VICTORIA UNIVERSITY

PROJECT-BASED GRADUATE RESEARCH STIPEND SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION GUIDE

Enhancing decision support and performance innovation in elite Australian Rules football

Doctor of Philosophy ONLY

Newly commencing Domestic applicants (including Australian citizens, Australian permanent residents, New Zealand citizens and holders of a permanent Australian humanitarian visa)

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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).

Contents

Acknowledgement of Country **2**

Key Details **4**

Eligibility **5**

Domestic Applicants 5

Conditions and Benefits **6**

Special Conditions 6

Scholarship Value 6

Period of Support 6

Employment 7

Commencement 7

Part-time Scholarships 7

Scholarship Selection Procedures **8**

Eligibility 8

Ranking against the selection criteria 8

Final Ranking 8

Appeals 8

Application Submission **9**

For more information **9**

Key Details

This guide is for applicants interested in a postgraduate research scholarship commencing in 2026 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**.

Project:
This research project will investigate applications of player monitoring and performance data. The specific research question will be refined in collaboration with the successful candidate and club stakeholders. The selected candidate will step directly into the club's resourcing model, contributing meaningfully to real-world decision-making within the AFLW environment. This provides a rare opportunity to undertake rigorous academic research while playing an active role in applied performance implementation alongside coaching, strength and conditioning, medical, sport science, performance analysis, and emerging data science personnel.
Areas of interest may include (but are not limited to):

- Athlete monitoring, availability and physical readiness profiling
- Training load and recovery modelling.
- Integration of wearable technologies and sleep monitoring tools.
- Development of practical visualisation and reporting systems.
- Applied performance insights to support strength & conditioning, medical, and sport science teams

You will be embedded within an elite AFL club performance environment; involved in direct collaborations with high-performance leadership and multidisciplinary staff and get hands-on applied experience alongside formal academic supervision.

Ideal candidates will have:

- First Class Honours (80%+) or a Masters by Research (75%+)
- Foundation in wearable technology, athlete monitoring, high-performance, or sport science
- Motivation to work within a fast-paced, collaborative high-performance environment

Application due date

a.	Application Due Date	**20 March 2026**

Table 2: Project Outline

Item	Detail	
a. Expected Commencement Date	TBC with preferred candidate 27 April; 25 May or 27 July 2026	
b. Project Title	Enhancing decision support and performance innovation in elite Australian Rules football	
c. Chief Investigator	Dr Samuel McIntosh	
d. Associate Supervisor	Dr Alice Sweeting	
e. Special Conditions	Intellectual Property Assignment Required	No
	Working with Children Check Required	Yes
	Police Check Required	No
	Other conditions	Not applicable

Table 3: Stipend Value and Included Benefits

Item	Detail
a. Value of stipend per annum	$35,707 (2026 rate)
b. Fixed rate or incremented	Incremented rate
c. Fee offset included	RTP Fee Offset
d. Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC)	NA
e. PhD and/or Master Research Degrees available	PhD only
f. Part-Time Available	Yes

Eligibility

Domestic Applicants

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)

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.

Special Conditions

If item (e) 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 must be willing to obtain Working with Children Check before commencing the Project and Scholarship as this is a requirement of the Industry Partner; 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.

Scholarship Value

Stipend Value

The full-time 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

Domestic Applicants

In 2026, the value of the Fee Offset component of the Award is $14,000 to $16,750 per Research Period depending on the area of research.

Period of Support

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

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.

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 **Table 3** is marked "Yes" then Funding Agency requirements for the Project mean that the scholarship can be offered for part-time study.

Domestic Applicants

The University may approve a part-time award where an applicant can demonstrate heavy care commitments or a medical condition which precludes full-time study. The award holder must demonstrate one of the following:

- care responsibilities for a pre-school child, or
- care responsibilities for school aged children as a sole parent with limited access to outside support, or
- care responsibilities for an invalid or disabled spouse, child or parent, or
- a medical condition which limits the capacity to undertake full-time study (supported by medical certification).

A part-time award holder is expected to progress at half the rate of a full-time award holder. Award holders approved to study part-time may revert to full-time study at any time.

Stipends for part-time awards are **NOT** tax exempt. A Tax File Number Form is required to be completed together with supporting documentation detailing the care commitment or medical condition.

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.

Final Ranking

The Institute Associate Director will determine a final ranking of applications, identifying the preferred 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

Expressions of interest should be submitted to **Dr Samuel McIntosh**, with the following documentation attached:

- 500-word research proposal
- 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 Samuel McIntosh, **Samuel.Mcintosh@vu.edu.au**, +61 9919 5063

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