Industry scholarships for PhD & MPhil students

Information for sponsors

At The University of Queensland we are committed to building on our very strong record of working with industry and in commercialisation. In 2019 UQ received the highest rating of all Australian universities in the Engagement and Impact Assessment conducted by the Australian Research Council. Higher Degree by Research (HDR) students are often central to the development of the university-industry relationships. These students apply high level research skills to an industry problem while at the same time developing their capabilities as researchers.

Why consider supporting a UQ HDR scholarship?
Partnering with UQ to provide HDR scholarships has many strategic and competitive advantages such as

- accessing a highly trained research student who can contribute new ideas and fresh perspectives to your business;
- improving the leadership and supervisory skills of your staff as industry co-supervisors;
- identifying future employees;
- developing stronger connections with UQ and connecting with some of the latest research across a wide variety of areas;
- shaping future leaders of industry and research.

What does it mean to sponsor an HDR student?
Sponsoring a student is different to conducting contract research. When sponsoring an HDR student you do not appoint a specific person to undertake your research, rather UQ recruits a student for your project and awards the scholarship.

Students are primarily undertaking an HDR to develop as researchers. This means that their selection, enrolment, management, supervision and examination is subject to the regulations, policies and procedures that govern their academic program (PhD or MPhil).
HDR scholarships must be competitively awarded

A scholarship is defined by the Australian Tax Office as financial aid to a scholar that is awarded on merit. The purpose of a research scholarship is to provide tuition fee support and/or living allowance support to the recipient so that they enrol at the University as an HDR student. UQ requires a competitive process to be demonstrated in the advertising and selection of a student.

All scholarship providers must comply with the terms and conditions outlined in PPL 4.80.01 UQ and RTP Research Scholarships – Procedures.

Please note, a person’s wage cannot be converted to a scholarship.

How long does it take to complete a PhD or MPhil?

• The PhD program takes 3 - 4 years full time, or part-time equivalent.
• The MPhil program takes 1.5 - 2 years full time, or part-time equivalent.

Students can take breaks for study, in which case their period of enrolment is paused. Students are also able to take parental leave, sick leave, and transfer between full-time and part-time study. In these cases, the program completion date is adjusted accordingly.

What is a HDR (PhD or MPhil) scholarship?

Scholarships vary and cover a broad range of items. Usually the term ‘HDR Scholarship’ refers to a package that includes a base living stipend and tuition fees. It is important to keep in mind that for international students, the package also includes Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC). OSHC is a government requirement for international students studying in Australia on a student visa.

There are four types of HDR scholarship

Scholarship funds are paid to UQ for financial administration. Scholarship funds are used to support the student to undertake a research project and develop as a researcher. Costs are indexed annually based on UQ’s set tuition fees and the Commonwealth Research Training Program base rate for a living allowance. Scholarships can consist of four different components:

• Tuition fees support the university costs of running the HDR program. These fees are administered in research quarters and are generally 3-4 years for the PhD, and 2 years for the MPhil). Tuition fee amounts are published on UQ’s website.
• Base living stipends* support a student’s day to day costs of living, as undertaking a higher degree by research is a full time role (assuming the student is enrolled in the program full time). Most PhD students complete their program in 4 years, and MPhil in 2 years. The base living stipend amount is the same as the Commonwealth Research Training Program stipend rate and is updated on 1 October each year for the following year. Remember to budget for the cost of OSHC (approximately $3800 for individuals and $15,000 for families).
• Top-up scholarships are added to a base living stipend (and are sometimes provided from other scholarship funds) to support an additional amount for the student’s day to day costs of living. As such, top-up scholarships are very attractive to prospective students. Top-up scholarships must be a minimum of $5,000 per annum. These scholarships are capped at 75% of the base living stipend.
• Research or Project Costs provide support for the project the student is undertaking. Examples include bench fees, materials or equipment costs, travel, or publication costs. These scholarships are generally offered as a one-off award. The amount offered can vary, and often depends on project.

* Provisions must be made in base living stipends to accommodate parental leave and sick leave. It is also encouraged to consider these leave provisions when establishing a top-up scholarship, though not mandatory.

Recruitment of a student

We recommend allowing at least 3 months for recruitment and selection of a domestic student and up to 7 months to recruit an international student for commencement. The recruitment process will include:

• advertisement (2-4 weeks),
• application collation (4+ weeks - this includes referee reports, supervisor and school/institute review),
• assessment and offer (8 weeks), and
• visa processing (timing depends on country).

Finally, UQ has noted many international students coming from particular countries or regions have been experiencing significant delays in obtaining their visa. Depending on the country, visa processing can delay the start date by 4 to 6 months on average.

Academic expertise

UQ has 2000+ academic supervisors whose research covers a diverse range of fields. You should search the UQ Researchers database to find potential supervisors with appropriate expertise.

Advertising scholarships

To satisfy the requirements for competitive process, all HDR scholarships are advertised on UQ’s Scholarships page. This page receives a large number of views. The Graduate School also uses social media and paid advertising to promote scholarships from time to time.

For further details, please contact:
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