



Guidelines and Conditions for BMWHI Top-up Scholarships

The Blue Mountains World Heritage Institute (BMWHI) PhD top-up scholarships are open to doctoral students engaged in any discipline of research that supports management of the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area (GBMWA). Priority research areas and topics are outlined in the BMWHI Research Strategy¹ and its associated Prospectus². Applicants must be enrolled, or finalising enrolment in a full-time PhD research degree at any accredited Australian university, and be successful in obtaining a primary scholarship such as an Australian Postgraduate Award (APA) or equivalent.

Applications for top-up scholarships

The BMWHI Research Committee will receive applications for top-up scholarships and make recommendations to the Board as to which projects should be awarded a top-up. BMWHI encourages top-up scholarships for the top 15 research projects listed in its Research Prospectus. Requests for top-up funding can be made directly to BMWHI or via the BMWHI website. The student and supervisor(s) should submit a short (two page) project brief to BMWHI that covers:

- Title of research project
- Aims of research project
- Research questions to be answered
- Relevance to BMWHI Research Prospectus
- Relevance to management needs – how would the knowledge gained inform management of the GBMWA?

Tenure of BMWHI PhD top-up scholarships

- Top-up scholarships are awarded for a maximum duration of three years from initial enrolment in the PhD.
- Top-up scholarships are not available to students who are already receiving another top-up scholarship.
- Students must advise the BMWHI of the expected commencement date of the top-up scholarship.
- Students are expected to commence studies within three months of the award, unless the BMWHI agrees otherwise.
- Subject to satisfactory progress, the top-up scholarship will be renewed each year.
- The top-up scholarship will cease upon final submission of the thesis for a Doctorate or when the award expires, whichever is the earlier.

Financial administration

- BMWHI offers of funding are made on the understanding that the applicant will accept primary scholarship funding for the duration of the BMWHI top-up scholarship from another funding body.
- The total stipend attached to the top-up scholarship may vary between \$5000-\$10000 per annum and will be paid through BMWHI or if the university policy requires, then through the

¹ <http://www.bmwhi.org.au/docs/BMWHI-RESEARCH-STRATEGY.pdf>

² <http://www.bmwhi.org.au/docs/BMWHI-Research-Prospectus-2010.pdf>

administering institution (university at which the student is based), in the first quarter of each year of study. Payments will be made to the student as a regular stipend rather than a lump sum.

- The student is responsible for obtaining any tax exemption or advice regarding the scholarship stipend.
- The awarding of a top-up scholarship does not imply an employer/employee relationship; therefore, BMWHI does not pay for workers' compensation insurance or Superannuation Guarantee Contributions.

Extension and deferment

If an extension or deferment is approved by the granting body for the primary scholarship, the student must notify BMWHI in writing by registered mail within 10 working days of the date of approval. BMWHI may, at its discretion, grant an extension or deferment to the top-up scholarship. Consideration may be given to the deferment of a scholarship for a maximum period or periods totalling twelve months. Any student not granted an extension must relinquish the scholarship.

Administering institution

Prior to the award of a top-up scholarship, certification that the administering institution endorses the application and is willing to administer the Scholarship must be received by BMWHI. Acceptance of the top-up scholarship will indicate that the candidate accepts the conditions set out in these guidelines. The administering institution shall provide the facilities and services necessary for the efficient conduct of research during the term of the scholarship. BMWHI does not provide funds for administrative charges to administering institutions. If a researcher relocates during the term of the grant, he/she must notify BMWHI in writing as soon as possible.

Termination of a top-up scholarship

The top-up scholarship will be terminated or suspended at the discretion of BMWHI if:

- the full scholarship is terminated for any reason; or
- the university or the BMWHI Research Committee determine that the research for which the scholarship is approved is not being carried out:
 - with competence, diligence and scientific honesty and with appropriate ethics clearances; or
 - in accordance with the conditions of award; or
 - on the grounds of permanent incapacity of illness, and no alternative arrangements can be made for continuation of the PhD.
- the student ceases to be a fulltime student; or
- the student does not resume study at the conclusion of a period of deferment, or does not make arrangements to extend a current period of deferment.

If the student wishes to terminate the top-up scholarship, they must notify the BMWHI within 10 working days in writing of such an intention. When a top-up scholarship terminates under any circumstances, any unexpended balance / funds shall be returned to BMWHI.

Expectations of student, supervisor and BMWHI

The Scholarship recipient must comply with the conditions of award stipulated in their primary scholarship. The student is also expected to follow the policy and protocols of the administering institution.

When a top-up scholarship is granted, BMWHI, the student and the core supervisor agree to the following:

- That student and core supervisor provide to BMWHI their email and phone contacts.
- That the university and core supervisor consider a co-supervisor from a BMWHI member agency (namely, DECCW, the Hawkesbury Nepean Catchment Management Authority, Blue

Mountains City Council, or the Sydney Catchment Authority). To this end, BMWHI will canvas its members and make suggestions to the supervisor. It is not in general a condition for receiving a scholarship that an agency co-supervisor be appointed, however where the top-up is donated by a member agency, this condition may apply.

- The PhD will focus on the project brief approved by BMWHI. However, if students seek to change the PhD's aims or research questions, the student and supervisor should have these changes approved by BMWHI. Of course, the student remains free to vary their PhD significantly, even though BMWHI does not approve the changes. Under this situation however BMWHI reserves the right to terminate the top-up scholarship.
- There should be an initial face-to-face meeting to discuss the project with the student and supervisors and BMWHI, to be held shortly after the top-up scholarship is granted. At this meeting, agreements will be made about ongoing liaison and feedback on the project.
- There should be an *annual* meeting of the student and supervisors with BMWHI to discuss the project. The student is required to provide a short (1-2 page) progress report for this meeting. Any research findings of potential relevance to management of the World Heritage Area will be a focus of discussion.
- The student and/or supervisors are encouraged to make contact with the BMWHI Research Manager outside of these meetings. Discussion may include any matters of relevance to the progress of the project (including seeking advice), or regarding the management of the World Heritage Area. The BMWHI Research Manager will assist the student in terms of research and management contacts, and relevant scientific information, and will aim to forward any information relevant to the student's project as he/she becomes aware of it.
- When the PhD is approved, the student will submit an electronic version to BMWHI, who (with permission from the scholar's university) may make this available to the public via its website. The PhD should acknowledge the BMWHI top-up scholarship, as should any publications that the student publishes based on the PhD.