**Higher Degree by Research (HDR) Scholarship program**

**Western Alliance is pleased to open expressions of interest for our new HDR (Higher Degree by Research) scholarship program. This program will be available to existing employees of our member health services and PHN, for study to be completed at our member universities (Deakin University and Federation University). Two scholarships, with stipends of up to $15k per year of the degree will be awarded (depending on full time/part time completion), with up to $45k per candidate in total for the duration of the degree. Expressions of Interest (EOI) will open on November 10th and close on February 2nd. Scholarships will be available for both full time and part time study, aimed at candidates wanting to undertake a PhD or Masters of Research. Candidates who do not yet meet the formal university entry requirements for a PhD are welcome to apply, with PhD pathways via other courses to be considered.**

**Background**

Health practitioners face practical barriers to combining higher degree by research (HDR) study with their practice, including difficulty juggling work, study and family commitments in addition to financial disincentives associated with reduced paid work hours. As part of the approach to building research culture and capacity among health service and PHN members, Western Alliance is overseeing an initiative that minimises barriers to health professionals undertaking health sector embedded HDR studies whilst enabling candidates to continue to progress their professional practice. Entry to the program will be by competitive application, open to employees of Western Alliance member health services or the Western Victoria PHN.

***About Western Alliance:***

Western Alliance (<https://www.westernalliance.org.au/>) was established in 2014 as the first regional and rural focussed academic health science centre in Australia. Western Alliance operates across western Victoria as a not-for-profit consortium, supporting its members to improve the health of their communities through research-based and evidence-informed health care.

What we do:

* We foster relationships between organisations and individuals who can influence regional and rural health outcomes and research
* We build capability of regional and rural health practitioners, researchers and consumers, enabling them to contribute to and benefit from health research
* We prioritise health care problems and fund regional and rural health research teams to investigate, generate evidence and implement solutions
* We support development of nationally relevant models of regional and rural health research
* We work to achieve equitable funding for regional and rural health research

**Objectives of the HDR scholarship program**

* Improve research career development opportunities for health practitioners in regional and rural western Victoria
* Increase research capacity and capability within Western Alliance health sector partner organisations
* Improve collaboration between Western Alliance academic and health sector partners
* Support the development of regional/rural, translation-focussed health sector led research to improve health outcomes across western Victoria

**Conditions of the HDR scholarship program**

* Employment at the respective health service or PHN will need to be maintained for the duration of the degree in order to continue to receive the stipend.
* Candidates will need to identify a topic and supervisors (both health and academic) in collaboration with a Western Alliance partner University (Deakin University or Federation University).
* The proposed topic will need to be of direct relevance to the hosting health service or PHN priorities, and to rural/regional health, as well as demonstrating a focus on research translation.
* Stipends of up to $15k per year of the degree will be awarded (depending on full time/part time completion), with up to $45k per candidate in total for the duration of the degree.
* Candidates will either nominate or be matched to a suitable HDR program based on their situation and proposed topic.
* Applicants must disclose whether financial support (scholarships, bursaries etc.) has been or will be received by any other sources to support their study. Western Alliance HDR Scholarships may be used to top-up existing PhD scholarships where appropriate and as determined by the review panel.

**Eligibility:**

* Only employees of Western Alliance health sector member organisations (as below) are eligible to apply for these scholarships.
* Barwon Health
* Colac Area Health
* East Grampians Health Services
* Grampians Health
* South West Health Care
* St John of God (Ballarat, Geelong and Warrnambool)
* Western District Health Service
* Western Victoria Primary Health Network
* Employment must continue at the organisation for the duration of the study in order to continue to receive the scholarship contributions.
* Scholarship funding is not available to cover completion of an existing enrolled course of study, however, candidates who are enrolled in a particular course and are applying for the scholarship to progress to a higher level of study will be considered (e.g. a person who is already enrolled in a PhD and seeking a scholarship for their existing study will not be eligible, but a person enrolled in a Masters program and looking to transition to a PhD would be eligible).

**Assessment criteria:**

All applications will be assessed against the following selection criteria:

**Pre-requisites:** Employment at a Western Alliance member health organisation (see above).

**Key assessment criteria:**

* Alignment of the proposed research topic to the priorities of the employer (health service or PHN)
* Relevant experience (can be professional or research) of the candidate to undertake the study
* Suitability of the supervisors (both academic and professional) to support the candidate to undertake the study
* Likelihood of the study leading to improved outcomes (e.g. clinical, population health or health service outcomes)
* Scientific merit of the proposed research

**Note: The judging panel reserves the right to consider a balance of representation (including geographical location, professional background and research experience of applicants) when awarding funding.**

**Application Support:**

If you are interested in applying for a HDR scholarship or want to learn more, we encourage you to contact your local Western Alliance Research Translation Coordinator (below) prior to commencing your application.

* Ballarat/East Grampians: Ella Ottrey Ella.Ottrey@eghs.net.au
* Geelong/Colac: Michael Field - MField@cah.vic.gov.au
* Hamilton/Warrnambool: Louise Greenstock - Louise.Greenstock@wdhs.net

You will also need to contact the universities below in order to discuss your proposal and identify relevant supervisors. If you need support with this process, you can also contact your local Research Translation Coordinator (above).

**Deakin University:**

Prof. Peter Enticott.

Associate Dean Research

+61 3 924 45504

peter.enticott@deakin.edu.au

**Federation University:**

Prof. Wendy Wright

Dean Graduate School

(03) 51226854

wendy.wright@federation.edu.au

For **further information** about the HDR scholarship program, you can also contact Western Alliance Executive Officer, Drew Aras: drewaras@westernalliance.org.au or 0402777385.

**Key Dates:**

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| --- | --- |
| Expressions of interest open | Thursday 10th November 2022 |
| Expressions of interest close | Thursday 2nd February 2023 COB (5pm) |

After shortlisting, candidates will progress to an interview stage, with further detail to be provided once they are notified of being shortlisted.

**Please complete all fields in the following section and submit your EOI electronically to:** **info@westernalliance.org.au** **by 5pm on February 2nd 2023.**

**Western Alliance HDR scholarship EOI Form**

**Candidate (must be from a Western Alliance member Health Service or PHN)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Title and Name** | Enter text |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Current Employing Organisation/s and Appointment/s** | Enter text |

|  |  |
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| **Department/s**  | Enter text |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Phone** | Enter text |  **Fax** | Enter text |

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| **Mobile / Pager** | Enter text |  **Email** | Enter text |

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| **Academic qualifications (please include course title, institution and year completed)** | Enter text |

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| **Include a brief summary of relevant experience (could include research, quality improvement clinical, managerial etc. Please include dates and locations.) –** *Maximum 200 words* | Enter text |

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| **Are you currently enrolled in a program of study? (please indicate yes/no, and if yes, provide details of the course and progression to date)** | Enter text |

**Proposed program of study**

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| **University administering the course (must be either Deakin University or Federation University):** | Enter text |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Proposed/preferred course or pathway and full time/part time status:** | Enter text |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Administering faculty:** | Enter text |

**Supervisors**

| **Name of Primary Academic Supervisor (must be from the administering University)** | **Organisation, position, qualifications, key research experience**  |
| --- | --- |
| Enter text | Enter text |

| **Name of Academic Co-Supervisors (if applicable)** | **Organisation, position, qualifications, key research experience** |
| --- | --- |
| Enter text | Enter text |
| Enter text | Enter text |
| Enter text | Enter text |

| **Name of Professional supervisor (must be an employee at the same organisation as the candidate)** | **Organisation, position, qualifications, experience (including research)** |
| --- | --- |
| Enter text | Enter text |

| **Name of Professional Co-Supervisors (if applicable)** | **Organisation, position, qualifications, experience (including research)** |
| --- | --- |
| Enter text | Enter text |
| Enter text | Enter text |
| Enter text | Enter text |

**Please provide a brief lay summary of the proposed project. Please ensure that it is easily read and understood by the general public.** *Maximum 250 words*

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| Enter text |

**Project Proposal**

*Maximum 2 pages (covering aim and research question, background/rationale and methodology), minimum 11 point font size*

**Aim and research question**

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| --- |
| Enter text |

**Background and rationale (including literature review & bibliography)**

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| Enter text |

**Methodology**

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| --- |
| Enter text |

**What is the intended impact of this project? Please include expected outcomes, benefits and/or translational impact** *Maximum 250 words*

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| --- |
| Enter text |

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| --- | --- |
| **Has funding for this study/project been sought elsewhere?** | Select an option |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **If funding has been sought elsewhere, please provide information about source, amount and status of application** | Enter text |

**Certification**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Name and signature of Candidate** |  |  **Date** | Select date  |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Name and Signature of faculty head at the administering university** |  |  **Date** | Select date  |

|  |  |  |  |
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| **Name and Signature of proposed Primary Academic Supervisor** |  |  **Date** | Select date  |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Name and Signature of proposed Primary Professional Supervisor** |  |  **Date** | Select date  |

**Certification by Head of Department at candidate’s employer**

I certify that:

* The project is appropriate and relevant to the work conducted in my department and I am prepared to have the project carried out in my department
* The investigators will seek ethics approval and will conform to the general principals set out in the NHMRC guidelines

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| --- | --- |
| **Name, organisation & position****(please print)** | Enter text |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Signature of Department Head** |  |  **Date** | Select date  |