

Faculty of Arts Graduate Research Student Essential Funding Scholarship

Authorised by the Associate Dean, Research Training and Performance

Approved by Faculty of Arts Executive in June 2025

Last reviewed by Faculty of Arts Research Training Committee in June 2025

The purpose of this scholarship is to provide Faculty of Arts Graduate Research Students (GRS) with funding to support essential research costs, especially but not limited to, significant travel outside of Sydney. The Faculty of Arts recognises that GRS require financial assistance to support research activities required for the completion of a substantial research project. The Faculty provides this support through a scheme which is non-competitive while requiring students to submit rigorous justifications for funding that meet stringent criteria. Student applications are assessed by the Confirmation of Candidature panel and approved by the Director of Research Training for the School or Centre in which the candidate is enrolled. Funding will be awarded if the applicant is deemed to have shown the following:

- a. That they are making satisfactory progress towards completion
- b. That the research activity is essential for the completion of the thesis
- c. That the research has been well defined, is feasible and has the support of the supervision team
- d. That the timing for the research is suitable
- e. That the research activity has been properly budgeted
- f. That any costs above that awarded by the Faculty can be furnished by the student either by funding from a grant, appropriate external agency or partner, or personal funding
- g. That the application is well written, professionally presented, and word limits have been adhered to; and
- h. That all necessary supporting documentation has been provided, including evidence of ethics approval (if required) and indicative quotes for all funded research activities

Students should be aware they may be eligible to apply for the funds, but the award of funds is still subject to the review of the Faculty Research Training Committee and the Associate Dean, Research Training and Performance.

VALUE

Up to \$5000 for PhD and MPhil students and up to \$1000 for students enrolled in Master of Research. No further funding will be granted once the maximum limit has been reached.

KEY DATES

Applications are submitted by each student at the time of PhD and MPhil Confirmation of Candidature

and approved when a student is confirmed. In cases where the funding cannot be fully calculated at the time of confirmation, students can submit a variation to the original form. Variation forms are signed by the supervisor and endorsed by the School / Centre Director of Research Training on behalf of the Faculty Research Training Committee. MRes students will submit an application form for funding to their School / Centre Director of Research Training.

ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for the Faculty of Arts Graduate Essential Research Funding Scholarship, a student must:

- a. Be enrolled in a Graduate Research program (PhD, MPhil, MRes) in the Faculty of Arts;
- b. Have successfully met requirements of Confirmation of Candidature (in the case of MRes students, because of the condensed time of the program, applications can be submitted prior to CoC in exceptional circumstances); and
- c. Demonstrate that the funding requested is essential to the completion of their research

ACCESSING FUNDS

In most cases, approved funds only be accessed in the same calendar year as the activities undertaken. Exceptions may be made where activities are undertaken across calendar years or in the first month of the calendar year, where the student can demonstrate that it is essential for the research activity to take place at this time. As booking travel takes time, students are advised to start the process several months in advance of their planned departure to ensure their travel can be booked by the Operations team.

SELECTION CRITERIA

- a. Student has clearly identified the research is essential for completion of the project
- b. Student is able to demonstrate that the research cannot be completed without the amount of funding requested
- c. Student has demonstrated satisfactory progress
- d. Budget is detailed and expenditure is justified; and
- e. Supervisor endorses the research to be conducted.

ITEMS AND ACTIVITIES THAT WILL BE FUNDED

- Travel costs associated with fieldwork (**Field Research** means the collection of information integral to the Project in a location external to the participant's normal place of study) including but not limited to: travel costs, accommodation, expenses associated with phones and communications (e.g. purchase of an overseas SIM card or the cost of internet access), and archive/library fees. Fieldwork is generally supported for no longer than 180 days and it is preferred if the funded activity occurs within the same calendar year. Applications for fieldwork must also be approved via Field Friendly and must comply with MQ Travel Policy

and risk assessment prior to the release of the funding.

- Up to 50% of transcription costs required for the project. All requests for transcription costs must have been approved in the ethics application and be fully justified (see rules for transcription below)¹.
- Research participant compensation. All requests for funding participant compensation must have been approved in the ethics application and be fully justified (including any marketing or advertising required to recruit participants)².
- Translation only where translating is not a skill the student is required to demonstrate, and the non-English material is essential to the completion of the thesis.
- Purchase of statistical data, or other data critical for the research, computer software critical for the research that cannot be provided by MQ, and specialist books or periodicals not available through the library that is essential primary source. All materials purchased remain the property of MQ.
- Interrater reliability assistance and blind coding.
- Enrolment in training workshops not provided by MQ, and critical for the research.
- Conference attendance, provided any associated travel is bundled with essential research activities such as field work, workshops, or archive visits.
- Students undertaking creative arts graduate research can apply for funding that is essential for the completion of the creative work, and which cannot be completed without incurring costs.
- Specialist IT equipment essential to research can be purchased in cases where Macquarie University cannot supply the equipment. All equipment purchased with MQ funds remains the property of MQ upon completion of the project. Graduate Research Students will be required to demonstrate that they have been unable to source suitable equipment owned by MQ. Requests for IT equipment valued over \$200 will need to be approved by the AD RTP.

ITEMS THAT WILL NOT BE FUNDED

- Catering/meals/refreshments/per diem requests.
- Gifts except as outlined in the “Items and Activities that will be Funded”
- Marketing or advertising except as outlined in “Items and Activities that will be Funded”.
- Staff costs for hiring a research assistant.
- Standard IT equipment, such as laptops, PCs, or tablets, for the purposes of word processing, data analysis, web browsing, email, and other day-to-day research activities.
- Editing and proofreading expenses (except for students who do not speak English as a first language who are permitted up to \$2500 for editing and proofreading a PhD or MPhil and up to \$500 for editing of an MRes thesis).

APPLICATION PROCESS

- a. Students shall submit the application for essential research funding, with a detailed budget, as

part of their Confirmation of Candidature paperwork.

- b. Font size must be 12 point.
- c. Responses must not exceed specified word limits.
- d. A supervisor statement of support must be attached to all applications.
- e. Supporting documentation including quotations for all funds requested must be attached.
- f. Incomplete applications will not be approved.

SUPERVISOR'S REPORT

Supervisors are to provide a statement of endorsement to support the funding. The statement must include a justification of the request. This statement should identify the necessity and significance of the proposed activities relative to the aims and/ or research questions of the thesis.

The supervisor's statement should clarify any detail in the application that may be complex or unclear for the Confirmation of Candidature panel, especially if these relate to participant compensation and/or fieldwork (e.g., length, costs).

Where a supervisor writes a statement which does not offer usefully detailed support that can advise the panel properly, the student's application may be rejected.

APPEALS

Only appeals on procedural grounds will be permitted. Appeals must be in writing and addressed to the Associate Dean, RTP within 30 days of a student receiving notification of the outcome. All appeals will be assessed by the Faculty Research Training Committee at the first meeting after the appeal has been received.

ONCE FUNDS ARE AWARDED

Once funds are awarded, students will liaise with Faculty administrative staff. All funding requests must be pre-approved. Applications for retrospective costs will not be considered.

Variations to the funding requested at the time of the CoC (or for MRes students at the time of initial application) can be made at any time. Variation forms are signed by the supervisor and endorsed by the School / Centre Director of Research Training on behalf of the Faculty Research Training Committee.

¹ Rules for applications including transcription.

The Faculty will provide support for interview transcription, where:

- Interviewing is a substantial element of the research project.
- Employing transcribers is essential to ensure timely completion of the thesis.
- The student completes at least half of the total number of hours of transcription. This is required to ensure that the student has demonstrated the capability to transcribe their own data and also that they have sufficiently engaged with the raw data prior to it being transcribed.
- The maximum amount of \$3.00 a minute will be considered for transcription, but quotes/receipts must be supplied, outlining the reasons for costing.

The funding requested must be based on two quotes from professional transcription services. In their justification for the funding students need to address the questions:

- Why do interviews need to appear as transcriptions?
- Is coding required?
- How will transcription facilitate data analysis?
- Why is it better than listening to the interviews repeatedly throughout the thesis writing process?
This is especially important for in-depth interviews of a relatively small number, which are easy to tag or code, and warrant repeated listening by the candidate to best capture the data being recorded.

If this is not addressed in the application, the request will be denied.

² Rules for applications including participant compensation.

All requests for funding participant compensation must be reasonable and explained in detail. Participation should be motivated primarily by the possible benefits that may accrue from the research conducted, rather than because of monetary incentives. Given these broad considerations: When considering compensation, the researchers should consider whether compensating the broader community (e.g., a local organisation / the school(s), class, relevant society, or advocacy group) might be more appropriate than compensating the individuals. The rationale should be explained in the application for funds.

- When professional or experiential expertise is essential for data gathering (e.g., of interpreters, sign language users, medical professionals, or knowledge-holding groups/practitioners), clearly benchmarked and documented pricing should be made available to the Department.
- “Thank you” presents, if at all appropriate or necessary, might be costed according to what the researcher would be willing to offer rather than what they think the Faculty may be able to fund. If they think it is important and appropriate, then the researcher should consider if they rather than the Faculty should make the contribution.
- Researchers should consider creative ways of showing appreciation to participants that are of direct value to the participating community as well as the individual. The researcher should focus on thinking about and articulating the potential benefit of their project to the community or individuals they plan to ask to participate, for example, proposing to present their research outcomes at a relevant community event or co-presenting/co-authoring with their participants.
- The Faculty reserves the right not to approve participant compensation costs even if they have been approved by the Ethics Committee, if the explanation is unsatisfactory and the costs are deemed unreasonable.