



## AOA Research Foundation Trainee PhD Pathway Scholarship

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### 1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

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This policy outlines the terms and conditions of the PhD Pathway Scholarship offered by the AOA Research Foundation.

### 2. ABOUT THE PHD PATHWAY SCHOLARSHIP

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#### 2.1 Purpose of Scholarship

- 2.1.1 As part of the AOA 21 Training Program, orthopaedic trainees must choose a pathway through which to meet the research requirement of the Training Program. Three pathways are available; project pathway, coursework pathway and PhD pathway.
- 2.1.2 The purpose of the Scholarship is to provide financial support for trainees who wish to pursue the PhD pathway while working at a reduced clinical load. The Scholarship provides a living allowance, or stipend, which is paid to recipients through the administering institution.
- 2.1.3 The Scholarship does not cover any costs related to enrolment in the PhD program or any university fees associated with the PhD program.

#### 2.2 Scholarship Value

- 2.2.1 The Scholarship has a current value of AU\$25,000 per annum. This consists of \$22,500 in stipend and \$2,500 in departmental maintenance.

#### 2.3 Scholarship Duration

- 2.3.1 The Scholarship shall be awarded for one year in the first instance. Subject to satisfactory progress and available funds, the Scholarship may be renewed for a second or third year if the trainee continues training at less than full time. Scholarship funding will not be provided for longer than three years.

## **2.4 Scholarship Frequency**

- 2.4.1 Up to two Scholarships may be awarded on an annual basis, subject to available funding and the number of continuing awardees.

## **3. ELIGIBILITY AND APPLICATIONS**

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### **3.1 Eligibility**

- 3.1.1 The Scholarship is open to current AOA trainees who are enrolled in the AOA 21 Training Program and wish to undertake the PhD pathway to meet the research requirement of the Training Program.
- 3.1.2 Applicants must be enrolled or intending to enroll in a PhD program of study at an Australian university.
- 3.1.3 Applicants must nominate a supervisor at a hospital that is accredited by AOA to host a PhD Pathway candidate. This supervisor must be an AOA member and will be required to submit a letter of support as part of the candidate's application.

### **3.2 Application Process**

- 2.3.1 Applicants must submit a completed application by the due date specified on the [AOA website](#). Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted.
- 2.3.2 In addition to the written application, applicants will be required to submit a Curriculum Vitae, supporting references and a letter of support from the hospital at which they intend to complete their PhD.

### **3.3 Selection Criteria**

- 3.3.1 The successful applicant will be selected on the basis of their academic record, record of performance in the AOA 21 Training Program, research experience, publication and presentation history, and the strength of the proposed research topic.
- 3.3.2 The successful applicant will also need to demonstrate excellent interpersonal communication skills, the ability to work in a multi-disciplinary team environment, and the ability to manage the demands of research and clinical work. This will be evidenced by the applicant's written application and supporting references.
- 3.3.3 All eligible applications will be reviewed by the AOA Research Foundation Board. The award decision will be made by the AOA Research Foundation Board.
- 3.3.4 The AOA Federal Training Committee and the relevant Regional Training Committee will be formally notified of the successful applicant's name and proposed program of study.

## **4. SCHOLARSHIP TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

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### **4.1 Program of Study**

- 4.1.1 Scholarship recipients must be enrolled in their approved PhD for the full duration of their award.
- 4.1.2 Scholarship recipients must satisfactorily undertake the program of study as specified in their successful application.
- 4.1.3 Any alteration(s) to the approved program of study must be approved by the AOA Research Foundation in writing prior to the change.
- 4.1.4 Scholarship recipients must submit documentary evidence of ethical approval from the relevant institution prior to commencement of the research.

### **4.2 Leave**

- 4.2.1 All scholarship recipients are entitled to take up to four weeks of leave in each calendar year.
- 4.2.2 If a scholarship recipient wishes to take a leave of absence from their studies of more than four weeks in a calendar year, a formal request for a leave of absence must be submitted to the AOA Research Foundation for approval.
- 4.2.3 If the leave of absence is approved, scholarship payments may be suspended during the period of leave unless you are entitled to one of the following paid leave provisions:
  - a. up to 8 weeks FTE additional sick leave which may also be used to cover leave for family caring responsibilities where there are compassionate circumstances
  - b. for each (multiple) birth or (multiple) adoption, up to 8 weeks FTE maternity leave for students who are giving birth or are the main carer of a recently adopted child
  - c. for each (multiple) birth or (multiple) adoption, up to 4 weeks FTE parenting leave at the time of the birth or adoption for students whose partner has given birth or is the main carer of their adopted child
  - d. up to 8 weeks FTE leave for jury duty if the jury duty requires absence of 1 week or more.
- 4.2.4 Requests for paid leave must be supported by relevant supporting documents, e.g. a medical certificate or statutory declaration setting out the reasons for the leave
- 4.2.5 If a scholarship recipient is approved for an interruption of training by the AOA Federal Training Committee, written notification must be provided to the AOA Research Foundation. Scholarship payments may be suspended during the period of interruption.

- 4.2.6 The duration of the scholarship will be extended by the duration of the scholarship leave, unless the recipient continues to be enrolled during the scholarship leave.

### **4.3 Finances**

- 4.3.1 The Scholarship funds will be paid to an administering institution on behalf of the recipient. The administration of the expenditure should be undertaken as per the usual policies of the administering institution.
- 4.3.2 Payment of the scholarship value will be made in a single instalment prior to 1 February in the relevant year. Payment will only be made upon receipt of a valid invoice from the administering institution.
- 4.3.3 Scholarship recipients may secure additional funding for their research in the form of additional scholarships, Fellowships, and awards. If additional funding is secured, the recipient must notify the AOA Research Foundation as soon as practicable. If the recipient is awarded a stipend from another source, the Scholarship may (in part or in full) instead be paid towards research direct costs.
- 4.3.4 Scholarship recipients may apply for an AOA Research Foundation grant while receiving the Scholarship but may not direct any AOA Research Foundation grant funding towards their own stipend costs.
- 4.3.5 Applicants must not work a clinical load in excess of 0.5 FTE during the Scholarship period.

### **4.4 Reporting and Presentation**

- 4.4.1 Scholarship recipients must submit two reports each year to the AOA Research Foundation. The first report must be submitted by 30 June and the second report must be submitted by 21 December. If reports are not submitted by the relevant deadline, the recipient may not be awarded any further funding from the AOA Research Foundation and may be required to refund the full amount of the scholarship.
- 4.4.2 Scholarship recipients must present their research at the national AOA Annual Scientific Meeting (ASM) within 12 months of completing their PhD.
- 4.4.3 Scholarship recipients agree to participate in promotion of their research in AOA communication channels, including the Bulletin and on the AOA website.
- 4.4.4 Scholarship recipients should aim to publish their research in a peer-reviewed journal, such as the ANZ Journal of Surgery.

### **4.5 Acknowledgements**

- 4.5.1 The AOA Research Foundation must be formally acknowledged in all relevant publications, presentations, advertising and other material related to the Scholarship.

## **5. TERMINATION**

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### **5.1 Termination of a PhD Pathway Scholarship**

5.1.1 The AOA Research Foundation, in its absolute discretion, may choose to suspend scholarship payments or terminate a scholarship early if:

- The recipient ceases to meet the Scholarship eligibility criteria;
- The recipient receives two or more unsatisfactory performance ratings on a Performance Appraisal Form during the scholarship period;
- The recipient withdraws or is dismissed from the AOA 21 Training Program;
- The recipient withdraws or is terminated from their approved PhD program;
- The recipient, in the opinion of the AOA Research Foundation, does not demonstrate that they have carried out the approved program of study with appropriate competence and diligence;
- The recipient commits serious misconduct, including but not limited to the provision of false or misleading information.

5.1.2 In the event that a Scholarship is terminated, it will not be reinstated unless the termination was due to an AOA Research Foundation error.

## **6. ACCEPTANCE OF TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

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### **6.1 Scholarship Acceptance**

The Acceptance of Offer form must be signed by the scholarship recipient, the nominated supervisor and a representative from the administering institution. By signing the form, all signatories acknowledge acceptance of the above terms and conditions. The form must be returned to the AOA Research Foundation prior to the commencement of the Scholarship.

## **7. ADMINISTRATION OF THE PHD PATHWAY SCHOLARSHIP**

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The PhD Pathway Scholarship is funded by the AOA Research Foundation. On occasion, additional scholarships may be funded by external organisations and administered through the AOA Research Foundation.

For further information, please contact:

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