

Metro North Health Pre-RHD Scholarships 2026

Guidelines

Metro North Research is committed to developing integrated research career pathways that will allow us to retain, train and attract a world class research active workforce. Pre-Research Higher Degree (RHD) Scholarships enable clinicians to further develop their research plan, methodology and supervision plans, with the goal of achieving enrolment in a Research Higher Degree (Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) or Masters of Philosophy (MPhil)) by 31 December 2027.

Program Overview

Pre-RHD Scholarship funding will be awarded to Metro North clinicians to undertake research planning activities as work toward a RHD. A maximum of \$15,000 funding will be awarded per Scholarship and these funds will be provided to the relevant Business Area to enable the recipient to avail of protected research time. Scholarship recipients must:

- commit unencumbered work-days to undertake work for a RHD.
- submit and/or demonstrate significant progress towards an application for enrolment in a RHD by 31 December 2027.
- undertake early work towards the program of research, which may include; a literature review, development of research questions, development of research methodology, attending research education, piloting data collection tools, preparing enrolment documentation etc. It may also include preparing ethics applications or grant applications if progress towards enrolment has already been made during the scholarship period.
- While a formal supervisor is not required at the time of this Pre-RHD Scholarship application, recipients are strongly encouraged during the scholarship period to identify a potential **supervisor** (i.e. university-affiliated academic who would formally supervise the RHD) or **research mentor** within Metro North who will support in further developing their research proposal and preparing for RHD enrolment.

Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for a Metro North Pre-RHD Scholarship you must:

- be currently employed and remain employed as a clinician within Metro North Health for the duration of the scholarship period (applicants may not undertake a secondment during the Pre-RHD Scholarship period).
- be eligible to enrol in a RHD at the preferred university.
- be committed to submitting a RHD enrolment application (for MPhil or PhD) by 31 December 2027.
- have the support of your line manager to commit research days, unencumbered by usual work duties, between 1 July 2026 and 30 June 2027.

You are ineligible to apply if any of the following pertain to you:

- have received any funding (including grants, scholarships, fellowships) to support the nominated research or RHD research project.
- are already enrolled in a RHD.
- are currently (temporarily or permanently) in a research position that includes the expectation that the individual will undertake their own research as part of their role (as per the role description).
- have dedicated work time already allocated to RHD activities.

Metro North Research is committed to creating pathways for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to develop their research skills and capacity. Priority consideration will be given to applicants that identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

Scholarship Terms and Conditions

If you are successful in your application, funding will be provided under the following terms and conditions:

- Scholarship funds will be provided to support the successful applicant to undertake 'research days' by enabling clinical backfill. Funded research days may be taken in any format (e.g. one day per week or in a block) and the format must be outlined in the funding agreement.
- Up to \$1,000 of the Pre-RHD Scholarship funds may be claimed via reimbursement for travel or attendance at a domestic conference or meeting and must be noted in the application. No other expenditure is considered eligible.
- Scholarship research days costs are not to exceed the value of the funds.
- Recipients must be allocated the maximum number of research days, unencumbered by other work duties, to undertake work to prepare for a RHD.
- Scholarship funds will not be awarded until the successful applicant and the relevant Head of Department has agreed to:

- the number of days and/or hours of protected research time that the scholarship will enable, noting that:
 - cost of protected research time excludes clinical allowances and overtime as these will not be funded.
 - planned leave, such as annual leave or long service leave will not be funded or allowed during research days.

Note: The number of days/hours should be calculated in consultation with the local Business Manager. Supporting documentation of how the number of days and/or hours was calculated needs to be uploaded with the application form – a costing template can be accessed on QHEPS at [Budget forms and templates | Finance | Corporate Services Division \(health.qld.gov.au\)](https://www.health.qld.gov.au/qheps/BudgetFormsAndTemplates/Finance/CorporateServicesDivision).

- the format in which the research days will be taken.
- Funds will be transferred in full and non-recurrently to the nominated relevant business area cost centre following receipt of a completed funding agreement and once the scholarship has commenced.
- Funding will only be provided on the condition that no other funds have been obtained by the recipient for the nominated research or for the provision of backfill during the scholarship period.
- Funding is provided subject to the participant remaining as a Metro North Health employee and as a clinician for the duration of the funding term.
- Funding is provided on the condition that the recipient agrees to participate in quality assurance and evaluation processes associated with this program, including submission of a final report and supporting documents in July 2027, and annual follow-up surveys, each July, until the completion of a RHD.
- The recipient acknowledges Metro North Health funding support in any associated publications and presentations.
- The recipient or their line manager must notify the Metro North Office of Research immediately of any changes impacting on the recipients' ability to complete the funded days or satisfy the above terms and conditions. Any scholarship funds not utilised as per the conditions above may be requested to be returned to Metro North Office of Research.
- The recipient cannot be named as a Chief Investigator for a Metro North Health Swift Grant in the same year.

Assessment Criteria

Following the submission deadline, an initial administrative assessment of completeness and eligibility will be carried by the Pre-RHD Scholarships administrative coordinator. Applications that do not meet the requirements will not be assessed further.

Scholarship applications deemed eligible will be assessed in a competitive, merit-based process against the assessment criteria outlined below, by an independent research panel convened by the Metro North Office of Research.

Criteria	Assessment Details	Weighting
Planning	- Clearly identify the research question or hypothesis. - Demonstrate that you have undertaken preliminary planning for your RHD (e.g. identified your preferred institution/RHD type, identified or established working partnerships with one or more collaborators). - Demonstrate an understanding/recognition of the long-term commitment required for the completion of a RHD. - Demonstrate that study plans have been considered, including consideration of: - strategies that may be required in employment and study to ensure the completion of the RHD (e.g. combining part-time work with part-time self-funded study; applying for scholarship funding for back-fill; and - draft timeline for project stages and completion.	50%
Significance	- Demonstrate whether there is a benefit identified for patients and/or Metro North Health. - Demonstrate awareness of other research that has been or is being undertaken in the field. - Identify where the proposed research may meet an identified need or gap.	40%
Track Record	- Your resume should identify how your career to date & achievements will enable you to successfully complete the RHD you've proposed. - Demonstrate that you have commenced development of research related knowledge, skills and/or experience.	10%

How to Apply

Visit the Metro North Pre-RHD Scholarship website <https://metronorth.health.qld.gov.au/research/grants/prs> and complete the online application form via the SmartyGrants platform.

Further Information

For further information, please contact the Research Grants Officer at MetroNorthResearch-Grants@health.qld.gov.au or on (07) 3647 9635.