

**VICTORIA
UNIVERSITY**

2026 GUIDE TO APPLICANTS

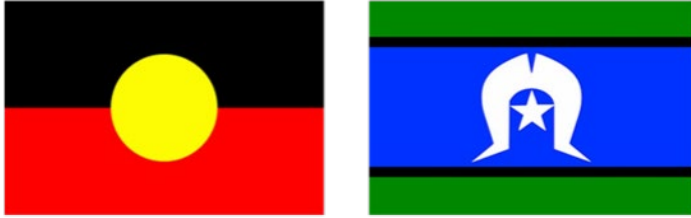
GRADUATE RESEARCH TRAINING PROGRAM (RTP) STIPEND SCHOLARSHIPS

Graduate Research School

Newly commencing **Domestic** and **International** students
– Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) and Research Master
degrees

23/07/2025
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).

Cultural Warning

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people should be aware that these pages contain the names of people who have passed away.

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Key Details

This guide is for new applicants, **Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) or Research Masters***, who wish to apply for a Higher Degree Research Stipend Scholarship commencing in Research Period 1, 2026 at Victoria University as part of the schemes listed in [Table 1](#).

The number of RTP Stipend Scholarships awarded is determined by the availability of University funds in any given year.

Annual Research Training Program (RTP) Stipend Scholarship and value

Table 1 Annual RTP Stipend Scholarship details

Stipend Scholarship Award	Cohort	Degree	Annual amount (2025)
Research Training Program Stipend Scholarship (RTPSS)	Domestic & International	PhD	\$35,006
VU Doctoral Research Access Scholarship*	Domestic	PhD / Masters	\$42,900
VU Doctoral Research Diversity Scholarship*	Domestic	PhD / Masters	\$42,900
Nigel Stepto Doctoral Research Scholarship	Domestic	PhD	\$40,006
Vice Chancellor's Graduate Research Award	Domestic	PhD	\$10,000
Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Research Scholarship	Domestic	PhD / Masters	\$47,736
Lisa Belleair Indigenous Research Scholarship	Domestic	PhD / Masters	\$47,736
Foley Collection Research Scholarship	Domestic & International	PhD / Masters	\$47,736

**Only the VU Doctoral Research Access, VU Doctoral Research Diversity and Moondani Balluk Scholarships are available for Research Masters applicants*

Research Focus Outline

All scholarship applicants must nominate an advertised [Research Focus Outline](#) in their application in order to be considered.

The Research Focus Outlines have been through an internal approval process and meet the hurdle requirements of Strategic Alignment and Appropriate Supervision.

Eligibility - Domestic

This section outlines the requirements for Domestic applicants to **be eligible for consideration**.

It provides the eligibility criteria for the relevant scholarships listed in [Table 1](#).

Research Training Program (RTP) Stipend Scholarship

- i. **Australian residents** (all domestic students including Australian citizens, Australian permanent residents, New Zealand citizens and holders of permanent Australian humanitarian visas)
- ii. Have an average final year or Honours year grade of Distinction (VU Standard 75% or above) or equivalent
- iii. Applicants who have been accepted by Victoria University for entrance into the proposed degree
- iv. Nominate an approved [Research Focus Outline](#)
- v. Enrol as a full-time candidate (part-time-award may be available for compelling or medical reasons)
- vi. Complete the online application form and provide **all required documentation** as outlined below and on the [Apply for Graduate Research page](#)

Nigel Stepto Doctoral Research Scholarship

The Nigel Stepto Doctoral Research Scholarship has been established in memory and honour of [Professor Nigel Stepto](#).

Nigel was a significant contributor and leader in research and research training at Victoria University between 2007 and 2020, specialising in exercise physiology and Women's Health in the Institute of Health and Sport (IHeS). Nigel was also the Co-Deputy Director – Research Training of IHeS from 2018 until his untimely death in early 2020.

To be eligible to apply applicants must demonstrate academic excellence and conduct research that is within an area of Health research in one of the four **IHeS research programs**:

- [Clinical & Community Health & Wellbeing](#)
- [Healthy & Inclusive Communities](#)
- [Mechanism & Interventions in Health & Disease](#)
- [Sport Performance & Business](#)

This scholarship is awarded to the highest ranked Domestic scholarship applicant who meets the eligibility criteria.

Vice Chancellor's Graduate Research Award

Only successful Domestic RTPSS applicants are assessed for the Vice Chancellor's Graduate Research Award.

This scholarship is awarded to the highest ranked Domestic scholarship applicant.

Eligibility - International

This section outlines the requirements for International applicants to **be eligible for consideration**.

It provides the eligibility criteria for the relevant scholarships listed in [Table 1](#).

Research Training Program (RTP) Stipend Scholarship

- i. Be a citizen of any country other than Australia or New Zealand
- ii. Have an average final year or Honours year grade of H1 (VU Standard 80% or above) or equivalent
- iii. Enrol as a full-time candidate
- iv. Applicants who have been accepted by Victoria University for entrance into the proposed degree
- v. Nominate an approved [Research Focus Outline](#)
- vi. Complete the online application form and provide **all required documentation** as outlined below and on the [Apply for Graduate Research page](#)

Moondani Balluk

VU recognises that Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders are under-represented in graduate research studies and encourages qualified Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander applicants to undertake their research studies at VU.

Moondani Balluk means 'embrace people' in the language of the Wurundjeri people who first lived in the western region of Melbourne.

Moondani Balluk Academic Unit is a culturally safe and supportive place for Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander students and staff at Victoria University. We are committed to an Indigenous research agenda of pursuing epistemic justice through research within a framework of decolonisation and solidarity.

Eligibility

- i. Have an average final year or Honours year grade of Distinction (VU Standard 70% or above) or equivalent
- ii. Applicants who have been accepted by Victoria University for entrance into the proposed degree (Research Masters or Doctor of Philosophy)
- iii. Nominate an approved [Research Focus Outline](#)
- iv. Enrol as a full-time candidate (part-time-award may be available for compelling or medical reasons)
- v. Complete the online application form and provide [all required documentation](#) as outlined below and on the [Apply for Graduate Research page](#)

Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Research Scholarship

Only available to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Lisa Belleair Indigenous Research Scholarship

Only available to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are Australian citizens or have been granted permanent resident status.

Foley Collection Research Scholarship

Available to both domestic and international applicants however domestic applicants are preferred due to the nature of the projects. Recipients of this scholarship will undertake a research project using the [Foley Collection](#) and the [Aboriginal History Archive](#).

Access and Diversity

VU is committed to encouraging people whose educational opportunities have been disrupted or adversely affected by their life circumstances to participate in graduate research.

VU normally offers two (2) stipend scholarships each year to support this commitment for applicants for Research Masters or Doctor of Philosophy (PhD).

Eligibility

- i. **Australian residents** (all domestic students including Australian citizens, Australian permanent residents, New Zealand citizens and holders of permanent Australian humanitarian visas)
- ii. Have an average final year or Honours year grade of Distinction (VU Standard 70% or above) or equivalent
- iii. Applicants who have been accepted by Victoria University for entrance into the proposed degree (Research Masters or Doctor of Philosophy)
- iv. Nominate an approved [Research Focus Outline](#)
- v. Enrol as a full-time candidate (part-time-award may be available for compelling or medical reasons)
- vi. Complete the online application form and provide **all required documentation** as outlined below and on the [Apply for Graduate Research page](#)

VU Doctoral Research Access Scholarship

VU is committed to encouraging people whose educational opportunities have been disrupted or adversely affected by their life circumstances to participate in graduate research.

This scholarship supports students who identify as having a disability, are neuro-divergent or who are Deaf. This includes:

- being blind or having low vision
- having an acquired brain injury
- being hard-of-hearing or Deaf
- having a physical disability (mobility needs for example)
- having a diagnosed mental health condition, illness or other invisible or visible disability

Applicants must submit the following documentation as part of their application:

- [Doctoral Research Access and Diversity Scholarship Form \(PDF\)](#)
- Supporting evidence such as a letter of support from a community case-worker, medical practitioner or other support practitioner

There is normally only 1 scholarship awarded in Research Period 1 each year.

VU Doctoral Research Diversity Scholarship

VU is committed to encouraging people whose educational opportunities have been disrupted or adversely affected by their life circumstances to participate in graduate research.

This scholarship supports students who have living experience of one or more of the following identities and barriers:

- being part of the LGBTQIA+ community
- being a solo parent or carer
- having lived in out-of-home care (such as being a ward of the state, living in foster or kinship care)
- having experienced recent homelessness
- having experienced family violence or other significant adverse life events
- being a refugee or asylum seeker

Applicants must submit the following documentation as part of their application:

- **Doctoral Research Access and Diversity Scholarship Form (PDF)**
- Supporting evidence such as a letter of support from a community case-worker, medical practitioner or other support practitioner

There is normally only 1 scholarship awarded in Research Period 1 each year.

Ineligible – All applicants

Applicants are ineligible to apply for a RTP Stipend Scholarship if they:

- Are applying for the Doctor of Philosophy (Integrated) degree
- Are receiving another equivalent award, scholarship or salary to undertake the proposed program (“equivalent” stipend is regarded as more than 75% of the Stipend value)
- Have already completed a degree at the same or higher level as the proposed candidature
- Have held any Victoria University Research Scholarship previously unless it was terminated within six months of the commencement of benefits

Selection

Selection Criteria

Applications are assessed against the selection criteria listed below. Each criterion is given a score and the scores are added together to form a Final Selection Score.

Academic Merit

The academic achievement score (AAS) of the applicant is based on their results in their relevant qualification which demonstrates the applicant's ability or potential ability to undertake a Research Degree project to a high standard.

The criterion score is based on the AAS.

Research Experience

Experience in relevant research activities outside of a research training degree.

These include but are not limited to; technical assistant with supervision; ongoing research assistant with limited supervision or management of a small research team; non-refereed papers such as conference abstracts, papers under review (must provide evidence of submission).

This information must be included in your curriculum vitae (CV).

The criterion score is based on duration of experience and relevance to your proposed project.

Research Publications and Creative Works

Peer reviewed research publications, published creative works and grey literature.

To include publications and creative works:

- your curriculum vitae must include a bibliographic reference of (up to) your **top five** publications only with your **ORCID number**; and
- you must provide a screenshot of the first page of these top five (5) publications or creative works/products; and
- for each publication, please provide a brief statement (up to 50 words) that outlines why your contribution to the paper was significant.

Grey literature, such as reports, policy papers or white papers, may be included but must be directly relevant to your research proposal, and show evidence of academic level research. Evidence must be provided in the form of a link or copy of the paper.

If a publication has been accepted by a publisher but not yet published, an acceptance letter from the publisher must be included.

If you do not provide supporting documentation, your publications will not be considered, and you will not receive a score for this criterion.

The criterion score is based on relevance to your proposed project, quality of journal, authorship contribution, critical reviews and outlet recognition of creative works.

Work, Leadership & Community Experience

Professional/work experience within the past 10 years, leadership and community involvement, and/or excellence / impact such as industry / community awards or national/international recognition. These experiences must be relevant to research in the field of the proposed research degree.

- If you are using work experience as an entry qualification you must provide supporting documentation as detailed on your curriculum vitae. It is the applicant's responsibility to provide proof of their work experience.
- If you have excellence / impact experience, you must provide evidence such as links to news items, copies of awards or certificates.

You may choose to information (up to 200 words) on your skills and experience, including any community and leadership experiences, that will complement and clarify information provided in your curriculum vitae (CV).

The criterion score is based on relevance to your proposed project, duration of experience and level of excellence/impact.

Relative to Opportunity

Achievement Relative to Opportunity is an evaluation of what you can or have achieved given the opportunities available to you.

Relative to opportunity refers to the consideration of personal circumstances (e.g. being a primary carer, living with disability), work arrangements (e.g. part-time work, adjustments, working in a different industry) and career histories (e.g. periods of leave, time since Honours/Masters) in the assessment of your research achievements.

This criterion provides us with the opportunity to make an informed and fair judgement based on your situation.

- If you have experienced an impact on your opportunity for research achievement, please provide a written statement (up to 200 words) to contextualize your research outputs and achievements relative to the opportunities that you have had to participate in research-related activities.

The criterion score is based on your unique situation.

Note that there are separate scholarships for [Access and Diversity](#) listed above. If you fall into one of those categories, please apply accordingly.

Selection

Selection Process – All RTP Scholarships

All RTP Stipend Scholarships are awarded via a competitive process as outlined in Victoria University's [Higher Degree by Research Scholarship Procedure](#).

Only those applications that are deemed eligible and have provided all supporting documentation will be considered.

The Scholarship Ranking Panel in each Institute ranks eligible RTP Stipend Scholarship applications based on the Selection Criteria. Based on the Final Selection Scores, the Panel agrees on a ranking of eligible applications and provides a recommendation to the Executive Scholarship Panel for all available scholarships.

The Executive Scholarship Panel reviews the ranking and recommendation to determine those applicants who will receive an offer of a stipend scholarship, and any conditions attached to an offer.

The final ranking and scholarship/award allocation is normally completed within two months of the closing date of applications.

Selection Process – Research Access and Research Diversity

All RTP Stipend Scholarships are awarded via a competitive process as outlined in Victoria University's [Higher Degree by Research Scholarship Procedure](#).

In addition to the above [Selection Process](#), these applications are assessed by a separate panel comprising senior staff with experience in equality, wellbeing and inclusion.

The Executive Scholarship Panel reviews the ranking and recommendation to determine those applicants who will receive an offer for these two stipend scholarships.

Selection Process – Moondani Balluk

All RTP Stipend Scholarships are awarded via a competitive process as outlined in Victoria University's [Higher Degree by Research Scholarship Procedure](#).

In addition to the above [Selection Process](#), these applications are assessed by the Executive Director, Moondani Balluk (or nominee) who will provide a recommendation to the Executive Scholarship Panel.

Notification of Outcomes

Scholarship rounds are competitive, and we estimate that applicants will require the equivalent of 80 to 85 on the VU grading scale to be considered for a PhD stipend scholarship.

The number of stipend scholarships awarded is determined by the University funds available in any given year.

We receive many high-quality applications and cannot provide all eligible applicants with a scholarship.

Due to the volume of applications received, we are unable to provide individual feedback on applications or advise on what scores applicants received against each of the criteria.

Successful applicants will normally receive written notification of the result of their scholarship application within two months of the closing date.

Appeals

Appeals can only be lodged if an unsuccessful applicant believes there is a breach of process in the handling of their application. Refer to Higher Degree Research Scholarship Procedure.

Appeals against the outcome of scholarship applications must be lodged in writing to dean.gradresearch@vu.edu.au within 10 University business days of the applicant being informed of the decision. Applicants must explain the basis of their appeal and provide relevant documentation and evidence to support the appeal.

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 Victoria University. If there are any delays to the timeline for the 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. The review is final and cannot be appealed within Victoria University.

Conditions and Benefits of a Stipend Scholarship

The following is a summary of the main benefits and conditions. Successful applicants will receive a full guide to the conditions and benefits of these scholarships at the time of offer. Applicants can refer to the [Higher Degree by Research Scholarship Procedure](#) for full details of the benefits and conditions.

Stipend

Scholarship recipients will receive a full-time stipend at the rate listed in [Table 1](#) above.

Full-time stipend payments are currently exempt from taxation and indexed annually. Payments are made fortnightly into an Australian bank account.

Domestic holders of all scholarships may:

- Be in receipt of minor award, allowances or other earnings, which are supplementary to a scholarship, or derived from part-time work in accordance with the [Higher Degree by Research Scholarship Procedure](#)
- Receive stipend top up funding from industry, or obtained from a non-Commonwealth source, provision for fieldwork, equipment and other such expenses not covered by the scholarship. Funds towards overseas travel costs may be obtained from Commonwealth awards or other sources.

RTP Fee Offset

In addition to the Stipend provided for any of the above scholarships, each scholarship holder will receive a RTP Fee Offset scholarship. This will exempt the scholarship holder from paying annual course tuition fees for the [timely duration](#) of the enrolled degree.

Table 2. RTP Fee Offset Value in 2025

	Minimum Annual	Maximum Annual	Minimum / Research Period	Maximum / Research Period
Domestic	27,300	33,500	13,650	16,750
International	34,200	40,400	17,100	20,200

Successful Domestic recipients must pay the Student Services and Amenities Fee (SSAF) every research period.

For successful International recipients, the Student Services and Amenities Fee is included in the course tuition fee.

Allowance

Domestic

Successful Domestic recipients relocating to take up their award or for an approved transfer, may apply to the University for the following relocation allowance upon production of receipts.

- travel expenses within Australia only, up to a maximum amount equivalent to the economy/student airfare for student, spouse and dependents to the new city;
- removal expenses of up to \$500 per adult and \$250 per child up to a maximum of \$1,500

International

Successful International recipients will be granted:

- Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC - **Single Cover only**) for the maximum timely duration of the degree in which they are enrolled and an additional two months
- Note that if recipients require Couples or Family cover, the additional cost will be at the recipients expense)

The following costs are NOT included in the allowance:

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

Duration

All students are expected to complete their study in the timely duration for their degree per [Table 3](#).

Table 3. Stipend and course durations for Higher Degrees by Research at Victoria University

Course	Stipend Duration	Timely Duration
Doctor of Philosophy	3.5 years	4 years
Master of Applied Research	2 years	2 years
Master of Research	1.5 years	1.5 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- refer to [HDR Procedure 3 Pre-Candidature and Candidature.](#)

Employment

Successful Stipend recipients are normally expected to study and research full-time (minimum of 36.75 hours per week) between the hours of 8.00am – 6.00pm Monday to Friday. There is a limit of eight (8) hours (maximum) paid employment per week during these hours. Please refer to the [Higher Degree by Research Scholarship Procedure.](#)

Commencement

All successful recipients are expected to commence study **in person** on **Monday 16 February 2026**.

If a recipient cannot start or present in person by this date, the offer of the scholarship may be withdrawn. Recipients in this situation are encouraged to seek advice from researchscholarships@vu.edu.au.

If an awardee of a Scholarship who has accepted their offer does not enrol by the Commencement Date, their offer cannot be deferred and their offer will be withdrawn by the University.

Application Submission

1. Select your [Research Focus Outline](#) (RFO)
2. Contact the listed Principal Supervisor to discuss your interest in and suitability for the research topic
3. Refer to the [Apply for Graduate Research](#) page and follow the steps outlined to submit your application
4. Use the Institute, course code, FoR code and RFO number of your selected RFO to assist you with your application

Ensure you include all required documentation for admission and scholarship with your application:

- ◆ academic transcripts*
- ◆ qualification certificates
- ◆ research proposal – including RFO number, supervisor's name, FoR codes*
- ◆ [200-word personal statement](#) (PDF, 73 KB) – include your reasons for wanting to undertake this research, and your academic path or trajectory
- ◆ up-to-date CV including bibliographic reference of your **top five** publications (if applicable) with an [ORCID ID](#) (external link)
- ◆ supporting evidence of your [top five publications](#) (if applicable)
- ◆ two written academic references - letters from previous lecturers or supervisors, including their titles, institutions and contact details
- ◆ signed [Prospective Supervisor form](#) (PDF, 64 KB)*
- ◆ 200-word statement on your Achievement [Relative to Opportunity](#) (if applicable)
- ◆ Supporting documentation for your [Work, Leadership & Community](#) experience

*These documents are mandatory and must be uploaded in your application.

All domestic research applicants will be considered for an Australian government funded place under the [Research Training Program](#) (external link).

Closing Dates

Applications close on:

International: Sunday 14 September 2025 (11:59pm AEST)

Domestic: Sunday 28 September 2025 (11:59pm AEST)