These guidelines are designed to assist academic staff to establish a Higher Degree Research scholarship. The guidelines should be read in conjunction with the relevant Western Sydney University policies.

**WHAT IS A SCHOLARSHIP?**

A scholarship is defined as a sum of money or other aid granted to a student to pursue their studies, and may include living allowances (stipend), lump sum payments (top-ups) and payment of tuition fees (RTP fee offset or fee waiver as appropriate).

**WHAT IS THE PROCESS FOR AWARDING A SCHOLARSHIP?**

**Step 1.** Academic: Secure funding for a research scholarship.

**Step 2.** Academic: Complete the Research Scholarship Establishment Form and a Research Scholarship Web Advertisement Template and submit to the Graduate Research School.

**Step 3.** GRS: If the scholarship is approved by the Graduate Research School, the scholarship will be advertised on the GRS website and other GRS channels as appropriate.

**Step 4.** GRS: After the closing date, the Graduate Research School will assess scholarship applications and provide the academic with a list of potential candidates.

**Step 5.** Academic: The Chief Investigator or Principal Supervisor will convene a selection panel and assess the applications.

**Step 6.** Academic: Complete an Approval to Award Scholarship Form (including supporting documentation and approvals) and submit to the Graduate Research School.

**Step 7.** GRS: The Graduate Research School will send a formal offer of admission to the selected candidate and notify unsuccessful applicants.

**TITLE OF AWARD**

The title of the award must be descriptive with a maximum of 80 characters (e.g Pasture Systems Ecology and Climate Extremes).

**ADVERTISING**

The Graduate Research School will place an advertisement on the project scholarships webpage and distribute via social media and newsletters.

The School / Institute is responsible for organising and funding any further advertisements (such as Seek, The Conversation, etc.)

Please refer to the Scholarship Web Advertisement Template for more information about how to structure your advertisement.

**FUNDING**

You will need to provide information about the funding source. Please provide a copy of any supporting documentation (including approval from the Graduate Research School or other sources) with the Research Scholarship Establishment Form.

If the funding is from any sources other than the GRS, a Cost Centre / Project Number must be provided.

Stipends are paid fortnightly. There must be sufficient funds available to finance the full tenure of the scholarship including possible extensions or sick leave.
**FUNDING**

**For externally funded scholarships**

REDI require the supervising academic staff member to complete an online clearance form to collect the data required to establish a project in the research management system and to enable attribution of income to the School or Institute and supervisor. Under the section ‘please identify a REDI Development Officer to help you with the submission’ please enter: adminpostaward@westernsydney.edu.au

If the scholarship is externally funded, invoicing will be attended to by either REDI or the Office of Advancement and Alumni.

If the scholarship is funded from a philanthropic source, the invoicing is undertaken by Advancement and Alumni. REDI will establish a research project for the funds to be transferred to and the scholarship will be paid from the designated research project.

If the scholarship is funded by a grant or an industry partner, the invoicing will be undertaken by REDI.

**AUSTRALIAN TAXATION OFFICE REQUIREMENTS**

To meet Australian Taxation Office (ATO) requirements for tax free status:

1. A scholarship must be provided principally for educational purposes.
2. The successful applicant must be chosen by academic merit and other advertised criteria (e.g. selection may also include such things as strategic alignment with the research objectives of Western Sydney University).
3. The scholarship must be open to a wide range of applicants, though eligibility may be restricted to a particular group (e.g. students at a particular institution or enrolled in a particular course).
4. The scholarship must be advertised and an independent selection committee appointed to make a recommendation on the award to the Dean of Graduate Studies (via the Graduate Research School following admission approval by the Dean or Institute Director).

The scholarship may not be provided to a student on the condition that they are required to enter into a contract with the scholarship provider that is wholly or principally for the labour of the candidate.

Exceptions to the requirement for advertising may apply where the nominated scholarship recipient has been endorsed as part of a competitive process such as an ARC funded project.

**TENURE / DURATION OF CANDIDATURE**

The maximum tenure for doctorates is 3 years full-time, and 2 years full-time for the Master of Philosophy. Doctoral candidates may apply for an extension of up to 6 months. No extensions are possible for Master of Philosophy candidates.

The tenure of the scholarship will be reduced by any period of study already undertaken toward the degree at any institution, including Western Sydney University.

If the proposed tenure is for less than the maximum stated above, please attach a separate page to the Research Scholarship Establishment Form explaining why and what level of support the student can expect to receive when the scholarship ends.

**STIPEND RATE**

Western Sydney University scholarships provide a stipend of $30,000 per annum from 2018. This is tax-free for a full-time candidate.

Top-up scholarships may be offered and should be externally funded or funded by the School or Institute. There are no centrally funded top-up scholarships. The value of a top-up scholarship is usually between $5,000 and $10,000.

Part-time scholarships are only awarded in very limited circumstances and are taxable.
OTHER BENEFITS

A research scholarship may provide additional benefits including:

• Eligibility for an extension.
• Relocation reimbursement allowance.
• Overseas Student Health Care (OSHC) – All international students are required by law to hold an Overseas Student Health Care Policy which covers the full duration of their study in Australia. The cover must be purchased prior to the enrolment. Single or family cover is available.

INDEXATION

Indexation rates may be nominated as a percentage of the annual stipend. Alternatively, scholarships can be established to award a stipend rate equivalent to the RTP rate which is indexed annually on 1 January. Otherwise, indexation will be applied as per the funding agreement.

SELECTION COMMITTEE

The Chair of the selection committee will usually be the Chief Investigator or Principal Supervisor. There should be a least three members, one of whom is outside the project area. Gender balance should normally be observed. The Chair should notify the Dean or Institute Director of their intention to form a selection committee. Selection committee members must observe advice in the Conflict of Interest Policy.

INTERNATIONAL APPLICANTS

All international candidates will incur tuition fees unless alternative arrangements are made. Grants and/or funding agreements may allow for the payment of international student tuition fees.

The Dean, Graduate Studies may approve a tuition fee waiver. A tuition fee waiver can only be approved if the scholarship was awarded by competitive process and evidence of this must be provided.

If funding is not available for tuition fees, the full cost will be passed on to the successful candidate. Please check the individual grant guidelines for further information.

FOR FURTHER ADVICE

Contact the Graduate Research School Scholarships Team at grs.scholarships@westernsydney.edu.au.