



The University of Sydney

Postgraduate Research Support Scheme (PRSS) 2009 Information for Students

(This document is also available on <http://www.usyd.edu.au/ro/training/prss.shtml>)

What is the PRSS?

It is a scheme introduced by the University in 2001 to provide direct support for currently enrolled postgraduate research students. Under the scheme, funds are allocated to Schools or Departments (in some cases Faculties) based on their higher degree research enrolment figures in the previous year. The funds are not allocated directly to the students but are awarded by Schools or Departments to eligible applicants on a competitive basis according to the University's general guidelines. Selection committees will consider (1) quality of the applicant and track record relative to opportunity and stage of candidature, (2) demonstrated need for funding, and (3) priorities, if any, placed on the different expenditure categories by the School or Department. In 2009, the total allocation is \$1.259 million.

What are the eligibility criteria for support?

1. **Currently enrolled** (including international students)
 - Enrolled **PhD students**, full-time or part-time, are eligible to apply for funds under the PRSS provided their candidature does not exceed eight full-time semesters (or part-time equivalent) at the closing date for applications.
 - Enrolled **Masters by research students**, full-time or part-time, are eligible to apply for funds under the PRSS provided their candidature does not exceed four full-time semesters (or part-time equivalent) at the closing date for applications.
2. **Satisfactory progress towards timely completion of the degree**
 - Applications will not be considered if the students have not demonstrated satisfactory progress and/or have exceeded the normal period of candidature (see 1 above).
3. **Justification for the need and proposed use of funds**
 - A brief statement justifying the need and proposed use of funds, together with the benefits to the applicant's candidature.
4. **Support by the applicant's supervisor/s**
 - As per requirement on the application form.
5. **Any achievement related to the applicant's research** such as:
 - Publications (in press or submitted), conference presentations, internal reports or other scholarly activities. A track record of achievement relative to opportunity and stage of candidature provides some indication of satisfactory progress during the candidature, however it is not a pre-requisite for a successful PRSS application.

What sort of things can I apply to get support for?

1. Conference expenses – for the purpose of presenting a paper or poster of which the student is the author and in connection with his/her research. Students who attend a conference without presenting, or presenting a paper or poster of which the student is not the author, are not eligible to apply under this category.
2. Expenses in connection with the use of specialist services, or a visit to use specialist facilities or to learn specialist technique/s directly related to the students' research, but were beyond those normally provided by the School or Department.

3. Field expenses – provided the PRSS funds are not used to defray the infrastructure costs normally provided by the School or Department.
4. Purchase of specialist books, periodicals, software that are essential to the students' research, but are not normally available or difficult to obtain in the University.
5. Purchase of computers or other equipment that are essential to the students' research and are above and beyond the normal infrastructure provided by the School or Department.
6. Thesis production expenses to a maximum amount of \$600 for a PhD thesis or \$300 for a Masters thesis. Only students who do not hold a scholarship which provides such expenses and who will submit their theses in the current semester or calendar year can apply under this category.

The expenditure/proposed expenditure must have been incurred or will be incurred during this calendar year. A student cannot lodge a second application for the remainder of expenditure incurred under a previous successful PRSS application.

What will not be supported?

Direct research costs will not be supported. Thus, expenditure related to the purchase of consumables (such as chemicals, stationery, questionnaires and disks) normally provided by Schools or Departments, or photocopying will not be supported under the PRSS.

What level of support is available?

Eligible students may apply for a minimum amount of \$200 and a maximum amount of \$1,200 (but can be up to \$3,000 to support presentations at conferences held in countries in Europe, Africa, North and South America, or up to \$2,000 to support presentations at conferences held in other overseas countries) in each application round.

How often can a student apply for support?

Each eligible student can lodge only one application in any PRSS round.

PhD students: although eligible PhD students may apply during any PRSS application round, only three successful applications during their candidature (eight full-time semesters, or part-time equivalent) are permitted. That is, a PhD student can only be awarded funds three times within eight full-time semesters under the PRSS.

Masters by research students: although a Masters by research student may apply during any PRSS application round, only one successful application during the candidature (four full-time semesters, or part-time equivalent) is permitted. That is, a Masters student can only be awarded funds once under the PRSS. If a Masters by research student converts to a PhD, the total number of successful PRSS applications permitted will be three (including any successful application as a Masters student).

When should I apply?

Individual Schools or Departments (in some cases Faculties) must hold at least one application round every year. Please check the *List of PRSS administering units* at the end of this document and contact the appropriate office on when applications open and close.

How do I apply?

The application process will be administered by individual Schools or Departments (in some cases Faculties). Please check the *List of PRSS administering units* at the end of this document and contact the appropriate office for an application form.

Apart from completing the application form, you will be required to provide brief statements on justification for the use of funds and support by your supervisor/s, and any evidence of achievement during candidature.

How are the funds paid if I am successful in getting support?

You will need to submit a claim to your School or Department for items that have been approved as soon as expenditure is committed. The funds can be paid in one of the following ways:

1. Reimbursement to you by cheque on presentation of original receipts.
2. By cheque payable to the supplier on presentation of original invoices, purchase orders, quotations, order forms, conference registration forms - receipts from the suppliers for the value of the cheque/s received must be submitted by the student later.
3. By cheque as cash advance to the student for travel in or outside Australia in specific circumstances as per the University's Travel Procedure – original receipts for related expenses must be submitted by the student within 7 days of completion of the travel.

The last date to lodge a claim is 15 January 2010. If a successful applicant has not spent the full amount awarded by the end of 2009, he/she should lodge a partial claim by the due date for the expenditure already incurred **as there are no provisions to carry forward any unused funds or to lodge late claims.** Any funds that are not claimed by the successful applicants after 15 January 2010 must be returned by the Schools or Departments for re-allocation centrally in 2010.

Where can I get more information?

Contact your Postgraduate Coordinator, Postgraduate Student Adviser in your School or Department Office, or your Faculty Sub-Dean/Associate Dean in charge of postgraduate research students.

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List of PRSS administering units

Faculty	PRSS administering unit
Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources	Faculty of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources
	Plant Breeding Institute
Architecture	School Office
Arts	Faculty of Arts
Dentistry	Faculty of Dentistry
Economics and Business	Faculty of Economics and Business
Education and Social Work	Faculty of Education and Social Work
Engineering and Information Technologies	School of Aerospace, Mechanical and Mechatronic Engineering
	Australian Centre for Field Robotics
	School of Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering
	School of Civil Engineering
	School of Electrical and Information Engineering
	School of Information Technologies
Health Sciences	Faculty of Health Sciences
Law	Faculty of Law

Medicine	Discipline of Anatomy and Histology
	Discipline of Biomedical Sciences
	Discipline of Pathology
	Discipline of Pharmacology
	Discipline of Physiology
	Discipline of Paediatrics and Child Health
	School of Public Health
	Central Clinical School
	Northern Clinical School
	Western Clinical School
Nursing and Midwifery	Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery
Pharmacy	Faculty of Pharmacy
<i>ex</i> Rural Management	<i>ex</i> Rural Management
Science	School of Biological Sciences
	School of Chemistry
	Centre for Research on Ecological Impacts of Coastal Cities
	Centre for the Mind
	Electron Microscope Unit
	School of Geosciences
	Unit for History and Philosophy of Science
	School of Mathematics and Statistics
	School of Molecular and Microbial Biosciences
	School of Physics
School of Psychology	
Sydney College of the Arts	Sydney College of the Arts
Sydney Conservatorium of Music	Sydney Conservatorium of Music
Veterinary Science	Faculty of Veterinary Science