

Western Australian Biodiversity Science Institute Scholarship General Conditions of Award

These 'Conditions of Award' are intended to supplement the various codes of practice for postgraduate supervision, conditions of award for ad-hoc scholarships, and higher degree regulations of the partner universities as well as providing a framework for managing outcomes and financial accountability. In matters of potential conflict between The Western Australian Biodiversity Science Institute 'Conditions of Award' and the codes and regulations of the administering university; the university documents will take precedence.

Background

The Western Australian Biodiversity Science Institute (WABSI) is formal research collaboration between nine research organisations which are the leading scientific authorities on Western Australian terrestrial biodiversity.

WABSI has been formed to ensure investments in scientific research pertaining to Western Australia's immense terrestrial and freshwater biodiversity efficiently deliver the knowledge required for government, community and industry land managers to make optimal decisions with respect to the management of that biodiversity.

1. Scholarship duration

The Western Australian Biodiversity Science Institute Scholarship is a top-up scholarship available to existing or prospective scholarship holders. The maximum duration of the scholarship is 3.5 years, subject to satisfactory university approved progress and performance. Scholarship extensions will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.

2. Recipient eligibility

Scholarship recipients must:

- be a current holder of, or be approved for, an existing base scholarship such as a Research Training Program (RTP) Stipend scholarship (previously referred to as an APA scholarship) or an industry-based fund of similar merit.
- have been granted enrolment acceptance in an appropriate full-time Higher Research Degree (HRD) program at a recognised Australian university to commence study in 2018.
- be enrolled in, or intending to enrol in a PhD.
- conduct research within the list of The Western Australian Biodiversity Science Institute related research disciplines and interests reflected in Schedule B.
- satisfy the selection criteria, including research interests, detailed within Schedule C.
- be enrolled at a Western Australian University and be based in Western Australia for the duration of their enrolment.

Preference will be given to recipients with Australian citizenship or permanent residency, although international students with research interests consistent with the research programs mentioned in Schedule B are encouraged to apply.

3. Supervision

A student's principal supervisor will be an academic who meets the supervisory requirements of the university partner. A minimum of two (2) supervisors will be required to submit written statements supporting the student's application, research interests and ability to complete their study program. One supervisor should be from a non-university partner, such as an industry agency or research and development organisation, with relevant expertise.

Supervisors must be formally recognised by the relevant university.

4. Administration

The Western Australian Biodiversity Science Institute top up scholarship will be administered and managed by the University at which the successful student is enrolled at.

5. Commencement

The Western Australian Biodiversity Science Institute will oversee the selection and appointment of the inaugural recipient of the Western Australian Biodiversity Science Institute Scholarship. Advertising of this scholarship will commence in 2017, applications closing on 31 October 2017 for commencement of study within three months.

A formal public launch of the Scholarship and the inaugural successful recipient will be held in Perth at a date and venue to be announced. The recipient will need to be available to attend this event.

Schedule A: Particulars of the ‘top-up’ scholarship

Scholarship value

The value of The Western Australian Biodiversity Science Institute Scholarship is \$10,000 per annum for 3.5 years.

Eligibility

Recipients will need to already hold, or be approved for, a current HRD award including, but not limited to, a RTP Stipend scholarship, university, industry or government recognised awards.

Duration

Subject to satisfactory review on student progress and performance conducted by the host university's internal reporting processes, the scholarship will ordinarily be available for a maximum of three years and six months full time enrolment. Leave of Absences during enrolment as approved by the host university will not affect the availability of the scholarship. Requests for additional funding beyond the three years six months of full time enrolment will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.

Schedule B: Research disciplines and interests

Eligible research activities need to demonstrate a positive contribution to the improvement, modification, adaptation or increased understanding of Western Australia's biodiversity.

Specific research areas or interests that are encouraged include, but are not limited to:

Restoration and ex Situ conservation

- Investigation of species enhancement tools and understanding of species introduction impacts to ensure long term persistence of populations.
- Investigation of innovative breeding, sourcing and storage options to enhance the capacity for ex-situ conservation of Western Australian Biodiversity.
- Investigation of climate resilient ecological restoration in the highly fragmented south west.
- Investigation of post mining rehabilitation technologies or approaches and systems that can be used to evaluate and assess restoration success.

Biodiversity survey

- Investigation of the application of new technologies for increasing the efficiency of biodiversity survey e.g. molecular/genomic techniques or remote sensing technologies.
- Investigation of approaches to vegetation mapping applied at regional scales.
- Investigation of innovative modelling approaches to predict genetic diversity and gene flow, and/or patterns in species/ecological communities at regional scales (consideration of conservation planning and decision support tools as a value-add).

Threats and process

- Investigation of climate change impacts and integrated management options for vulnerable ecosystems such as the wetlands of south west WA.
- Investigation of biodiversity impacts and evaluation of management interventions across multiple interacting threats and chronic decline of ecosystems.
- Investigation of innovative approaches for prioritising the management of threats to species and communities of conservation concern.

HRD by thesis or publication, as defined and administered by the host university, is equally acceptable.

Schedule C: Selection criteria

Selection for The Western Australian Biodiversity Science Institute Scholarship is based on merit, including merit of an academic and /or non-academic nature.

Applicants will need to complete the 'Application for The Western Australian Biodiversity Science Institute Scholarship' form. In completing this application, applicants will need to clearly state their capacity to address one or more of the research interests (or related) in Schedule B.

The application also provides sections to demonstrate the:

- research proposal, including outputs;
- industry contribution, including how the industry will benefit (outcomes);
- supervisory support, including industry-based supervision; and
- history, commitment and passion for research in this area.