

Flagship Postgraduate Scholarships

Guiding Principles

C S I R O
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1. Overview

1.1 Introduction

In 2001, CSIRO established a program to support research training in Australia through the award of postgraduate scholarships for higher degree students enrolled at Australian higher education institutions and conducting research in CSIRO's priority driven core research areas. This includes the National Research Flagship Programs.

Each Flagship Postgraduate Scholarship will be managed as a separate project with its own budget, milestones, and end date.

The Flagship Programs involve collaborations between CSIRO and Australian universities and research institutions, Government agencies and commercial companies that aim to make a substantial contribution to Australia's economic and social growth and sustainability. Flagships focus on research of longer-term national importance and are closely aligned with the Commonwealth Government's National Research Priorities¹.

1.2 National Flagships

The six Flagship Programs² and their goals are:

Preventative Health

To improve the health and well being of Australians and save \$2 billion in annual direct health costs by 2020 through the prevention and early detection of chronic diseases.

Light Metals

To lead a global revolution in light metals, doubling export income and generating significant new industries for Australia by the 2020s while reducing environmental impact.

Food Futures

To transform the international competitiveness and add \$3 billion annually to the Australian agrifood sector by the application of frontier technologies to high-potential industries.

Energy Transformed

To halve greenhouse gas emissions and double the efficiency of the nation's new energy generation, supply and end use, and to position Australia for a future hydrogen economy.

Water for a Healthy Country

To achieve a tenfold increase in the social, economic and environmental benefits from water by 2025.

Wealth from Oceans

To position Australia by 2020 as an international benchmark in the delivery of economic, social and environmental wealth based on leadership in understanding ocean systems and processes.

¹ Further information on the National Research Priorities can be found at http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/research_sector/policies_issues_reviews/key_issues/national_research_priorities/default.htm

² Further information on Flagships can be found at <http://www.csiro.au/FlagshipPrograms>

2. Categories of Scholarship

2.1 Categories of Scholarships

The Flagships offer full and top-up Flagship Postgraduate Scholarships. The scholarships are available for high quality students eligible to enrol in a PhD degree at an Australian university, and who will be working on a project which is directly relevant to a Flagship Program.

2.2 Top-Up Scholarships

Top-up scholarships are the norm. Top-up scholarships are available to PhD students who have gained an Australian Postgraduate Award (APA) or equivalent University Postgraduate Award (UPA) at an Australian university. Top-up scholarships are not available to students who have gained an Australian Postgraduate Award (Industry).

2.3 Full Scholarships

Full scholarships may be considered where a student has applied unsuccessfully for an APA or a UPA at an Australian university, provided that the student can supply supplementary evidence of excellent research skills and academic performance.

3. Funding Rules

3.1 Eligibility

Applications for Flagship Postgraduate Scholarships will only be accepted from full-time students enrolled in an eligible Australian Higher Education Institution³ during the term of the award. While the normal expectation is that scholarships will be full time, they may be converted from full time to part time where CSIRO agrees that there are compelling reasons for this and the APA, if any, is also converted to part time.

Applicants for scholarships must be eligible to apply for an APA. For the year the scholarship is to begin, students must have, or expect to gain, first class honours or equivalent in relevant research areas. If applying for the top-up scholarship, they must also expect to receive an Australian Postgraduate Award (APA) or university equivalent (UPA) commencing in that year. If applying for the full scholarship, a student cannot receive both an APA/UPA and a CSIRO Flagship Scholarship.

International students are eligible to apply for full scholarships but their fee status must be negotiated and agreed with the host university and cannot be paid from scholarship funds.

Joint supervision of students by a university and a CSIRO supervisor is required, and such joint supervisory arrangements must be consistent with the Higher Degree by Research Regulations of the host university. In most cases the primary supervisor will be the university supervisor.

³ Eligible Australian Higher Education Institutions are listed in Section 4 of the Higher Education Funding Act 1988 at <http://scaleplus.law.gov.au/html/pasteact/0/108/0/PA000090.htm>

3.2 Stipend and Allowances

Up to 50 National Research Flagship Postgraduate Scholarships will be offered each year.

Full scholarships offer a stipend of \$25,000 per annum for three years FTE. If, on the advice of the supervisors, the host university approves an extension of the tenure of the candidate by six months due to delays beyond the control of the student, an additional \$12,500 stipend will be paid for this period.

Top-up scholarships are valued at an annual rate of \$7,000, and an extra \$3,500 will be paid in the event that a six month extension of tenure is granted to the student as outlined above.

For both full and top-up scholarships, additional support of up to \$4,000 per annum will be provided towards necessary travel and operating costs for the student project, and up to an extra \$6,000 to support attendance of the student at one international conference and associated overseas laboratory visits during the period of the scholarship. The student should arrange access to this additional support via the CSIRO supervisor.

Host universities will be responsible for additional project costs incurred by/at the host university and CSIRO will be responsible for project costs incurred by/at CSIRO. In some circumstances, other project costs may be funded from other sources provided CSIRO is informed beforehand of any obligation imposed on the student by another funding body.

The normal expectation is that scholarships are provided to students from the commencement of PhD studies, rather than in later years of the degree. CSIRO will, however, consider making an award in later years of the PhD where compelling reasons exist. The duration of such scholarships will take account of the duration of any prior candidature for the PhD.

4. Scholarships for 2005

4.1 Timelines

For scholarships starting in 2005, advertisements were placed in all major newspapers, graduate websites, Campus Review and JASON in late August 2004. Applications closed on 7 November 2004. Offers were made around mid January 2005.

For the recent round a complete list of student projects is available at:
<http://www.csiro.au/index.asp?type=faq&id=PostGradScholarshipsFlagships>

5. Scholarships for 2006

5.1 Timelines

Advertisements for scholarships due to commence in 2006 will be placed in early September. An application form will be available closer to the time.

Applications will close on 6 November 2005.

6. Selection Criteria

6.1 Student Project

The primary assessment criterion for a Flagship Postgraduate Scholarship is the quality and relevance of the project being proposed. The research must be complementary to, and clearly aligned with, the portfolio of a Flagship Program and not simply to the broad scientific fields covered by the Flagship.

6.2 Quality of the Student

The quality of the student is critical to the assessment of a Scholarship and candidates must hold a degree from a recognised University, normally first class honours or equivalent.

6.3 Prospects

The potential of the proposed student project to support the directions of the Flagships and to deliver outcomes that are relevant to a particular Flagship Program is essential. Also important are the broader prospects of the nature and value of the benefits of the outcomes of the project, and in particular whether they have helped the Flagships achieve their audacious national goals.

7. Assessment

Prospective applicants (and their supervisors or prospective supervisors, if they have been identified) are encouraged to contact the relevant Flagship to discuss their intention to submit an application for a Flagship Postgraduate Scholarship. This will allow prompt feedback on the likelihood of the proposal being selected. Contact details of all Flagships are available at

http://www.csiro.au/index.asp?type=blank&id=Flagships_Collaboration#contacts

The task of assessing Flagship Postgraduate Scholarships is the responsibility of the CSIRO Scholarship Committee, who will take advice from the relevant Flagship Director and the Chief(s) of the Division(s) in which the candidate will spend the majority of his or her time.

Universities will be advised of all successful Flagship Postgraduate Scholarship holders as soon as the results are known.

8. Reporting and Accountability

8.1 Student Report

Host universities require annual reports on progress to be provided by the student and these are submitted through the university supervisor. A copy of the report should be provided to the CSIRO supervisor at the same time it is provided to the university supervisor.

The CSIRO supervisor must have been given a reasonable opportunity to review the full thesis before it is submitted for examination.

8.2 Responsibilities

The CSIRO Scholarship Committee is the authorised approving entity for all Flagship Postgraduate Scholarships.

The student and supervisors will be required to report to the relevant Flagship Director on project outcomes at intervals necessary to facilitate reporting to the Flagship Oversight Committee, which monitors the overall performance of the Flagship Postgraduate Scholarships in the context of the CSIRO Flagships' Annual Performance Goals.

9. Scholarship agreements

9.1 Simplified Approach - *FastTrack*

CSIRO has developed an easy and simplified approach to developing consistent and plain English contracts called *FastTrack*.

The *FastTrack* approach will be used for all Scholarship Agreements between CSIRO, the student and the host university in the conduct of the student project funded by a Flagship Postgraduate Scholarship. However, CSIRO is still in the process of rolling out the *FastTrack* Track proforma CSIRO wide for use with the Flagship Postgraduate Scholarships, so there may be some variance in agreements for the 2005 scholarship round. The *FastTrack* Scholarship Agreement will be used for the 2006 scholarship round.

The Scholarship Agreement will also define the terms of the student involvement in undertaking the project. In exceptional circumstances, there will be some opportunity for negotiation of conditions.

When the development of the proforma *FastTrack* contract for use with Flagship Postgraduate Scholarships is completed, a copy of the contract will be made available on the Flagship website.

9.2 Intellectual Property and Publication

Ownership of any Project Intellectual Property⁴ will vest in CSIRO and/or the host university to be negotiated on a case by case basis. Where the student project contributes to a documented collaboration between CSIRO and the host university, negotiations will also determine responsibility for technology transfer. To ensure delivery on Flagship objectives, CSIRO will normally be the party with responsibility for technology transfer.

The student's right to publish a thesis for examination to fulfil the requirements of a PhD at their host university is paramount, and copyright of the thesis prepared by the student will remain with the student.

It is possible that CSIRO and/or the host university may require the thesis to be submitted for examination in confidence, and for the thesis to have restricted access for a period of time following lodgement in the university library. Wherever possible, the necessity for and duration of such restricted access, and the scope of the restrictions, should be made clear

⁴ Intellectual Property (IP) developed during the project which is incorporated or identified in the deliverables.

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to research students at the beginning of their candidature, and in each case should be the subject of negotiations between CSIRO and the candidate's university.

9.3 Financial and Reporting Obligations

Each Flagship Postgraduate Scholarship will be managed as a separate project with its own budget, milestones, and end date.

It is the responsibility of the host university to ensure that a financial report is provided to CSIRO detailing the annual expenditure of funds for Flagship Postgraduate Scholarships.

10. Contacts

For further information on the Flagship Postgraduate Scholarships contact:

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