1. **Background**

   a. A unique opportunity is available for two outstanding Doctoral or Masters scholars in the area of research and innovation to improve musculoskeletal health in Australia and internationally.

   b. The scholarships are funded by the academic research group Musculoskeletal Health Sydney (MHS) within the School of Public Health, Sydney Medical School at the University of Sydney. MHS is a new academic research group within the University of Sydney's School of Public Health. The group is based at the King George V building in the Sydney Local Health District, Camperdown. Our focus is the promotion of musculoskeletal health and physical activity across the lifespan. Our vision is for better musculoskeletal health through healthy lifestyles and equitable access to patient-centred, evidence-based, and cost-effective health services. Our group currently comprises of 45 people, including world leaders in low back pain, and physical activity and ageing research. PEDro, the internationally renowned Physiotherapy Evidence Database, is produced by researchers in our MHS group. We currently have around 16 PhD students, 7 of these having travelled from other parts of the world to study with us. We offer a dynamic and supportive environment ensuring that research is conducted to the highest standards. Past PhD students have published their findings in the leading journals in the field including the *New England Journal of Medicine*, *Lancet* and *JAMA*. The findings of our PhD students have impacted clinical practice guidelines and changed the way musculoskeletal disease is managed in Australia. In addition, PhD students have benefitted from the active collaborations the group has with a wide range of multidisciplinary clinicians, researchers, and policy makers in Australia and internationally.

2. **Eligibility**

   a. The scholarship is offered subject to the applicant having an unconditional offer of admission or being currently enrolled full-time or part-time in a Research Masters or PhD in the School of Public Health, Sydney Medical School at the University of Sydney.

   b. Applicants must hold graduate qualifications (honours or equivalent) in a health related field from an approved Australian or overseas University.

   c. Applicant’s research proposals must related to the promotion of musculoskeletal health and/or physical activity across the lifespan through healthy lifestyles and equitable access to patient centred, evidence-based and cost-effective health services.

   d. Applicant’s primary supervisor must be a part of the MHS.

   e. Experience in clinical research is desirable.

3. **Selection Criteria**

   a. The successful applicant will be awarded the Scholarship on the basis of:
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I. academic merit,
II. curriculum vitae, and
III. a statement which demonstrates how the applicants research relates to musculoskeletal health and alignment with the MHS vision.

b. Shortlisted applicants will be required to attend an interview.

c. The successful applicants will be awarded the Scholarship by the nomination of the relevant research supervisor.

4. Value

a. The successful applicant enrolled full time will be provided with a stipend allowance of $26,682 per annum for up to three years for a PhD or two years for a Research Masters, subject to satisfactory academic performance.

b. The Scholarship will be indexed annually on 1 January each year at a rate equivalent to the indexation on the Australian Government’s Research Training Program stipend scholarship.

c. If the successful applicant is studying part-time, the Scholarship will be paid at 50% of the full-time rate.

d. Academic course fees and the Student Services Amenities fee are not provided for a successful international applicant.

e. Periods of study already undertaken towards the degree prior to the commencement of the Scholarship, will be deducted from the maximum duration of the Scholarship.

f. The Scholarship is for commencement in 2017 and cannot be deferred or transferred to another area of research.

g. No other amount is payable.

h. The Scholarship will be offered subject to the availability of funding.

5. Eligibility for Progression

a. Progression is subject to passing the annual progress review.

6. Leave Arrangements

a. The Scholarship recipient receives up to 20 working days recreation leave each year of the Scholarship and this may be accrued. However, the student will forfeit any unused leave remaining when the Scholarship is terminated or complete. Recreation leave does not attract a leave loading and the supervisor’s agreement must be obtained before leave is taken.

b. The Scholarship recipient may take up to 10 working days sick leave each year of the Scholarship and this may be accrued over the tenure of the Scholarship. Students with
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family responsibilities, caring for sick children or relatives, or experiencing domestic violence, may convert up to five days of their annual sick leave entitlement to carers leave on presentation of medical certificate(s). Students taking sick leave must inform their supervisor as soon as practicable.

7. Research Overseas

a. The Scholarship recipient may not normally conduct research overseas within the first six months of award.

b. The Scholarship holder may conduct up to 12 months of their research outside Australia. Approval must be sought from the student’s supervisor, Head of Department and HDRAC, and will only be granted if the research is essential for completion of the degree. All periods of overseas research are cumulative and will be counted towards a student’s candidature. Students must remain enrolled full-time at the University and receive approval to count time away.

8. Suspension

a. The Scholarship recipient cannot suspend their award within their first six months of study, unless a legislative provision applies.

b. The Scholarship recipient may apply for up to 12 months suspension for any reason during the tenure of their Scholarship. Periods of suspension are cumulative and failure to resume study after suspension will result in the award being terminated. Approval to suspend must be given by both HDRAC and the head of the department concerned. Periods of study towards the degree during suspension of the Scholarship will be deducted from the maximum tenure of the Scholarship.

9. Changes in Enrolment

a. The Scholarship recipient must notify HDRAC and their supervisor promptly of any planned changes to their enrolment including but not limited to: attendance pattern, suspension, leave of absence, withdrawal, course transfer, and candidature upgrade or downgrade. If the award holder does not provide notice of the changes identified above, the University may require repayment of any overpaid stipend.

10. Termination

a. Unless terminated earlier under this paragraph, the Scholarship will terminate:

I. on resignation or withdrawal of the student from their PhD or Research Masters,
II. upon submission of the thesis or at the end of the award,
III. if the student ceases to be a full-time student and prior approval has not been obtained to hold the Scholarship on a part-time basis,
IV. if the recipient receives an alternative primary scholarship. In such circumstances this Scholarship will be terminated in favour of the alternative scholarship where it is of higher value,
V. does not resume study at the end of a period of approved leave, or
VI. If the student ceases to meet the eligibility requirements specified for this Scholarship, (other than during a period in which the Scholarship has been suspended or during a period of approved leave).

b. The Scholarship may also be terminated by the University before this time if, in the opinion of the University:

I. the course of study is not being carried out with competence and diligence or in accordance with the terms of this offer,

II. the student fails to maintain satisfactory progress, or

III. the student has committed misconduct or other inappropriate conduct.

c. Stipend payments will be suspended throughout the duration of any enquiry/appeal process.

d. Once the Scholarship has been terminated, it will not be reinstated.

11. Misconduct

a. Where during the Scholarship a student engages in misconduct, or other inappropriate conduct (either during the Scholarship or in connection with the student’s application and eligibility for the Scholarship), which in the opinion of the University warrants recovery of funds paid to the student, the University may require the student to repay stipend amounts and any other payments made to the student in connection with the Scholarship. Examples of such conduct include and without limitation; academic dishonesty, research misconduct within the meaning of the Research Code of Conduct (for example, plagiarism in proposing, carrying out or reporting the results of research, or failure to declare or manage a serious conflict of interests), breach of the Code of Conduct for Students and misrepresentation in the application materials or other documentation associated with the Scholarship.

b. The University may require such repayment at any time during or after the Scholarship period. In addition, by accepting this Scholarship, the student consents to all aspects of any investigation into misconduct in connection with this Scholarship being disclosed by the University to the funding body and/or any relevant professional body.