

PROJECT-BASED GRADUATE RESEARCH STIPEND SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION GUIDE

**Advanced Functional Materials for Battery Fire
Suppression**

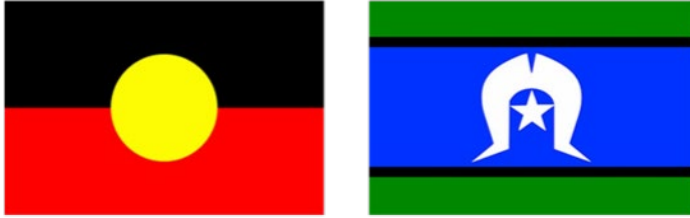
Doctor of Philosophy ONLY

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

26/05/2026
Version 1.0

Acknowledgement of Country



We acknowledge, recognise and respect the Ancestors, Elders and families of the Traditional Owners of University land where our campuses are situated. In Victoria, the Bunurong/Boonwurrung, Wadawurrung and Wurundjeri/Woiwurrung of the Kulin Nation; in Sydney, the Gadigal and Guring-gai of the Eora Nation; and in Brisbane, the Turrbal and Yugara people.

As we share our own knowledge practices within the University, we acknowledge that the land on which we meet, learn and grow is a place of age-old ceremonies of celebration, initiation and renewal. We honour the depth of wisdom held by Aboriginal communities and recognise their enduring connection to Country. Sovereignty has never been ceded.

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Key Details

This guide is for applicants interested in a postgraduate research scholarship commencing in Research Period 2 2026 or Research Period 1 2027 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:

Lithium-ion battery fires are difficult to control because thermal runaway can generate intense heat, flammable gases, and re-ignition risks. This PhD project will focus on the chemistry-driven development of materials and chemical formulations to reduce battery fire hazards. The research will explore two complementary pathways: developing functional additives or protective chemical components that can improve battery safety from within and designing external fire-suppression formulations that can control battery fires more effectively.

The project will investigate how chemical composition, surface chemistry, thermal behaviour, and reaction mechanisms influence fire suppression, heat control, and gas mitigation. The candidate will use materials synthesis, formulation development, physicochemical characterisation, thermal analysis, and fire-related testing to evaluate performance. This interdisciplinary project sits at the interface of chemistry, materials science, battery technology, and fire safety, with outcomes relevant to safer electric vehicles, energy storage systems, emergency response, and clean energy infrastructure.

Required disciplinary knowledge:

- Applicants should have a strong background in chemistry, materials science, chemical engineering, electrochemistry, energy materials, or a closely related field.
- The project is particularly suited to candidates with experience in experimental materials research, including the synthesis, modification, and testing of functional materials or chemical formulations.
- The project will require the candidate to investigate how chemical composition, structure, surface chemistry, and thermal behaviour influence battery fire suppression and thermal runaway mitigation.
- Experience with characterisation and analytical techniques such as XRD, Raman spectroscopy, XPS, SEM/TEM, FTIR, TGA/DSC, gas analysis, electrochemical testing, or fire-related performance testing will be viewed favourably.
- The successful candidate will be expected to design laboratory experiments, prepare and evaluate chemical systems for battery fire-control applications, analyse data, and link material properties with fire-suppression performance.
- Prior experience in catalysis, electrocatalysis, battery materials, green chemistry, or sustainable energy technologies would be advantageous, but direct experience in battery fire safety is not essential.

Application due date

a. Application Due Date	05/06/2026
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Table 2: Project Outline

Item	Detail
a. Expected Commencement Date	27 July 2026
b. Project Title	Advanced Functional Materials for Battery Fire Suppression
c. Chief Investigator	Dr Asif Mahmood
d. Associate Supervisor	Professor Khalid Moinuddin
e. Special Conditions	Intellectual Property Assignment Required No
	Working with Children Check Required No
	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
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

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)

International Applicants

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 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.

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 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.

International applicants

If Item (c) of [Table 3](#) is marked “Fee Offset” then international award holders will be granted a Fee Offset scholarship, covering tuition fees for the duration of the course.

In 2026, the value of the Fee Offset component of the Award is A\$17,500 to A\$20,700 per Research Period depending on the area of research.

Overseas Health Cover (International only)

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.

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.

International applicants

The following costs are NOT included:

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

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.

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 Asif Mahmood](#), 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 Asif Mahmood, Asif.Mahmood@vu.edu.au

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).

PRIVACY INFORMATION:

We collect and protect your personal information in accordance with our Privacy Policy vu.edu.au/privacy