Scholarships, Postgraduate Research Support Scheme (PRSS) and essential resources

As a Higher Degree by Research (HDR) student there are several ways to receive funding to advance your research, including the Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarships (RTP) and the University of Sydney Postgraduate Awards (UPA). Both are offered to domestic and international HDR students. The UPA for international students is called the University of Sydney International Strategic Scholarship.

Types of scholarships

Research Training Program (RTP) Scholarships and University of Sydney Postgraduate Awards (UPA)

All domestic students who received an unconditional offer to undertake a Higher Degree by Research course at the University of Sydney will be offered the RTP Fees Offset Scholarship, which covers tuition fees. This scholarship lasts for up to 4 years for PhD students.

The RTP Stipend Scholarship, is awarded by competitive process, based on application rankings. This scholarship is intended to cover general living expenses, at a rate of $35,000 per year. For PhD students it covers up to 3.5 years. Both the Fees Offset and Stipend scholarships are funded by the Australian Government.

The UPA is funded by the University of Sydney and is similar in tenure and benefits to the RTP Stipend Scholarship. Students who apply for the RTP Stipend Scholarship will also be automatically considered for the UPA. The stipend rate is $35,000 per year.

It is important to understand that while the RTP is funded from an Australian Government grant it is up to each university to set the rate each year. More details on the UPA and RTP scholarships, including deadlines and application process.
University of Sydney RTP Supplementary Scholarship

University of Sydney RTP Stipend Scholarship recipients who commenced before 2020 receive an annual RTP stipend of $28 000, and are not eligible for the new rate ($35 000). In response to widespread student complaints the University recently introduced the University of Sydney RTP Supplementary Scholarship which is valued at $5000 per year for the remaining duration of the student’s candidature. The supplementary scholarship is awarded to recipients of the RTP Stipend Scholarship as at 2019, and on a competitive basis. More details on the Supplementary Scholarship.

PhD Completion Scholarship

Full time PhD candidates in their final research period may be eligible for the Paulette Isabel Jones Completion Scholarship, which is worth $7,000.

General and faculty scholarships

In addition to the RTP and UPA, a range of general or University-wide scholarships are available to HDR students. Faculty- or discipline-specific scholarships are available to candidates who are enrolled in those faculties or researching in those disciplines. These scholarships will have their own applications, tenures, and benefits.

More details on general and faculty scholarships for domestic HDR research students at the University of Sydney.

More details on general and faculty scholarships for international HDR research students at the University of Sydney.

Check each scholarship for application and eligibility advice, but in general you can apply for scholarships even after you have commenced your candidature.

Did you miss out on a scholarship? You can appeal.

If you were unsuccessful in applying for a scholarship you cannot be provided with feedback but you may appeal by contacting the Deputy Vice Chancellor, Education: mdvc.education@sydney.edu.au

Contact us if you require assistance with a scholarship appeal.
Scholarships FAQs

The types of scholarships, conditions, applications and eligibility can be complicated. What happens if you have to take a suspension, or if you change to part time enrolment? What about tax on your scholarship payment? Your question may be answered by the University's scholarships FAQs.

Postgraduate Research Support Scheme (PRSS)

The Postgraduate Research Support Scheme (PRSS) offers grants for travel and attendance costs at overseas conferences or fieldwork. The grants are available for domestic and international students, valued at up to $3500 per student per round of funding. There can be more than one round of funding per year and you may apply more than once. PRSS is administered by your faculty.

More information about funding categories and applications in your faculty is available on the University website.

Grants-in-aid (GIA)

Grants-in-aid (GIA) are travel grants worth between $500 and $2500 to support domestic students undertaking short overseas research activities, not including attendance at conferences. Check the application details.

Essential resources for HDR research

Many students assume they will be provided with a desk and computer, maybe even their own secure office. Unfortunately the reality is that most students are provided with a shared office space. Faculties and schools vary with the types of resources they can offer HDR students. Key resources that your faculty must provide to you, include:

- appropriate office space
- lockable storage
- technology access
• appropriate workspace and laboratory or studio space and equipment

A list of the minimum resources that must be provided to each HDR candidate can be found in the Higher Degree by Research Supervision Policy 2020.

On commencement of your degree, if you are not provided with these resources we recommend you discuss the issue with your lead supervisor. If you think a resource or piece of equipment is necessary for your research project but is not provided, ask your lead supervisor if it can be provided by your faculty, or by other means such as hire or share with another faculty. Note: sole use of a desk and laptop is not considered an essential resource.

Most supervisors are good at supporting students with resources, but if you have to buy something yourself consider applying for a bursary or loan of up $2000 through the University’s financial support.

More help

SUPRA can assist with advice, advocacy and support regarding scholarships and other resources. Contact us for help.

Policies

All policies can be accessed at the University of Sydney Policy Register:

• Research Training Scholarships Program Policy 2018
• Postgraduate Research Support Scheme Procedures 2019