Helen Christensen Mental Health Research Scholarship
PhD Scholarship 2023

Date 10.11.2022
Introduction

The Black Dog Institute Helen Christensen Mental Health Research Scholarship is a full 4-year* PhD scholarship offered to outstanding domestic candidates to be trained to conduct research specifically in the field of mental health, under the supervision of experienced academics affiliated with the Faculty of Medicine and Health at UNSW.

The scholarship comprises:
- A stipend of $44,637 per year (indexed, 2022 rate) for a maximum of 4 years* based on satisfactory progress
- A Career Development Fund of $20,000, ($2,000 in the first year of candidature and then $6,000 per annum upon confirmation and for the remainder of the candidature to a maximum of 4 years)
- Access to a comprehensive Research Training and Career Development program
- A six-month (2 Terms) integrated internship with an academic unit or industry partner (optional component)

Successful candidates will be admitted to the UNSW PhD Program in one of the 3 Terms of 2023 and will be subject to the relevant Black Dog Institute and UNSW HDR policies, procedures and guidelines as well as the present Terms and Conditions.

1. The Scholarship
   a. Scholarship Categories
      This scholarship will be offered under two different categories. A maximum of two scholarships per cycle will be offered with a preference to offer one in clinical research, and one in either population mental health or suicide prevention.

      Clinical research stipend. The Clinical Research stipend will be offered to outstanding applicants who hold a degree in psychology (with honours), public health, medical sciences or related discipline. This research will be conducted within the Clinical Research Stream as part of the overarching Research Directorate.

      Population health or Suicide prevention stipend. The Population health or Suicide prevention stipend will be offered to outstanding applicants who hold a degree in psychology (with honours), public health, medical sciences or related discipline. This research will be conducted within Population health or Suicide prevention Streams as part of the overarching Research Directorate.

   b. Duration of the scholarship
      *Duration subject to taking up six-month internship, which is optional.
The scholarship will be offered for a minimum of 3.5 years (maximum duration of four years if the internship opportunity is taken up) to undertake the PhD degree at UNSW. The scholarship will cease the day the PhD thesis is submitted.

**Early submission.** In case of early submission (before 4 years if participating in the internship component or 3.5 years if not participating in the internship component), a lump sum payment equivalent to the remaining amount of the stipend to 3.5 or 4 years (depending on engagement with the internship) will be made to the successful applicant.

c. **Full time/Part time**
Full time or part time enrolment will be available for all categories of scholarships.

d. **Leave entitlements**
Leave entitlements will be applicable for scholarship holders as described in the [Higher Degree Research Scholarships Procedure](#).

e. **Expectations**
To maintain their scholarship the candidate must:

- Submit a career development plan and detailed budget each year; and
- Provide a plan for publication and presentation in the first year of their candidature; and
- Participate at least once in a communication opportunity (such as the annual Three Minute Thesis (3MT) Competition at Faculty level); and
- Present at least one domestic and one international conference during their candidature; and
- Attend mandatory workshops/events during their candidature.

2. **Eligibility**
To be eligible for this scholarship, applicants must meet the requirements described in the [Admission to Higher Degree Research Program Procedure](#) at the time of admission.

In addition, applicant must:
- be an Australian citizen or permanent resident, or a New Zealand citizen holding the relevant visa
- be eligible to receive an Australian Government Research Training Program (RTP) scholarship or equivalent

*Duration subject to taking up six-month internship, which is optional.*
- not be receiving another scholarship or salary providing a combined benefit in excess of 75% of this scholarship stipend rate as described in the Higher Degree Research Scholarships Procedure.
- be able to start their candidature the year of the offer
- enrol as full time or part time PhD candidate
- be located at the Black Dog Institute Randwick site. Conducting research away from the Institute will require a formal process of approval.

In addition, applicants must fulfill the criteria described in “2. The scholarship” to be considered for the relevant category

3. Scholarship benefits

The benefits provided with the scholarship include:
- A full stipend for a maximum of four years* (rate provided in “1. Introduction”)
- A career development package worth $2,000 in the first year of candidature and then $6,000 per annum upon confirmation and for the remainder of the candidature (not indexed and up to a maximum of 4 years)
- A tailored Research Training and Career Development program (requiring about one week per year).
- A six-month internship with a partner Academic Unit or and Industry Partner (optional component)
- Australian Government Research Training Program Fee Offset*

* The RTP scholarship and Fee Offset are governed by the UNSW RTP Scholarship Terms and Conditions.

a. Career Development Package

Upon successful confirmation of their candidature, a total of $6,000 per annum will be made available to successful applicants to support skills and career development activities as well as conference travel/attendance. For their first year and prior to confirmation, successful applicants will be provided with $2,000 of Career Development Package.

The funds will be managed by the Black Dog Institute via an account located at UNSW, on the candidate’s behalf. The career development package funds are an auditable scholarship benefit and must be spent in accordance with the principles set out in relevant Black Dog Institute and UNSW travel and purchasing policies.

Candidates will not be able to roll over unused funds to the subsequent year.

Eligible expenses will need to be approved by the supervisory team.

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These funds cannot be used to cover non-development items (e.g. professional membership exams).

**b. Research Training and Career Development program, including a 6-month internship**

As part of the Helen Christensen Mental Health Research Scholarship, successful applicants will access an integrated Research Training and Career Development program.

This program will consist in:
- A specifically designed Career Readiness program offered in collaboration with UNSW Careers and Employability
- A HDR Research Training developed by the Faculty of Medicine
- An integrated six-month internship at a partner Academic Unit or Industry Partner (optional component)

This program is compulsory for all successful applicants and will require a time commitment of about one week per year for the Research Training and Career Development program.

**4. The internship**

All successful applicants supported by the Scholarship will have the option to undertake a six-month internship as part of their candidature at Black Dog Institute. This will constitute an important part of their training at the Institute, as it will allow them to explore an alternative career prospect outside of their field of research.

**a. Duration and timing of the internship**

The internship will be conducted over two Terms of enrolment according to the UNSW HDR calendar. These two terms can be consecutive or undertaken at different periods during the candidature.

To undertake their internship, candidates will need to first be confirmed in their candidature.

In addition, candidates will not be able to submit their thesis unless they have completed their internship (if they elect to participate in the internship).

The best timing to undertake the internship should be discussed and agreed on with the supervisory team, ideally during the first year of enrolment.

**b. Expectations**

To maintain their Scholarship the candidate must:

*Duration subject to taking up six-month internship, which is optional.*
a. submit a career development plan and detailed budget each year; and
b. provide a plan for publication and presentation in the first year of their candidature; and
c. participate at least once in a communication opportunity (such as the annual Three Minute Thesis (3MT) Competition at Faculty level); and
d. present at least one domestic and one international conference during their candidature; and
e. attend mandatory workshops/events during their candidature.

c. Location of the internship
Internships will be undertaken at approved partner Academic Units or Industry Partner’s location. UNSW will assist with sourcing internships or will assist with the approval of internships identified by the candidate or their supervisory team. If the candidate decides to source themselves the location of their internship, the approval process will need to be finalised before the internship can start.

Partner Academic Units can include Faculties, Schools or Departments at UNSW or another Academic Institution.

Industry partners can include, but are not restricted to, Hospitals, Clinics, General Practices, Clinical Practices, Pharmaceutical companies or Government organisations.

d. Supervision during the internship
The partner Academic Unit or Industry partner will provide local supervision for the whole duration of the internship. The local supervisor will be responsible for ensuring appropriate training and induction is provided to the candidate as applicable and will assist with the organisation of the activities that will be undertaken by the candidate as part of the internships.

e. Condition of access during the internship
Candidates accessing external locations from UNSW whilst undertaking their internship must comply with the relevant Federal and State/Territory laws, rules and regulations.

Candidates will also need to comply with all relevant and reasonable directions given by the partner Academic Unit or Industry Partner and its personnel. This includes

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health and safety, access and security, use of equipment and facilities, as well as the use of computer, hardware and software provided by the partner.

Inspection can be organised by the Partner Institution to ensure compliance with conditions set out above.

f. Reporting for the internship
   - At completion of the internship, candidates will be expected to produce a reflective report about their experience and describing what they learnt.
   - A short report will also be provided by the local supervisor focusing on the translational skills developed and acquired by the candidate in the course of their internship.

5. Tenure conditions

In order to remain enrolled in their degree and to continue to receive their stipend and training, candidates will need to adhere to the following conditions.

a. Acceptance
   All successful applicants will need to accept the offer of the scholarship by the prescribed deadline described in their letter of offer. No deferral will be approved.

b. Enrolment
   All successful applicants will be required to commence their candidature by the prescribed Term in their letter of offer.

c. Duration of the scholarship and leave entitlements
   As described above the scholarship is offered for a maximum of 4 years*.

   All leave entitlements will be considered according to the Higher Degree Research Scholarships Procedure.

d. Ongoing eligibility
   To maintain their eligibility during their candidature, all successful applicants will need to adhere to the following rules
   - Be confirmed in their candidature within 15 months full time equivalent of their first enrolment, participate in a Research Progress Review at least every 12 months and maintain satisfactory progress as demonstrated during the reviews. The relevant procedure can be found at: https://www.gs.unsw.edu.au/policy/progressreviewandconfirmationofresearchcandidatureprocedure.html
   - Maintain regular and appropriate communication with their supervisors during the course of their candidature

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- Participate in the Research Training and Career Development program, involving a time commitment of one week every year
- Submit their PhD thesis within 4 years full-time equivalent

e. Variation to candidature, including change in supervisory team and project
Variations to candidature will be managed through the Graduate Research Information System (GRIS) and according to the relevant procedure: [https://www.gs.unsw.edu.au/policy/variationprocedure.html](https://www.gs.unsw.edu.au/policy/variationprocedure.html)

Requests for changes affecting the supervisory team or the project that was approved during the application process will need to be submitted to the Director of Research

f. Termination of Entitlements
A candidate’s entitlements will be terminated if any of the conditions described in the *Higher Degree Research Scholarships Procedure* are met.

6. How to apply
There will be a two stage process when applying for the Helen Christensen Mental Health Research Scholarship.

a. Applicants must complete a fully completed application (insert link) and provide a complete curriculum vitae. All applicants will be required to identify a project area of interest. If the application meets the Institute’s provisional entry requirements, they will then meet with potential supervisors to assess suitability.

b. Should the supervisor and student come to an acceptable project, the student will then submit a full scholarship application that must include:
   - an up to date and complete curriculum vitae
   - brief research proposal
   - a copy of the transcripts for all degrees completed, currently enrolled or incomplete as well as a proof of completion of these degrees
   - the relevant institution grading system
   - a copy of all research outputs (e.g. accepted manuscripts, conference abstracts or articles, thesis and reports)
   - the name and contact details of two referees

The applicant will then be assessed through a competitive process with other applicants. Only complete applications submitted by the deadline will be

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considered. All applications will also need to comply with the relevant UNSW Higher Degree Research admissions, supervision and scholarship policies and procedures.

Applicants are encouraged to work with their supervisors to complete the application.

Contact details for additional information: student@blackdog.org.au

7. The Selection process
The selection of the successful applicants will be merit based.

Applicants will be assessed in their respective categories based on their previous academic performance, research potential and excellence of the research project.

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