional learning and impact. These levers will facilitate the enhancement of teacher agency and expertise, including:

- > **Funding to support scholarship:** Fellowships will provide funding to support teacher fellows' scholarly development through an improvement project focused on transforming the practice and science of teaching. Teacher fellows are supported to engage in professional learning and share their exemplary practices with colleagues in their schools and beyond.
- > **Evidence-informed and self-directed learning:** Teacher fellows will be supported to direct their own professional learning to respond to the unique professional challenges that arise in their contexts. Teacher fellows will have and enact agency over their learning. They will diagnose their learning needs and formulate their learning goals in relation to their improvement project. Teacher fellows will identify the human and material resources they need for learning, choosing and implementing appropriate learning strategies and evaluating learning outcomes.
- > **Engagement with experts and fellowship advisors:** Through formal engagement in professional learning and direct support from a fellowship advisor, teacher fellows will deepen their learning, develop critical understanding and refine their practice.
- > **Fellowship learning communities:** Fellows will engage and collaborate in fellowship learning communities. They will learn from each other and support each other's professional growth.
- > **Enabling school relationships and structures:** Supportive school relationships, structures and environments can enable teachers' agency and professional learning. The success of the fellowship is facilitated through a mutually reinforcing partnership between the Academy, the fellow and their school. Teacher fellows' effort and success will be facilitated through collaborative and supportive relationships and structures in their school context.

Academy responsibilities

The Academy is committed to supporting teacher fellows through the provision of a range of benefits.

Project funding

The fellowship provides teacher fellows and their school \$5,000 to design and implement an improvement project focused on transforming teacher practice and professional learning at their school.

Project funding **can** be used for:

- > resources associated with project implementation, including purchasing and/or creating teaching and learning resources and materials and other incidental project costs.
- > professional learning costs, including professional learning fees or support for the teacher fellow that are directly related to project design and implementation.

- > costs of designing and delivering professional learning programs and planning improvement initiatives at their school.
- > travel and accommodation costs associated with project implementation; these costs can only account for a maximum of 10% of the budget.¹

Project funding **may not** be used for:

- > capital work expenses
- > professional learning costs not directly associated with the project
- > salaries
- > resources unrelated to the project
- > tertiary education fees (e.g., a Diploma, Masters or PhD degree).

Supplementary funding

Regional and rural subsidy

Fellowships will provide additional funding of up to \$3,000 per teacher fellow to selected participants from regional and rural schools to cover the cost of the teacher fellow's accommodation and travel to TIF activities.

Project funding and supplementary funding will be paid to the teacher fellow's school in alignment with the conditions outlined in the Teaching Impact Fellowship agreement.

Time release funding

Time release funding of up to \$6,000 is available to eligible schools, based on an equity funding model and intended to support schools to release the teacher fellow and members of their team to work in the project.

Time release funding can be used for:

- > releasing the teacher fellow to attend Teaching Impact Fellowship professional learning
- > releasing the teacher fellow to attend professional learning associated with project implementation
- > releasing the teacher fellow and members of the teacher fellow's project team to work on the project

Project funding and supplementary funding will be paid to the teacher fellow's school in alignment with the conditions outlined in the Teaching Impact Fellowship agreement.

¹ Travel and accommodation costs for teacher fellows who receive the Regional and rural subsidy should not be considered project costs.

Fellowship professional learning

Teacher fellows will engage with experts and other highly skilled educators in a series of workshops designed to provide them with strong foundations for pursuing their improvement projects. These workshops will take place in Terms 1 and 2 and will be delivered over three days. Teacher fellows are expected to attend all workshops, also referred to as foundation days.

Supportive fellows' community

Teacher fellows will participate and contribute to 3 X 3-hour online fellowship learning communities (FLCs) where they will build relationships with other fellows, share ideas, learn from each other, and support each other's professional growth.

Guidance from a fellowship advisor

Teacher fellows and their teams will be guided and supported by a fellowship advisor who will contribute to their improvement project's progress using a collaborative and supportive approach. Through up to 5 online advisory sessions, the fellowship advisor will assist the teacher fellow to engage in critical reflective practice; offer observations, feedback or educational input to help strengthen project implementation and to meet the fellowships learning and reporting requirements.

Fellowship requirements

Academy fellows are dynamic, passionate, committed individuals who have a vision for change.

Teacher fellows engage in self-directed professional learning, collegiate reflection and collaboration with the purpose of enhancing their knowledge and practice for the benefit of their students, school communities and the teaching profession.

At all times throughout their fellowship, teacher fellows comply with the standards of professional conduct, personal conduct and professional competence expected of them by colleagues and the community, as outlined in any relevant codes of conduct or local school or department policies, including Part 11 of Ministerial Order 1038 (Conduct and Duties), the [Code of Conduct for Victorian Public Sector Employees](#), the school's Child Safety Code of Conduct and the Victorian Teaching Profession's [Codes of Conduct and Ethics](#).

To successfully complete a Teaching Impact Fellowship, you must:

- > attend and actively contribute to the Teaching Impact Fellowship foundation days
- > attend and actively contribute to the three 3-hour online fellowship learning communities
- > engage and collaborate with your fellowship advisor to track progress and support delivery of your improvement project
- > lead the design, implementation, and evaluation of an improvement project at your school
- > maintain a reflective practice journal incorporating a series of reflective tasks that document your learning journey and professional growth
- > be willing to share any resources and artefacts directly resulting from the project with the Victorian Academy of Teaching and Leadership, other teachers and schools
- > present and share your improvement project journey and outcomes at the end of the fellowship event
- > meet reporting and milestone submissions as set out in the funding agreement

- > submit a final project report which demonstrates a contribution to evidence-informed practice as described by the macro indicators of quality in teaching rubric.
- > Acquit fellowship funding expenditure using provided templates.

The Academy reserves the right to offer individual flexibility upon application by the fellow in limited circumstances.

School requirements and responsibilities

Schools are integral to creating an authorising and supportive environment for teacher fellows to carry out their work. Teacher fellows will need to collaborate with their leaders and other teachers to successfully design and implement their project.

School leaders will support teacher fellows by:

- > providing time to work on their project
- > providing time to attend professional learning sessions, advisory sessions and fellowship learning communities
- > actively contributing to teacher fellows' learning, including participating in advisory sessions if required
- > providing access to support and resources that facilitate project implementation, including support in managing the project budget
- > providing direct guidance and support to engage with students, other teachers and or families in project design and implementation
- > supporting teacher fellows to prevent, mitigate and manage project risks
- > providing teacher fellows with time release to share their knowledge with teachers in their school and beyond.

By signing this charter, the teacher fellow, their principal and the Academy agree to support this fellowship by meeting the responsibilities outlined in this charter.

Fellow:

Signature _____

Printed name: _____

Date: _____

School Principal:

Signature: _____

Printed name: _____

Date: _____

Academy representative:

Signature: _____

Printed name: _____

Position title: _____

Date: _____