



PHIRST

(Population Health Investing in Research Students' Training)

HIGHER DEGREE BY RESEARCH FUNDING SCHEME GUIDELINES

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE FUNDING SCHEME?

In the Melbourne School of Population Health, we believe that research students should have the opportunity to enrich their research experience and maximise the benefits of their candidature. This funding scheme is designed to provide partial subsidies of the costs associated with higher degree research. The scheme provides support for expenses directly related to your research degree. Due to limited funding, only partial support can be provided, and only for expenses that cannot be financed from other sources. You are therefore advised to consider other available funding sources when applying.

WHEN SHOULD I APPLY?

Applications are called for twice yearly in April and October. Applications should be submitted to the Melbourne School of Population Health Higher Degree Research Training Committee Chair for consideration or may be submitted to the Academic Programs Office (see below: How do I apply?). You will be notified of the result of your application within two-three weeks following the next Melbourne School of Population Health Higher Degree Research Training Committee meeting.

WHAT FUNDING IS AVAILABLE?

Funding is limited under this scheme. Applications are awarded on a merit basis and the scheme is competitive. Every effort will be made to evenly divide the pool between the applicants depending on merit and need. As the amount available may vary from year to year, you may wish to contact the Postgraduate Coordinator in your Centre or Unit to get an estimate of the likely amount available for each funding round. Only applications for amounts of \$100 and above will be considered. **A maximum amount of \$900 will be awarded to a single application in any round. During their candidature PhD students are eligible to receive up to \$900 in total, Masters Students up to \$300 in total.**

WHAT ACTIVITIES MAY BE FUNDED?

The purpose of the PHIRST scheme is to meet costs necessary for the completion of your research degree. Applications, except under extraordinary circumstances, are expected to be for prospective funding, for activities such as:

- Conferences (if presenting)
- Accommodation (related to conferences)
- Travel (where necessary for fieldwork/conferences)
- Equipment
- Fieldwork expenses
- Workshop or specialized learning opportunity (note: a supporting statement from the Principal Supervisor demonstrating a direct link between the proposed activity and the student's research project and indicating that the opportunity is not otherwise available at the University of Melbourne is required)

The intention of this scheme is not to fund activities that students are usually expected to undertake themselves as part of their research, e.g. transcription of research interviews and data entry.

AM I ELIGIBLE?

This scheme is available to all Higher Degree by Research students (M.Phil & PhD) who are currently enrolled in the Melbourne School of Population Health. Students on leave are not eligible to apply. Amounts of previous grants to students will be taken into consideration. You should consider the likely requirements for funding over the total period of your research and plan for these at the beginning of your candidature.

It is important to keep in mind any other sources of funding that you may have, when submitting a PHIRST application. Students who hold scholarships that include funds for research support, e.g. NHMRC or VicHealth are advised that this research support fund needs to be fully expended before a PHIRST application is made. Where a student has remaining funds through such scholarships, they must supply evidence of the planned use of such funds with their PHIRST application.

HOW DO I APPLY?

To apply for this funding scheme, you must complete a Melbourne School of Population Health Higher Degree by Research Funding Scheme Application Form which will be available on the Melbourne School of Population Health's website.

Funds may be allocated but it is a university regulation that payment cannot be made unless receipts (or where receipts are not available, statutory declaration forms) are provided. Successful applicants will be notified in writing of the amount allocated and will be required to sign an authorization /declaration form and provide receipts or other evidence of expenditure to their Centre/Unit administrator.

Writing grant applications is an important and essential part of a research career. For many of you this will be the first of many grant applications that you write. The grant application must be clear and comprehensive. We can only base our decision on the information that you provide in the application.

You MUST address all the following points (if there is insufficient space, please attach additional sheets):

1. Purpose of application
2. Full details of what you are seeking funding for (max 300 words)
If you are applying for conference or other travel expenses, please include the following:
 - Conference title, dates and location
 - Conference paper to be presented if applicable
 - Proposed dates of travel, including departure and return datesIf you are applying for travel expenses for reasons not related to conference participation, please state clearly the place(s) which you intend to visit and the purpose of your visit. (Please give names of the cities and countries you plan to travel to, specific details of the centres you intend to visit at each location, and details of any appointments or meetings that have been planned – supporting documentation, e.g. e-mail correspondence, etc., should be attached if available.)
3. Budget of expenses
Detailed quotes must be provided where available. If applying retrospectively, you must provide receipts of expenses incurred.
4. Justification of each of the items listed under expenses and information on any amount already received for these items.
5. Funding requested for any expenses from other sources. Have you requested funding for this expense from another source, and what is the outcome of this request?
6. Attachments- You MUST attach all relevant documentation to your application.
7. Previous sources of funding. Please provide details - including dates, amounts and sources – for all sources of funding received during candidature so far.
8. Supervisor's Endorsement. Your principal supervisor must complete this section.

PARTIALLY COMPLETED APPLICATIONS AND APPLICATIONS WITHOUT THE PRINCIPAL SUPERVISOR'S ENDORSEMENT, WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED.

FUNDING ALLOCATED

Funding allocated must be used within 12 months of notification. In cases where funds are not spent within this period, the applicant can apply for an extension by writing to the Chair of the Melbourne School of Population Health Higher Degree Research Training Committee stating reasons why an extension should be granted.

REPORTS FROM STUDENTS WHO ARE AWARDED FUNDING

If you are successful in receiving funding, you are required to write a brief report (approximately 100-300 words) to the Higher Degrees Research Training Committee (addressed to the Chair of that committee – see details below) on what you did with the funding awarded and how it has benefited your research. Reports may be included in Melbourne School of Population Health newsletters in the future. Please provide your report to the Committee within six months of being awarded funds from this scheme. If no report is provided, further applications from you will not be considered.

WHO DO I ASK FOR FURTHER INFORMATION?

Academic Programs Office
Melbourne School of Population Health
The University of Melbourne
Ph: (+61) 03 8344 9338 / 49339
Fax (+61): 3 8344 0824
Email: sph-gradinfo@unimelb.edu.au

ARE THERE OTHER SCHEMES THAT I SHOULD KNOW ABOUT?

As this funding scheme is limited you are advised to seek support from other funding schemes available. Your own Centre or Unit within the School may have a funding scheme in addition to this scheme – check with your Postgraduate Coordinator to find out.

Inquire at the Melbourne Scholarships Office for the Melbourne Abroad Travelling Scholarship Scheme (MATS) or the Postgraduate Overseas Research Experience Scholarship (PORES). Details on these and other schemes are available from the following web site:

<http://cms.services.unimelb.edu.au/scholarships/pgrad>

Jason (on-line scholarship database)

For a list of scholarships and grants this website is invaluable. The types of funds available range from full scholarships, to grants of a lump sum, to grants purely for travel purposes. The web address for this site is:

<http://www.jason.edu.au/>

GRANTS BULLETIN

It is recommended that students subscribe on their email to the Melbourne Research and Grants Bulletin. The bulletin contains the latest information on current research grant opportunities (including ARC and NHMRC) and research grant seminars and for workshops. Subscriptions can be made at:

<http://www.researches.unimelb.edu.au/researchbulletins/>

The Melbourne Research webpage also offers a HUGE amount of information on applying for grants and the sort of grants that are available and we STRONGLY recommend that students look at this website to make the most of opportunities available to them. Details can be found at: <http://www.research.unimelb.edu.au/>

The Melbourne Research Office also has tips for writing successful grants applications. These can be especially helpful when writing your own application.