

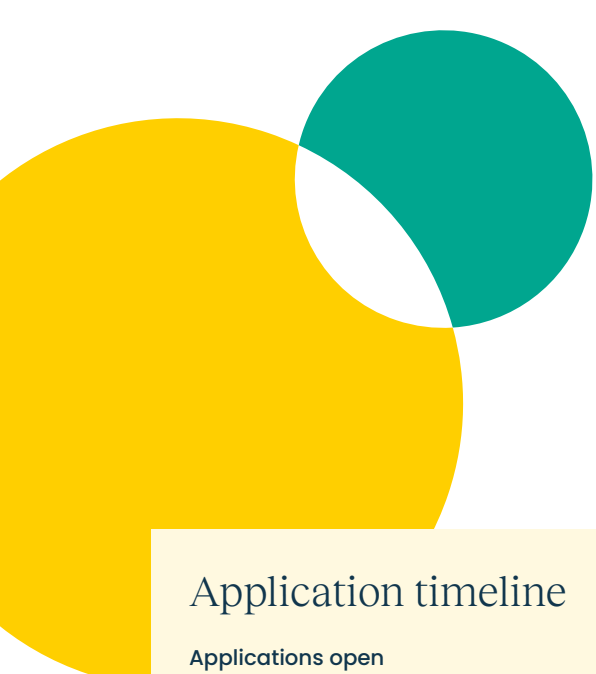


The Australian
**General Practice
Research Foundation**

2027 PhD top-up scholarships

Applications open in 2026 for scholarships
commencing by 31 March 2027

Information
for applicants



Application timeline

Applications open

24 August 2026

Applications close

5 October 2026 (11.59 pm AEDT)

Outcomes notified

November 2026

Funding agreements executed

January–February 2027

Commencement

by 31 March 2027

Shortlisted applicants may be invited to attend an interview as part of the selection process.

This document contains important information for applicants for the Australian General Practice Research Foundation's PhD top-up scholarships. Applicants should read all the information, including the Scholarship application terms and conditions at the end of this document, in conjunction with the application form. By submitting an application, applicants agree to these terms and conditions.

Introduction

The Australian General Practice Research Foundation (the Foundation), is the philanthropic arm of the RACGP, supporting research that improves general practice and patient outcomes across Australia.

Since 2024, the Foundation has offered PhD top-up scholarships to support outstanding GPs and GPs in training undertaking doctoral research directly relevant to general practice.

We are pleased to offer **two scholarships** in 2026, with successful applicants commencing their scholarship by 31 March 2027.

These scholarships aim to reduce financial barriers to PhD study, strengthen research capacity in general practice, and develop the next generation of GP researchers and future leaders, ultimately supporting the sustainability of the profession.

Scholarship inclusions

Each top-up scholarship provides:

- **\$25,000 per annum** (FTE) in stipend support
- **\$5,000 per annum** (FTE) bursary to support professional development and research translation activities, such as conference attendance, workshops, training, or initiatives that help translate research findings into practice.

PhD study may be undertaken full-time or part-time according to university protocols, with funding available for up to 3.5 years full-time, or on a pro-rata basis, up to seven years part-time. The duration of the top-up scholarship will be adjusted to reflect any period of PhD enrolment completed prior to 31 March 2027.

Beyond financial support, scholarship recipients may also benefit from networking opportunities, peer cohort experiences and, where possible, relevant industry placements within the RACGP.

Eligibility

All criteria must be met for applications to be eligible.

Applicant

1. The applicant must be a general practitioner who has attained FRACGP or FACRRM, or a GP in training, or have been accepted into the GP training program commencing in 2027.
2. The applicant must be an Australian citizen or permanent resident.
3. The applicant must have applied for or received a primary scholarship or other salary support from their university or another organisation for the purpose of undertaking their PhD research.
4. The applicant must undertake a research project that is directly relevant to Australian general practice and the communities it serves. The primary context of the research must be based in or on general practice. Medical education research must be situated in general practice.
5. The applicant must have commenced their PhD study between 1 January 2026 and 31 March 2027.
6. Applicants must undertake the PhD at an Australian university.

Supervision

7. An academic general practitioner at an Australian university must be actively involved in supervision of the PhD candidate.

Host university

8. The host university (the enrolling university at which the PhD candidate will undertake the research project), must hold an employment contract and/or affiliation agreement with the applicant's academic supervisor.
9. The host university must be willing to enter into a formal agreement with the RACGP under the terms and conditions of the provided template contract and comply with the requirements of the scholarship.

Selection criteria

Applications will be assessed against the following criteria. The assessment rubric will be made available once applications open.

Suitability of the applicant (40%)

- Academic record and relevant research experience
- Articulated capacity and motivation to contribute to academic general practice post completion of PhD
- Demonstrated intent to significantly contribute to future general practice research.

Strength of the research project (30%)

- Quality and feasibility of the proposed research
- Demonstrated relevance of the research to Australian general practice and the communities it serves
- Potential for outcomes that can be translated into general practice.

Strength of the supervision (30%)

- Contribution of an academic GP to project supervision
- Experience and suitability of intended supervisors
- Capacity of the host university to provide appropriate infrastructure and resources to support the research.



Frequently asked questions

Do I need to have already received a primary scholarship?

Receipt of this scholarship will be contingent upon the applicant receiving a primary scholarship or other salary support from their university. If the outcome of a primary scholarship application is not known at the time of application or awarding, the top-up scholarship may be awarded subject to successful outcome of the primary scholarship application. Evidence that the applicant has applied for or secured additional funding must be provided in the statement from the primary supervisor.

What is meant by “other salary support”?

The top-up scholarships are not intended to be the only source of income for the PhD candidate. Other salary support means any contribution towards your salary by the university. For example, a department may agree to support a lecturer to use the research component of their academic role for their PhD part-time. A letter of support from the Department outlining how they intend to support the applicant must be provided in the statement from the primary supervisor.

What is meant by “other salary support from another organisation for the purpose of undertaking their PhD research”?

This criterion is intended to recognise that some applicants may receive support to undertake their PhD from an organisation other than their university.

While this support is often provided through a university scholarship or salary arrangement, some applicants may receive equivalent support through a general practice, Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (ACCHO), community health service, research institute, or another organisation. In these circumstances, the support must be specifically intended to enable the applicant to undertake their PhD research.

This requirement helps ensure that applicants have an established source of support for their PhD studies and research activities, with the Foundation scholarship acting as a top-up rather than the sole source of research funding or salary support.

Employment income or clinical salary that is unrelated to undertaking a PhD would not satisfy this criterion.

I already have a top-up scholarship. Can I still apply?

Yes. We recognise that undertaking a PhD requires a significant reduction in salary and thus will allow more than one top-up to be held.

I have already started my PhD. Can I still apply? Will this affect the amount awarded?

If you commenced your PhD study on or after 1 January 2026, you may apply. The duration of a full-time or part-time top-up scholarship will be adjusted to reflect any period of PhD enrolment completed prior to 31 March 2027.

When do I need to start my PhD?

Enrolment must commence no later than 31 March 2027. Applicants must be enrolled in a PhD prior to commencement of payments.

What if I do not have a supervisor who is a GP?

It is an essential requirement that at least one supervisor is a GP, and that they play an active role in supervising your project. This supports our objective to build capacity in general practice research by building supervisory capacity. In addition, issues relevant to general practice cannot be researched without a GP investigator who plays an active role in the project. Applications that do not meet this requirement will not be considered. The GP supervisor does not have to be the primary supervisor, however details of how the GP supervisor will be involved must be provided.

Does my GP supervisor have to be based in a department of general practice?

The GP supervisor does not have to be based in a department of general practice. They may, for example, be based in an institute or other department. They must, however, be an academic GP with suitable university affiliation.

What types of research are considered relevant to general practice?

General practice research is broad and may include research relating to patient care, population health, the healthcare workforce, service delivery, systems, policy, professional education, or other issues relevant to general practice and the communities it serves.

Research may take place in a range of settings, including general practices, Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations, rural health services and education settings. Projects are not required to align with a prescribed list of topics; however, applicants should clearly demonstrate how their research is relevant to Australian general practice and may contribute to improving patient care, health outcomes, professional practice, healthcare delivery or the sustainability of the profession.

Will a project in medical education research be considered?

The primary context of the research must be based in or on general practice. Medical education research that is situated in general practice is acceptable.

Do I need to have a track record in research?

No. While relevant research experience is part of the selection criteria, we understand that not everyone has had the opportunity to undertake research. If you have any relevant medals, prizes, awards, or publications relevant to general practice settings, please include them in your CV. However, these will be considered relative to opportunity and in the context of other factors such as your motivation to contribute to academic general practice post PhD, and intent to significantly contribute to future general practice research.

I am a GP in training. Is there anything additional that I should consider?

If you are currently in, or about to enter, the training program, we recommend that you discuss your PhD plans with your Regional Director of Training. The RACGP [Policy Position Statement on Higher Degree Research during General Practice Training](#) outlines how the RACGP can support registrars to complete a PhD alongside general practice training and the principles that will be enforced.

How to apply

Before you start

Prior to commencing your application, applicants should read the scholarship details, eligibility, selection criteria, and terms and conditions as outlined in this handbook. Applications must be submitted using the online application form available on the [Foundation website](#) under 'Apply for Funding'.

Navigating the online application form

On every screen (page of the form) you will find a Form Navigation contents box –this links directly to every page of the application. Click the link to jump directly to the page you want. You can also click 'next page' or 'previous page' on the top or bottom of each page to move forward or backward through the application.

Saving your draft application

If you wish to leave a partially completed application, press 'save' and log out. When you log back in and click on the 'My Submissions' link at the top of the screen, you will find a list of any applications you have started or submitted. You can reopen your draft application and start where you left off. You can also download any application, whether draft or completed, as a PDF. Click on the 'Download' button located at the bottom of the last page of the application form.

Submitting your application

You will find a 'Review and Submit' button at the bottom of the Navigation Panel. You need to review your application before you can submit it. Once you have reviewed your application you can submit it by clicking on 'Submit' at the top of the screen or on the navigation panel. You will not be able to submit your application until all the compulsory questions are completed.

Once you have submitted your application, no further editing or uploading of support materials is possible. When you submit your application, you will receive an automated confirmation email with a copy of your submitted application attached. This will be sent to the email you used to register. If you do not receive a confirmation of submission email, then you should presume that your submission hasn't been submitted and take steps to submit again.

Attachments and support documents

You will need to upload/submit attachments to support your application. This is very simple but requires you to have the documents saved on your computer, or on a storage device. You need to allow enough time for each file to upload before trying to attach another file. Files can be up to 25MB each; however, we do recommend trying to keep files to a maximum of 5MB – the larger the file, the longer the upload time.

Technical assistance

If you need more help using the form, download the [Help Guide for Applicants](#) or check the [Applicant Frequently Asked Questions](#) (FAQ's). Links to these are also provided on the online form.

Submission of applications

Prior to submitting the application, ensure all questions have been answered. Applications close on Monday 05 October 2026 at 11:59 pm Australian Eastern Daylight Savings Time (AEDT). Applications submitted after the closing date will not be accepted.

Assessment of applications

After submitting your application, RACGP staff will review it to ensure compliance with eligibility criteria and scholarship conditions. To avoid disqualification, ensure that all criteria are met and all required documentation is included before submitting. The Foundation may exclude any application that is incomplete or fails to meet the specified eligibility criteria and scholarship conditions.

Once applications close, the Foundation Awards Panel will evaluate each submission against the specified criteria before convening to deliberate and recommend candidates for funding. The Panel's recommendations will then be reviewed by the Australian General Practice Research Foundation Committee, which will make the final funding decisions. All decisions of the Committee are final, with no mechanism for appeal.

Given the relatively small general practice research community, conflicts of interest may arise during the assessment process. The Panel has a well-established process for declaring and managing such conflicts. All Panel members must declare conflicts of interest before accessing any confidential information, including full scholarship applications and supporting documentation. Panel members with a real or perceived conflict of interest will not assess or discuss the affected applications.

Successful applicants

Notification and offer

All applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application by email by the end of November 2026. Successful applicants will receive a formal letter of offer and will be required to provide provisional acceptance, pending execution of the Scholarship Agreement. Applicants must confirm acceptance by the deadline specified in the offer letter. If acceptance is not confirmed by this date, the Foundation may offer the scholarship to another applicant.

Scholarship agreement

Awarding of the scholarship will be subject to the successful grant recipient's administering organisation (the host university), entering into a formal Scholarship Agreement with the RACGP on standard RACGP terms. The agreement will include reporting requirements, payment schedule and required wording for acknowledgement of funding.

Payment of scholarship

The RACGP will make payments from the Foundation to the host university on an annual basis of both the stipend and bursary components of the scholarship. The host university must pay the full scholarship value directly to the recipient. Payments will be made within the terms and conditions specified in the agreement. The host university will be responsible for the proper administration and expenditure of the funds and for ensuring that required reports are provided on time.

The PhD top-up scholarship will be awarded for one year in the first instance and will be renewed annually (for a maximum of 3.5 years, full-time equivalent), subject to the recipient performing satisfactorily in their research, remaining enrolled in the PhD degree, and meeting reporting requirements. In addition, the university, supervisors and scholarship recipient must remain compliant with all eligibility criteria.

Recipients are advised to refer to a financial or taxation advisor to ascertain the taxability of the scholarship.

Reporting

Scholarship recipients are required to complete and submit annual reports on their research progress and a final report on the outcomes of their PhD research. The reporting requirements and due dates will be set out in the Scholarship Agreement.

Presentation of certificate

Scholarship recipients may be invited to attend an event hosted by the Australian General Practice Research Foundation and/or the RACGP faculty where the scholarship recipient resides to receive a certificate of their scholarship.

Acknowledgement of support

Scholarship recipients must acknowledge the support of the Australian General Practice Research Foundation in the PhD dissertation and in all publications, presentations, summary findings, websites, newsletters and media announcements relating to the research. The required wording, as provided in the Scholarship Agreement, must be used. The Foundation's logo must be utilised where appropriate and will be provided upon request.

Publicity

Scholarship recipients agree to participate in reasonable communications activities coordinated by the Foundation and its funding partners. These may include media interviews, press releases, social media features and public announcements. Recipients consent to the use of their name, image and information from grant reports for communications purposes. The Foundation will work collaboratively with recipients and take schedules and preferences into account when planning any activities.

Program evaluation

The Foundation's PhD top-up scholarships program will be evaluated against the program's purpose and objectives. RACGP staff will perform this evaluation in collaboration with the host university, supervisors, and the PhD candidate. This may include face-to-face meetings for which all parties will be required to make themselves available. Feedback received will be used to inform future programs.

Further information

Please contact foundation@racgp.org.au if you have any queries.

Grant application terms & conditions

1. These terms apply to all RACGP grant applications unless otherwise indicated. These terms and Conditions apply to all applications, whether incomplete or otherwise. Applicants agree to these terms and conditions by logging on to the Smartygrants portal.
2. In these Terms, the following words have these meanings:
 - “Applicant” means the parties listed on an application for a Grant;
 - “Conflict of Interest” means a conflict of interest as described in clause 3 of the RACGP Conflicts of Interest Guidance which can be found at www.racgp.org.au/the-racgp/governance/organisational-policies/conflicts-of-interest-guidance;
 - “Grant Agreement” means the formal grant agreement signed by the RACGP and the Grant Recipient;
 - “Grant” means any grant, scholarship, award or other form of funding provided by the RACGP;
 - “Grant Recipient” means the organisation that will receive the funds and enter into a Grant Agreement with RACGP;
 - “Offer Date” means the date of the letter which notifies the Grant Recipient of the successful outcome of their application;
 - “RACGP”, “us” or “our” is a reference to The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners Ltd, including its philanthropic arm, the Australian General Practice Research Foundation;
 - “Terms” means these Grant Application Terms & Conditions;
 - “Uncommitted Funds” means any grant funds awarded that have not been legally committed for spending and that are not payable by the Grant Recipient to the RACGP as a current liability;
 - “you”, “your”, “they” or “their” is a reference to the Applicant.
3. The RACGP is committed to protecting your privacy. By applying for a Grant, Applicants consent to RACGP’s collection of the information provided by them in their application(s) to be used for the purpose of;
 - Assessing their application and, if successful, publicising their name(s), institution and title of their research project;
 - Sharing of their information with our funding partners, if necessary, for the purposes of assessing an application;
 - Logging in to the Smartygrants application platform;
 - Reporting on the outcomes of grants and projects to funding partners and governmental third parties;
 - Complying with any third-party contractual requirements;
 - Administering Foundation grants, awards and scholarship programs; and,
 - Promoting the research project applied for, the grant program through which the project is being funded, and/or the activities and impact of the Australian General Practice Research Foundation using RACGP’s various communications channels.
4. If you do not complete the application in full, then your application for a grant will be excluded from assessment. You may access the information RACGP collects from you, or you may make a complaint about breaches of the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth), by contacting the Privacy Officer (privacy@racgp.org.au). Further information about our collection, use, storage and disclosure of your personal information is available in our Privacy Policy which can be found at www.racgp.org.au/privacy-policy. If you no longer consent to the use of your personal information, please contact us on 1800 198 586 or by email at privacy@racgp.org.au
5. These Terms are governed and construed by the laws of the State of Victoria, Australia.
6. There will be no legally binding agreement between the RACGP and any Applicant in relation to a Grant unless and until a formal grant agreement is signed by the RACGP and the Grant Recipient.
7. Applicants acknowledge and agree they are independent of the RACGP and not an employee or Director, and have no authority to bind the RACGP by contract or otherwise.
8. Applicants must declare any Conflict of Interest relevant to the Grant for which they are applying. Applicants must have reference to the Conflicts of Interest Guidance on the RACGP website which can be found at www.racgp.org.au/the-racgp/governance/organisational-policies/conflicts-of-interest-guidance
9. The RACGP accepts no liability for any cost incurred by an Applicant in relation to a Grant application.
10. The Grants process is overseen by the Foundation Awards Panel on behalf of the RACGP. Terms of Reference are located at <https://www.racgp.org.au/FSDEDEV/media/documents/Education/Research/Foundation-Awards-Panel-TOR.pdf>
11. The Foundation Awards Panel is responsible for the independent, objective evaluation and review of Grant applications. All decisions are final and no correspondence will be entered into. Decisions made in relation to grants are not subject to reconsideration, review or appeal.
12. The Foundation Awards Panel may ask Applicants to clarify in writing information contained in their application in order for the Foundation Awards Panel to assess their application.
13. The Foundation Awards Panel may remove an application from consideration during the selection process if it is considered uncompetitive, incomplete, misleading, incorrect or if the application does not meet the eligibility criteria.
14. Where an applicant identifies a Conflict of Interest in an application, the Foundation Awards Panel may specify how the conflict must be managed in order for the application to be considered or may remove the application from consideration.
15. Where the Grant funds will only partially fund a project, Applicants must provide evidence they can still undertake a meaningful project in the event other grant applications are not successful. The Foundation Awards Panel may elect to not award grant funding for a project that is, or may be, funded from other sources. Applicants must notify the RACGP immediately if they receive funding from another source for a project that is the subject of a Grant application to the RACGP.
16. Unsuccessful Grant Applicants will be advised in writing; however detailed feedback will not be provided.
17. The Foundation Awards Panel in its sole discretion, may decide not to award any Grants if the applications received are assessed as not meeting the required standard.
18. Grant Recipients must be incorporated bodies in Australia that have an ABN and ACN and not individuals, unless the Grant letter of offer specifies that individual support will be provided.
19. Grant funds awarded may only be used for direct research costs (including reasonable costs and project-related salaries) and not for any overhead or management fees of administering organisations.
20. Unless otherwise agreed in writing by RACGP, Grant Recipients will be required to provide reports to RACGP as detailed in the Grant Agreement and outlined in this handbook.
21. Unless otherwise agreed in writing by RACGP, Grant funds will be paid upon completion of relevant milestones to the satisfaction of RACGP, as detailed in the Grant Agreement and outlined in this handbook.
22. Grant Recipients will be required to repay to the RACGP all Uncommitted Funds within 14 days of submission of their final report.
23. Successful Grant Applicants will be required, as part of the Grant Agreement, to negotiate ownership of any intellectual property rights developed using the grant funds.
24. Successful Grant Applicants for the Therapeutic Guidelines Research Grant, will be required, as part of the Grant Agreement, to agree to provide joint ownership of any intellectual property rights developed using the grant funds to Therapeutic Guidelines Ltd.



The Australian
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