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# 2024 GRADUATE RESEARCH STIPEND SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION GUIDE

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Newly commencing Domestic students – Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)  
ONLY

*(Domestic students are 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 (VU) acknowledges the Ancestors, Elders and families of the Boonwurrung, Woiwurrung (Wurundjeri) and Wathaurung (Wadawurrung) on our Melbourne Campuses, and the Gadigal and Guring-gai people of the Eora Nation on our Sydney campus. These groups are the custodians of University land and have been for many centuries.

We acknowledge that the land on which our campuses stand is the place of age-old ceremonies of celebration, initiation and renewal. The Kulin and Eora people's living culture had, and has, a unique role in the life of these regions. VU supports the aim of Reconciliation Australia to build better relationships between the wider Australian community and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples for the benefit of all Australians.

## Key Details

This guide is for new Domestic applicants, **Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) ONLY**, who wish to apply for a Postgraduate Research Stipend Scholarship commencing in Research Period 1, 2024 at Victoria University as part of the schemes listed in [Table 1](#).

## Annual Research Training Program (RTP) Stipend Scholarship and value

Table 1 Annual RTP Stipend Scholarship and value

Stipend Scholarship Award	Annual amount (2023)
Research Training Program Stipend Scholarship (RTPSS)	\$33,000
VU Diversity Postgraduate Research Scholarship	\$40,000
Nigel Stepto Doctoral Research Scholarship	\$40,000
Vice Chancellor's Graduate Research Award	\$10,000

*Awarded to one Domestic scholarship recipient on top of their other stipend scholarship. All RTP stipend applicants are automatically considered for this award*

## Eligibility

This section outlines the requirements for applicants to be eligible for consideration. It provides the eligibility criteria for all scholarships listed in [Table 1](#).

### All Higher Degree by Research (HDR) Stipend Scholarships in this Guide

- 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 H1 (VU Standard 80% or above) or equivalent (excluding Diversity applications as [outlined below](#)).
  - a. Applicants may refer to Step 2: **[Check your eligibility](#)** on the Apply for Graduate Research webpage to ascertain if you meet the minimum academic entry requirements for admission
- iii. Enrol as a full-time candidate (part-time-award may be available for compelling or medical reasons)
- iv. Applicants who have been accepted by Victoria University for entrance into the proposed degree
- v. Complete the application form and provide **[all required documentation](#)**, including the contact details of two referees

### VU Diversity Postgraduate Research Scholarship

- vi. Provide written supporting evidence that you have experienced one or more of the following that have disrupted or adversely affected your studies:
  - a. Traumatic events beyond your control
  - b. Significant illness and/or disability
  - c. Socioeconomic and/or family circumstances
- vii. Instead of (ii) above:
  - a. have an average grade (or equivalent) of at least 70% VU standard in the final year of the Honours degree or four-year undergraduate degree

### 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 the Institute of Health and Sport (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](#)
- [Health & Inclusive Communities](#)
- [Mechanism & Interventions in Health & Disease](#)
- [Sport Performance & Business](#)

## Vice Chancellor's Graduate Research Award

Only successful Domestic RTPSS applicants are assessed for the Vice Chancellor's Graduate Research Award. Victoria University expects to offer one Vice Chancellor's Graduate Research Award commencing in 2024.

## Ineligible

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

- 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 which are: academic merit, relevant research experience, relevant research publications or creative works, relevant work experience, strategic alignment and referee reports (as required)

### Academic Merit

The academic achievement of the applicant 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.

### Relevant Research Experience

Experience in relevant research activities outside of a research training degree. These include but are not limited to; 6 or more weeks internship; technical assistant with supervision; ongoing research assistant with limited supervision; management of a small

research team; patent or patent application (listed as inventor with description of contribution)

This information must be included in your curriculum vitae.

## Research publications and creative works

Peer reviewed research publications and published creative works. The criterion is based on relevance to the proposed project; quality of journal; authorship; contribution; critical reviews of creative works.

Your curriculum vitae must include a bibliographic reference of (up to) your **top five** publications only with your **ORCID number**. If a publication has been accepted by a publisher but not yet published, an acceptance letter from the publisher must be included. DO NOT provide copies of your publications. If you do not provide sufficient supporting documentation, your publications will not be taken into account.

## Relevant work experience

Work experience within the past 10 years that is 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.

## Strategic Alignment

To determine the research topic is aligned with Victoria University's priority fields of research. It is important to identify a supervisor that shares interest in your research topic. You must contact a supervisor and receive in-principle approval from them for your research project. In order to submit evidence of this approval, you will need to include the completed **Prospective Supervisor form** when you apply for a research degree.

Please ensure you review Step 3: **Identify a priority Field of Research (FoR) code and supervisor**.

You must select a **Field of Research (FoR) code** and submit a **Prospective Supervisor form** as part of your application.

## Referees

Referees provide an independent assessment of a candidate's academic potential and abilities. Candidates should provide the name and contact details of referees who have first-hand experience of their research capacity. If you are basing your application on work experience, at least one of your referees must be able to comment on your relevant work experience. Family members will not be accepted as referees; nominated supervisors will

only be considered if they have firsthand experience of an applicant's research experience (eg. supervised an applicant in a previous project, internship etc).

By providing Victoria University with contact details for your referees, you give permission for Victoria University to contact your referees to discuss your suitability for the degree and competitiveness for a stipend scholarship.

## Selection Process

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. Discipline Ranking Committees rank eligible RTP Stipend Scholarship applications based on the Selection Criteria, which results in an Order of Merit list. An assessment is made of successful applicants for the Vice Chancellor's Graduate Research Award.

The University Ranking Committee reviews the Order of Merit lists to determine a University-wide Order of Merit to identify 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 completed in early December. All applicants will receive written notification of the result of their scholarship application by mid-December 2023.

## Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Applicants

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.

Victoria University also has a program of scholarships for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. For more information on these, please go to the [Moondani Balluk Research Scholarships website](#).

## Appeals

Appeals can only be lodged if an unsuccessful applicant believes there is a breach of process in the handling of their application. Appeals against the outcome of scholarship applications must be lodged in writing to [dean.gradresearch@vu.edu.au](mailto: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

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

## Scholarship Allowance

See [Table 1](#) for an outline of the value of living stipend for the available scholarships.

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 within the [Higher Degree by Research Scholarship Procedure](#)
- Receive stipend top up funding from industry, or obtain 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 scholarship allowance provided for any of the domestic above scholarships, each scholarship holder will receive a RTP Fee Offset Place. This will exempt the scholarship holder from paying tuition fees for the [timely duration](#) of the enrolled degree. Successful recipients will still have to pay the Student Services and Amenities Fee (SSAF) every semester (domestic only).

## Intellectual Property

Applicants should note that they may be required to assign the University intellectual property they create while working on certain research projects through a formal agreement. Applicants should discuss this with their prospective supervisor.

## Duration of the Scholarship

All students are expected to complete their study in the timely duration for their degree per [Table 2](#).

**Table 2. 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. 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

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 **in person** on **4 March 2024** (coursework commencement date). If an applicant cannot start or present in person by this date, the offer of the scholarship may be withdrawn. If an awardee of a Scholarship who has accepted their offer does not take up their offer and enrol by the Commencement Date, their offer cannot be deferred and their offer will be withdrawn by the University.

## Part-time Scholarships

Part-time scholarships may be available to those who are unable to study full-time for all or part of their candidature. 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. Stipends for part-time awards are NOT tax exempt.

# Application Submission

Please contact your potential supervisor to discuss your Research Training Program Scholarship application.

Make sure to attach copies of the following in your email to your potential supervisor:

- academic transcripts
- qualification certificates
- research proposal – including supervisor’s name and priority 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)
- two written academic references - letters from previous lecturers or supervisors, including their titles, institutions and contact details
- signed **Prospective Supervisor form** (*PDF, 64 KB*)

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

Please follow the applications steps at **Apply for a Graduate Research Scholarship**

## 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](http://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](http://vu.edu.au/privacy)

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