

PROJECT-BASED POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH STIPEND SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION GUIDE

A new understanding of mitochondrial markers of biological ageing to inform targeted strategies to promote healthy ageing

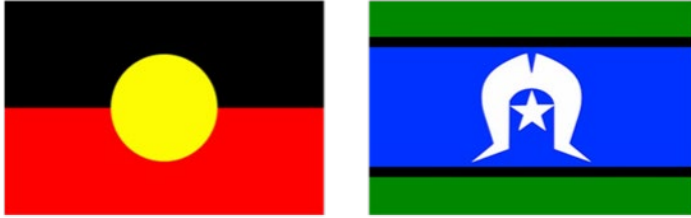
Doctor of Philosophy ONLY

Newly commencing Australian residents (all domestic students including Australian citizens, Australian permanent residents, New Zealand citizens and holders of a permanent Australian humanitarian visa)

Newly commencing International applicants

26/02/2025
Version 1.0

Acknowledgement of Country



Victoria University acknowledges, recognises and respects the Ancestors, Elders and families of the Bunurong/Boonwurrung, Wadawurrung and Wurundjeri/Woiwurrung of the Kulin who are the traditional owners of University land in Victoria, the Gadigal and Guring-gai of the Eora Nation who are the traditional owners of University land in Sydney, and the Yulara/YUgarapul people and Turrbal people living in Meanjin (Brisbane).

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Key Details

This guide is for applicants interested in a postgraduate research scholarship commencing in 2025 at Victoria University.

This scholarship is for the purpose of undertaking a graduate research degree related to the project outlined in [Table 2](#).

The Stipend Value and Included Benefits are outlined in [Table 3](#).

The Project:

Mitochondrial dysfunction has been proposed as a hallmark of ageing, yet the impact of reductions in physical inactivity on altered mitochondrial characteristics commonly reported in older adults has largely been ignored. A key barrier to unravelling the complex interaction between ageing and mitochondrial dysfunction is distinguishing primary ageing (inevitable changes) from secondary ageing (lifestyle-driven changes). This project will apply the latest, cutting-edge measures of mitochondrial characteristics to examine how physical activity influences age-related mitochondrial changes.

To achieve this, we will analyse skeletal muscle biopsies collected from four groups (young active, young inactive, old active, old inactive) using electron microscopy, proteomics, bioenergetics, and advanced bioinformatics. By stratifying participants by age and fitness, we can identify mitochondrial changes driven specifically by ageing or inactivity. This research will enhance our understanding of mitochondrial changes from ageing and help inform future interventions to improve health in older adults.

Applicants should possess the following required disciplinary knowledge:

- ◆ A bachelors and/or masters degree in biochemistry or molecular biology or related disciplines is essential.
- ◆ A background in mitochondrial biology, exercise and skeletal muscle physiology, or ageing research, is desirable.
- ◆ Experience with statistical modelling, -omics data interpretation (using R or Python), and laboratory techniques such as western blotting, proteomics, and respirometry would be advantageous.

Application due date

a. Application Due Date	Open until filled
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Project Outline

Item	Detail
a. Expected Commencement Date	28 July 2025

b. Project Title	A new understanding of mitochondrial markers of biological ageing to inform targeted strategies to promote healthy ageing	
c. Funding Agency	National Health & Medical Research Council	
d. Funding Agency ID		
e. Chief Investigator	Professor David Bishop	
f. Associate Supervisor	Dr Dale Taylor	
g. Special Conditions	Intellectual Property Assignment Required	No
	Working with Children Check Required	No
	Police Check Required	No
	Other conditions	Not applicable

Stipend Value and Included Benefits

Item	Detail
a. Value of stipend per annum	\$35,006 (2025 rate)
b. Fixed rate or incremented	Incremented rate
c. Fee offset included	Fee Offset Included
d. Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC)	OSHC Included - Single
e. PhD and/or Master Research Degrees available	PhD only
f. Part-Time Available	No

Domestic Applicants

Eligibility

To be eligible for this scholarship, applicants must:

- Australian residents (all domestic students including Australian citizens, Australian permanent residents, New Zealand citizens and holders of permanent Australian humanitarian visas)
- Meet the minimum academic entry and English language requirements for admission to the degree - click [here](#) for further details
- Not already have completed a research degree at the same or higher Australian Quality Framework (AQF) (or equivalent for overseas institutions)

Domestic Conditions and Benefits

Successful applicants will receive a full guide to the conditions and benefits of the Scholarships at the time of offer. The following is a summary of the main benefits and conditions.

Scholarship Value

Stipend Value

The annual value of the stipend is provided in Item (a) Value of Stipend per Annum in **Table 3 Stipend Value and Included Benefits** and are currently exempt from taxation.

If Item (b) of **Table 3: Stipend Value and Included Benefits** is marked as “Incremented” then stipend payments are indexed annually.

Fee Offset Value

In 2025, the value of this the Fee Offset component of a Scholarship is \$13,650 to \$16,750 per research period depending on the course.

Additional awards, allowances and stipends

Holders of Scholarships may:

- Be in receipt of minor award, allowances or other earnings which are supplementary to a scholarship, or derived from part- time work within the policies of Victoria University
 - a. student must not be receiving income from another source to support that student's general living costs while undertaking their course of study if that income is greater than 75 percent of that students RTP Stipend rate;
 - b. income unrelated to the course of study or income received for the student's course of study but not for the purposes of supporting general living costs is not to be taken into account.

Period of Support

All candidates are expected to complete their study in the timely duration for their degree as per **Table 4**.

Stipend durations for full-time Higher Degrees by Research

	Stipend Duration	Timely Duration
Doctor of Philosophy	3.5 years	4 years

Periods of study already undertaken towards the degree prior to the commencement of the award will be deducted from the normal period of award tenure. Similarly, periods of study undertaken during suspension of the award, or undertaken during the tenure of a previous Research Training Program Stipend or Australian Postgraduate Award, will be deducted from the maximum period of tenure.

A Scholarship holder may be required to pay tuition fees for any period of enrolment in excess of the timely duration.

Special Conditions

If item (g) in [Table 2](#) includes:

- the response “Yes” to the item “Intellectual Property Assignment Required” then the scholarship holder will be required to assign intellectual property they create while working on this Project (excluding copyright in the thesis) to the University through a formal agreement; or
- the response “Yes” to the item “Working Children Check Required” then the scholarship holder will be required to secure a Working with Children Check before commencing the Project and Scholarship; or
- the Response “Yes” to the item Police Check Required, then the scholarship holder will be required to secure a Police Check before commencing Project and Scholarship; or
- Other Special Conditions, then the Other Special Conditions must be met and abided by the scholarship holder throughout the Project.

Employment

Stipend candidates are expected to normally study and research full-time (minimum of 36.75 hours per week) between the hours of 8.00am – 6.00pm Monday to Friday with Stipend candidates limited to a maximum of eight (8) hours paid employment per week during these hours. Please refer to the [Higher Degree by Research Scholarship Procedure](#). Employment must not interfere with the candidate’s progress.

Commencement

No deferrals of the Scholarship will be considered. All successful applicants are expected to commence study by the Commencement Date advised in the Letter of Offer. The Commencement Date will normally be the Expected Commencement Date in Item (a) of [Table 2 Project Outline](#), however the University reserves the right to change the Commencement Date in the Letter of Offer when offering a scholarship.

If an applicant cannot start by the Commencement Date, the offer of the Scholarship may be withdrawn.

Part-time Scholarships

If Item (f) of Stipend Value and Included Benefits is marked “No” then Funding Agency requirements for the Project mean that the scholarship cannot be offered for part-time study.

If Item (f) of Stipend Value and Included Benefits is marked “Yes” the Scholarship may be available for part-time study to those who are unable to study full-time for all or part of their candidature. Where Item (f) of Stipend Value and Included Benefits is marked “yes” part-time scholarships can only be approved only in the following specific instances, where the scholarship holder has:

- A medical condition which limits the capacity to undertake full-time study (supported by medical certification), OR
- Care responsibilities for a pre-school child, OR

- Care responsibilities for a school aged child as a sole parent with limited access to support, OR
- Care responsibilities for an invalid or disabled spouse, child or parent

Part-time scholarships are **NOT** available to applicants who wish to study part-time in order to undertake full or part-time employment. Part-time scholarship holders are subject to the same restrictions on employment as full-time scholarship holders. Applicants wishing to be considered for a part-time scholarship must meet the criteria listed above. Applicants must provide evidence of the reason(s) they are unable to study full time. They also require the agreement of the supervisor and the University to the part-time arrangements.

International Applicants

Eligibility

To be eligible an International applicant must:

- Be a citizen of any country other than Australia or New Zealand
- Meet the University's academic entrance requirements for enrolment into a research degree - see [website](#) for further details
- Meet the University's English language proficiency requirements for enrolment in a research degree. Click [here](#) for further details
- Be enrolled in a Doctoral degree in 2024 on the Project
- Enrol onshore (in person) as a full-time student

You are **NOT ELIGIBLE** for if you:

- Have previously held an IPRS, VUIPRS or OPRS (unless it was for a Masters by Research degree, and you are applying for a scholarship to undertake PhD studies).
- Are currently studying, or have recently studied, on an AIDAB or AUSAID scholarship and are applying for an IPRS immediately following the AIDAB/AUSAID funded studies.

Priority will be given to:

- Applicants without an equivalent level degree.

You **MAY NOT** be eligible if you have already enrolled for more than one semester in the degree for which you are applying for scholarship funding. Please contact the Research Scholarships team via researchscholarships@vu.edu.au if this is your situation.

International Conditions and Benefits

Successful applicants will receive a full guide to the conditions and benefits of the Scholarship at the time of offer. The following is a summary of the main benefits and conditions.

Scholarship Value

Stipend Value

The annual value of the stipend is provided in Item (a) Value of Stipend per Annum in [Table 3](#). If Item (b) of [Table 3](#) is marked as “Incremented” then stipend payments are indexed annually and are currently exempt from taxation.

Tuition Fee Waiver

If Item (c) of [Table 3](#) is marked “Fee Offset” or “RTP Fee Offset” then international award holders will be granted a fee offset or Research Training Program fee-offset scholarship respectively, covering tuition fees for the duration of the course.

In 2024, the value of this component of the Award is between A\$17,100 to A\$20,200 per research period depending on the course.

Overseas Health Cover

If Item (d) of [Table 3](#) is marked “OSHC Included – Single” then International award holders of this project scholarship will be granted Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) for maximum duration of the degree in which they are enrolled and an additional two months of health cover.

An OSHC policy is ONLY issued to either: student visa holders, bridging visa holders (awaiting a student visa) & candidates who are applying for a student visa. As well, the criteria is very strict that claims ARE NOT to be made under the OSHC policy prior to the student visa being issued. We are to be notified that the student visa has been issued & Medibank will make the necessary changes to the OSHC policy to allow the correct cover and claims.

Costs Excluded

The following are NOT included:

- travel costs
- the cost of English language testing
- the cost of bridging programs or English language programs

Period of Support

All students are expected to complete their study in the timely duration for their degree per [Table 5](#).

Stipend durations for Higher Degrees by Research at Victoria University

	Stipend Duration	Timely Duration
Doctor of Philosophy	3.5 years	4 years

Periods of study already undertaken towards the degree prior to the commencement of the award will be deducted from the normal period of award tenure.

A Scholarship holder may be required to pay tuition fees for any period of enrolment in excess of the timely duration.

Special Conditions

If item (g) of [Table 2](#) includes:

- the response “Yes” to the item “Intellectual Property Assignment Required” then the scholarship holder will be required to assign intellectual property they create while working on this project (excluding copyright in the thesis) to the University through a formal agreement; or
- the response “Yes” to the item “Working Children Check Required” then the scholarship holder will be required to secure a Working with Children Check before commencing the Project and Scholarship; or
- the Response “Yes” to the item Police Check Required, then the scholarship holder will be required to secure a Police Check before commencing Project and Scholarship; or
- Other Special Conditions, then the Other Special Conditions must be met and abided by the scholarship holder throughout the Project.

Employment

Stipend candidates are expected to normally study and research full-time (minimum of 36.75 hours per week) between the hours of 8.00am – 6.00pm Monday to Friday with Stipend candidates limited to a maximum of eight (8) hours paid employment per week during these hours. Please refer to the [Higher Degree by Research Scholarship Procedure](#). Employment must not interfere with the candidate’s progress.

Commencement

No deferrals of the Scholarship will be considered. All successful applicants are expected to commence study by the Commencement Date advised in the Letter of Offer. The Commencement Date will normally be the Expected Commencement Date in Item (a) of [Table 2: Project Outline](#), however the University reserves the right to change the Commencement Date in the Letter of Offer when offering a scholarship.

If an applicant cannot start by the Commencement Date, the offer of the Scholarship may be withdrawn.

Scholarship Selection Procedures

Eligibility

All applications are assessed against the Eligibility criteria for the scholarship scheme. Those applications deemed ineligible for a scholarship will not be processed any further and ineligible applicants will be notified of the result.

Ranking against the selection criteria

The Project Supervisor will rank eligible applications on the basis of academic merit, relevant research experience, publications, relevant work experience, referee reports and may identify applications which are not for further consideration (NFFC).

The Project Supervisor may contact an applicant directly for more detail regarding their application.

Appeals

A request to review a scholarship decision must be lodged in writing dean.gradresearch@vu.edu.au within 10 University business days of the applicant being informed of the decision.

A review of a scholarship decision is available in circumstances where unsuccessful applicants believe there was a breach of process in the handling of their application;

The Dean, Graduate Research will undertake, or arrange a review if there is a conflict of interest, of the decision and a written outcome will be provided within 10 University business days of the date that the request was received by VU. If there are any delays to the timeline for any outcome, the Dean, Graduate Research will advise the applicant the reason for the delay and the date that they may receive an outcome of the review.

Application Submission

Applications should be submitted to Professor David Bishop, David.Bishop@vu.edu.au , with the following documentation attached:

- Academic transcripts
- Qualification certificates
- **200-word personal statement** – include your reasons for wanting to undertake this research, and your academic path or trajectory
- Up-to-date CV

Successful applicants will be required to submit a formal application through the Victoria University Admissions portal and meet all University requirements for admission and enrolment.

For more information

Please contact: Dr Dale Taylor, Dale.Taylor4@live.vu.edu.au or Professor David Bishop, David.Bishop@vu.edu.au +61 3 99199471

PRIVACY STATEMENT

Victoria University (VU) values your privacy and is committed to handling your personal information in accordance with the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic) and other applicable privacy legislation. The personal information collected on this form will be used primarily for the purposes of assessing and processing this application. VU may also use and disclose your personal information to verify the information provided by you, to comply with government and other reporting requirements and/or to carry out associated activities connected with this application. Your personal information may also be disclosed to Commonwealth and State agencies such as the Department of Education and Training and the Department of Home Affairs in accordance with VU's obligations under the Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (Cth) (**ESOS Act**), the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (**National Code**) and other applicable legislation. Your personal information will not otherwise be used or disclosed without your consent, unless permitted by law. By completing and submitting this application, you agree to VU collecting, using and disclosing your personal information as described above and in accordance with VU's Privacy Policy and Student Information Privacy Collection Statement (which provides further detail about the types of personal information VU may collect from you and how it is managed) available on the Privacy page on our website vu.edu.au/privacy

You have a right to access your personal information held by VU. If you have any questions regarding privacy, please refer to the Privacy page on our website, our frequently asked questions at ASKVU or phone us on 9919 6100 or 1300 VIC UNI (or 1300 842 864).

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