



Suicide Prevention
Australia

Application Guidelines PhD Scholarship

*The Suicide Prevention Research Fund
is proudly supported by*



Australian Government
Department of Health

About the Suicide Prevention Research Fund

The objective of the Suicide Prevention Research Fund is to build the evidence-base to enable continued improvements in suicide prevention models and strategies, including for at risk groups, at the national and regional level. The Suicide Prevention Research Fund is administered by Suicide Prevention Australia.

The Suicide Prevention Research Fund aims to establish a research fund capable of strategically driving suicide prevention research to foster a better understanding of what works and how to effectively deliver services that support individuals, families and communities.

About the PhD Scholarship

The PhD Scholarship provides funding for successful applicants to attain a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD).

The PhD Scholarship is a funding agreement between Suicide Prevention Australia and the applicant's Administering Institution (a University in Australia).

The PhD Scholarship aims to support outstanding graduates who are at the early part of their research career. The Scholarship supports research relevant to all aspects of suicide prevention and seeks to develop a capacity for original independent research within Australia.

Objectives

The objectives of the PhD Scholarship are to:

1. Advance promising early career researchers and promote enhanced opportunities for diverse career pathways;
2. Support excellent research in the suicide prevention field;
3. Enable research and research training in high quality and supportive environments;
4. Expand Australia's knowledge base and research capability; and
5. Enhance the scale and focus of research inline with the priorities within the National Suicide Prevention Strategy and/or the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Strategy or populations identified within the strategy..

Who should apply?

Applicants who wish to undertake a PhD in suicide prevention.

Grant Amount

The total Scholarship value is up to \$155,000 over three years.

Noting the funding covers up to \$150,000 for salary and up to \$5,000 for conference attendance, open access publishing fee etc. and does not include research operating costs. Costs of undertaking a PhD Scholarship research project must be supported by the [Administering Institution](#) and this support must be clearly indicated at all stages of the application.

Key dates

Application period	Open 28 April 2026	Close 23 June 2026
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How to apply

Applications can be emailed to sprf@suicidepreventionaust.org More information is via [this link](#).

Selection Criteria

- 1. Quality and Innovation** **30%**
 - Does the research directly address suicide and its prevention?
 - Is the research innovative and original?
 - How does the proposed research advance knowledge about suicide and its prevention?
 - How does your application address one of the priorities identified in the [National Suicide Prevention Strategy 2025-2035](#) and/or the [National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Strategy 2025–2035](#).
 - How does the research incorporate lived experience of suicide?
- 2. Feasibility** **20%**
 - Do the project's design and leadership provide confidence in the timely and successful completion of the research?
 - What is the demonstrated ability of the Administering Institution to provide a supportive research environment including existing relevant research program(s) and infrastructure?
 - How will appropriate academic and senior-level supervision be provided?
- 3. Benefit and Collaboration** **30%**
 - Will the completed project produce significant new knowledge and/or innovative social and/or cultural benefit to suicide prevention in the Australian community?
 - To what extent will the applicant build collaborations across research organisations and/or with other organisations?
- 4. Applicant** **20%**
 - Evidence of past academic performance, based on their academic record, referee reports, curriculum vitae and other evidence
 - Capacity to undertake the proposed research

Assessment panel

The applications will be assessed by an assessment panel. The assessment panel consists of experienced researchers, people with lived experience of suicide, and service providers. Panel members are appointed through the [Research Advisory Committee](#).

Application Process

Stage	Actions
1	Applications submitted to Suicide Prevention Australia (by closing date 23 June 2026)
2	Applications assessed by assessment panel using a standardised process
3	Assessed applications shortlisted by assessment panel using a standardised process
4	Shortlisted applications considered by Research Advisory Committee for recommendation to Suicide Prevention Australia Board
5	Suicide Prevention Australia Board considers final recommendations

6	Suicide Prevention Australia Board endorses the recommendations
7	Suicide Prevention Australia informs applicants of the outcome

Feedback/Appeals Process

The decision of the Board is final and any appeals about the merits of a decision will only be considered in terms of whether due process was followed. Complaints about administrative process must be made in writing, signed by the complainant, and addressed to the Chair, Research Advisory Committee, specifying the nature of and grounds for the complaint.

Funding requirements

Commencement

The funding commencement date for scholarship recipients must occur within 3 months of execution of funding agreement.

Duration

The funding is for a three year full-time equivalent position with provision for up to five years for career disruption.

Career disruption

A career disruption is defined as a prolonged interruption to an applicant's capacity to work due to pregnancy, major illness/injury and/or carer responsibilities.

The Scholarship is for a three year full-time equivalent PhD candidature. In the case of career disruption, Suicide Prevention Australia allows for five years to accommodate flexible working arrangements. This would require agreement with Suicide Prevention Australia.

Limits on proposals

The Scholarship is for those not currently funded through a Scholarship from elsewhere or about to commence a Scholarship.

Applicant requirements

Institutional support

Institutions listed by the Australian Research Council (ARC) and the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) as Administering Institutions are eligible to participate in this scheme.

Applications must be submitted to Suicide Prevention Australia by the due date. Prior to submitting the application the applicant should advise the Administering Institution's Research Administration Office of their intent to apply and ensure that they follow the requirements of the Administering Institution.

Partner Organisation

Applicants for this scholarship may wish to partner with an organisation active in suicide prevention or postvention in Australia during their PhD candidature. In this instance, details and signed letter of involvement should be provided with the application form.

Considering the current emphasis on whole-of-government and whole-of-community approaches to suicide prevention, applicants could consider partnering with organisations including, but not limited to, alcohol and other drugs services, justice settings, children's services, homelessness services, family violence services, or broader community-based services.

Applicants working in, or alongside, such organisations are eligible to participate when enrolled in an Administering Institution.

Applicant eligibility

The research must be conducted in Australia for the benefit of Australians. If the applicant is not an Australian citizen they are required to obtain a legal right to work and reside in Australia prior to the commencement of the PhD. PhD Scholarships are open eligible applicants who are planning to undertake a PhD related to suicide prevention, and those who have already begun a PhD in this area.

Applications can be made by those currently completing an Honours or Masters by Research degree who intend to enrol in a PhD.

To commence the scholarship, the successful applicant must be enrolled in an Administering Institution.

Applicants whose enrolment in a PhD is pending the results of a current degree must notify Suicide Prevention Australia of these results and the outcome of their enrolment application as soon as possible. The scholarship funds will not be released until the enrolment in the PhD is confirmed. Applicants are advised to speak with the Research Grants Office at their Administering Institution about the Institution's enrolment process.

Successful applicants must be based at the Administering Institution for the duration of the PhD Scholarship period.

We actively encourage applications from people with lived experience, lived experience-led research, partnerships with industry, service providers and policy makers.

Incorporating the perspectives of people with lived experience of suicide

Applications for funding through the Suicide Prevention Research Fund must incorporate the perspectives of people with lived experience of suicide. This will ensure that new knowledge is grounded in the reality of suicide and responsive to the priorities of those who have experienced it.

Lived experience of suicide includes experiencing suicidal thoughts, surviving a suicide attempt, having self-harmed, having cared for someone through a suicidal crisis, or having been bereaved by suicide.

Applications must demonstrate the inclusion of lived experience and detail how lived experience will inform their proposed project, including in its ideation, design, implementation and evaluation of outcomes.

Information is provided to assist the applicant with this process and can be found [here](#).

Curriculum Vitae (CV)

The applicant's CV and the CV(s) of their supervisor(s) must be submitted at the time of application using the template(s) provided.

Academic Transcript

A copy of the applicant's academic transcript must be submitted at the time of application.

References

One written reference from an academic supervisor for the applicant must be submitted at the time of application.

Ethics approvals

Applicants should be aware of any ethics approvals required for the commencement of their PhD research.

Consent to provide information to International assessors

In some situations, applications may be provided to overseas assessors for peer review.

In this case under Commonwealth privacy laws, Suicide Prevention Australia will require permission from the applicant to disclose any information contained in the application.

Scholarship conditions

Funding agreement

Successful applicants' Administering Institutions will be required to enter into a funding agreement with Suicide Prevention Australia.

The funding agreement will be prepared by Suicide Prevention Australia and is not open to negotiation.

Research reporting

Scholarship recipients will be required to provide Suicide Prevention Australia with progress reports and a final report on their PhD research and its findings, as agreed.

Communication and promotion

By submitting an application, consent is given for contact for (but not limited to) operational feedback, public relations opportunities (such as commentary and interviews) and for inclusion on websites, social media, media releases and mentions in Ministerial announcements.

Communication of the findings of the PhD research through conferences, forums and communication with Suicide Prevention Australia Members will be expected (as appropriate).

Wherever possible, academic journal publications of the research should be on an open access basis.

Availability of recipients for future peer reviewer opportunities

By submitting an application consent is given to being contacted for future peer review opportunities.

Support from Administering Institution

The application should include a Letter of Support from the applicant's proposed Academic Supervisor. This is a minimum requirement. Applicants are also able to include a letter from the Head of School or Department.

The Letter of Support should include:

1. The supportive elements of the research environment provided by the Administering Institution.
2. Knowledge of the applicant and their academic record.
3. Assessment of the viability of the research proposal.
4. Commitment to providing support to the applicant and their research.

Involvement of Partner Organisation(s)

The application should include a Letter of Involvement if there will be a partnership with an Organisation(s). This should be signed by the Chief Executive Officer or relevant Director of the Organisation.

The Letter of Involvement should include:

1. Support for the applicant's program of work, timelines and proposed involvement;
2. Commitment to providing support to the applicant and their research;
3. A summary of the Organisation's purpose, strategic goals, activities, organisational structure, and key financials.

Enquiries

If you have enquiries regarding the scholarship program, please contact Suicide Prevention Australia on +61 (2) 9262 1130 or email sprf@suicidepreventionaust.org