



The University of Waikato Seeker Doctoral Scholarship was established in 2023 to enable teams of academic staff to recruit outstanding doctoral students for pre-selected research projects with strong strategic alignment and thereby increase the quality and impact of doctoral research outcomes. No set number are available each year as number awarded is dependent on the pool of funding available.

Projects are listed by academic staff under [PhD Opportunities](#) and academic staff will extend an invitation to apply through the [Application to Enrol](#) process. Eligible applicants will be shortlisted and interviewed by a predetermined committee (nominators, usually the proposed supervision panel). The highest ranked students will be provided with an invitation to apply. Once an Offer of Place in the Doctoral Programme has been granted, the committee will forward the nomination to the Scholarships Team. The Scholarships Team will coordinate consideration and possible approval by the Scholarships Executive.

1. Purpose

- 1.1. To support excellent doctoral candidates to undertake research in key strategic areas of research at the University of University of Waikato.

2. Eligibility, Selection Criteria and Nomination Process

2.1. To be eligible, candidates must:

- 2.1.1. contact the academic supervisor(s) for the project(s) of interest listed under [Doctoral Opportunities](#).
- 2.1.2. have received an Invitation to Apply through the [Application to Enrol](#) process from the relevant academic staff member.
- 2.1.3. have received an Offer of Place (formal or conditional) into a doctoral qualification at the University of Waikato (i.e., a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), Doctor of Health Science (DHSc), Doctor of Musical Arts (DMA), Doctor of Juridical Science (SJD), but not yet commenced their enrolment at the closing date of the application round in which they are to be considered or Part 2 of a Doctor of Education (EdD)¹.
- 2.1.4. normally be intending to study full-time at the University of Waikato (but see Clause 5.2 below).
- 2.1.5. not be employed by the University of Waikato. However, employment as a sessional assistant, or similar, may be permitted, provided the hours worked do not contravene Clause 5.

- 2.2. Candidates will be considered ineligible if they already hold a doctoral qualification (or equivalent)

2.3. Selection is based on:

- 2.3.1. Academic merit: a minimum grade point average (GPA) of **A-** (calculated based on the qualification used for entry to the doctoral programme) is required.

¹Candidates enrolling in a EdD may apply for the [University of Waikato Taught Postgraduate Scholarship](#) for Part 1 of the enrolment.

- 2.3.2. Other factors taken into consideration include experience of applicant and readiness for independent research (e.g., prior research and professional experience relevant to the research topic, references, publications).

2.4. **The nomination process is as follows:**

- 2.4.1. Eligible candidates will be ranked, and the nomination will be forwarded for consideration by the Scholarships Executive.
- 2.4.2. Nominations will be considered by the Scholarships Executive every 6-8 weeks, who will make the final decisions on offers.
- 2.4.3. Nomination of a student does not guarantee award to the nominee; the Scholarships Executive reserves the right to decline the nomination.

3. **Awarding and ongoing eligibility:**

3.1. Successful candidate:

- 3.1.1. will be advised of the Scholarship outcome via the MyWaikato portal.
- 3.1.2. must accept the offer of a Scholarship within 28 days of the offer being made, or the offer will lapse.

3.2. In accepting the Scholarship, the recipient will:

- 3.2.1. be deemed to have read, understood, and accepted these regulations, as well as the associated terms and conditions of the Scholarship, and the [Scholarships Policy](#).
- 3.2.2. agree to participate in any publicity concerning the Scholarship arranged by the University of Waikato.

3.3. **Ongoing eligibility for recipients is conditional on:**

- 3.3.1. enrolling in a doctoral qualification and following the approved programme of study; and
- 3.3.2. meeting expectations in all doctoral reports.

3.4. A Scholarship may only be taken up by a candidate who has formally completed the entry qualifications for, and enrolled in, a doctoral qualification.

3.5. The accepted Scholarship will remain valid as long as the associated Offer of Place or enrolment in the doctoral qualification is also valid.

3.6. If a recipient's circumstances change in a manner which may affect their continued eligibility for this Scholarship, including becoming employed by the University, they must inform their Supervisor and the Scholarships Executive immediately (via scholarships@waikato.ac.nz). Any change of circumstances will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

4. **Value and Tenure**

4.1. The value of the **standard** Scholarship is:

- 4.1.1. A living allowance of **\$33,000** in total every 12 months, payable in monthly instalments for up to 36 months (three years) in total.
- 4.1.2. The living allowance is paid on a pro-rata basis for approved part-time students.
- 4.1.3. The **domestic** tuition fees for enrolment in the doctoral qualification during the tenure of the Scholarship; and
- 4.1.4. The Student Services Fee.

- 4.2. Any additional costs such as medical insurance, moving costs, and research expenses must be met by other means.
- 4.3. The total tenure of the Scholarship will not exceed 36 months (three years) of full-time doctoral enrolment (or equivalent for part-time study).
 - 4.3.1. For candidates enrolling in a DHSc, DMA, or SJD programme, the tenure of the Doctoral Scholarship will begin on the date that they commence their Part 1 DHSc, DMA, or SJD enrolment.
 - 4.3.2. For candidates enrolling in an EdD programme, the tenure may be reduced and will begin on the date that they commence their Part 2 enrolment EdD enrolment.
- 4.4. If a recipient's [doctoral enrolment](#) ends during the Scholarship term, due to the recipient submitting their thesis for examination, or for any other reason², the Scholarship will end from the same date as the end of the recipient's doctoral enrolment.

5. Part-time Study, Employment, Suspension, and Holidays

- 5.1. The University of Waikato is committed to ensuring the wellbeing of its students. Thus, **full-time scholarship recipients:**
 - 5.1.1. Are expected to undertake their doctoral studies full-time (i.e., 37.5 hours per week) and may take up to four weeks holiday each year (not including University and Public Holidays) without applying for suspension of their scholarship.
 - 5.1.2. Are not permitted to undertake paid employment that exceeds an annual total of 500 hours (i.e., not work more than 6 days per week when combining doctoral studies and paid employment). Permission to exceed an annual total of 500 hours paid employment must be sought from the Scholarships Executive (via the [Scholarship Variation Request form](#)) and will only be approved in exceptional circumstances (e.g., where the work is part of the data collection).
- 5.2. **Part-time scholarship recipients:**
 - 5.2.1. Recipients who have socially compelling reasons for enrolling in part-time study (e.g., illness, disability, parent or carer responsibilities) may apply to the Scholarships Executive for permission to retain the scholarship part-time. The recipient should submit a [Scholarship Variation Request](#) outlining the reasons for the request and providing appropriate evidence of the need to study part-time. These requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
 - 5.2.2. During any period of part-time enrolment, the value, tenure, employment allowances and duration of a recipient's Scholarship will be adjusted on a pro rata basis.
 - 5.2.3. Recipients will not be granted permission to hold this Scholarship on a part-time basis to undertake full-time paid employment or where combined days worked on doctoral studies and in employment exceed 6 days a week, or where annual holidays are forfeited.
 - 5.2.4. Recipients are required to transfer to full-time enrolment if a change in their circumstances means they no longer qualify to hold the Scholarship part-time.
- 5.3. **Suspension of studies**

² For example, completion, withdrawal, or termination.

- 5.3.1. Scholarships may only be paid to enrolled students. This means that doctoral recipients on suspension are not eligible to receive any Scholarship funds for any reason. This includes suspension related to parental, medical or compassionate leave. In the cases of overpayment, the School of Graduate Research will work with the recipient to recoup the funds.

6. Co-tenure

- 6.1. The recipient may hold other awards that provide funds for research and/or conference purposes. However, recipients:
 - 6.1.1. may hold lower-value awards which also allow co-tenure, provided the combined value of all other awards does not exceed fifty percent of the living allowance of this Scholarship in any one year.
 - 6.1.2. must seek permission to retain both scholarships where one or multiple award(s) with a combined value higher than fifty percent of the full value of the living allowance of this Scholarship (which also allows co-tenure) have been attained. The recipient must apply to the Scholarships Executive (via [Scholarship Variation Request form](#)), providing adequate details.
 - 6.1.3. must relinquish their University of Waikato funded Scholarship if also offered a scholarship by a government sponsoring body, or a partner of the University (e.g., [China Scholarship Council \(CSC\) Scholarship](#)). In some cases, recipients may apply to the Scholarships Executive for permission to hold both scholarships concurrently via the [Scholarship Variation Request form](#).
- 6.2. These requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

7. Other Conditions

- 7.1. If a recipient is in receipt of a student allowance, another scholarship, or any type of financial assistance, it is their responsibility to check their entitlement to other income and any tax implications.
- 7.2. The Scholarships Executive may terminate this Scholarship at any time, and recoup any funds disbursed, if the recipient:
 - 7.2.1. has their enrolment terminated for any reason (e.g. see clause 23 of the [Higher Research Degree Regulations](#))
 - 7.2.2. is not following the approved programme of study; or,
 - 7.2.3. brings the University into disrepute³, or otherwise does not comply with the regulations governing the Scholarship.
- 7.3. The Scholarship recipient will have the right to appeal against any decision to terminate a Scholarship by writing to scholarships@waikato.ac.nz, who will forward the appeal to the Research Committee.
- 7.4. The University of Waikato may, from time to time, vary these regulations.

³ See the [Student Code of Conduct](#).