Australian Postgraduate Awards (APA) are scholarships to assist with general living costs and are awarded to students of exceptional research potential to undertake a higher degree by research at this university. Eligible APA applicants will be automatically considered for both awards.

The University awards these scholarships twice a year - applications for Round One open in early September and applications for Round Two will open in early May of each year. Round One is for admission to research period 1 or 2, i.e. January to March, in the following year, and Round Two is for admission to research period 3 or 4, i.e. July to October, of the same calendar year.

Other postgraduate research scholarships offered in conjunction with the APA/UPA process is listed in Section 3 below, and University-wide top-up scholarships, together with those offered by some faculties and departments are listed in Section 4 below. Eligible APA/UPA applicants may also be considered for these awards and will be contacted separately if being shortlisted and/or successful.

1 Australian Postgraduate Awards (APA)

The APA scheme is provided by the Australian Government, the Department of Education and Training, in conjunction with Australian universities. The following information is based on the Commonwealth Scholarships Guidelines (Research) 2012 for the APA and may be subject to change.

1.1 Eligibility

To be eligible applicants must:

a) be an Australian citizen, a New Zealand citizen, an Australian permanent resident, or a holder of a VISA that allows the applicant to enrol as a domestic student, by the respective application closing date of the application round and

b) have completed a Bachelor Degree, or expect to complete within 3 months from the closing date of respective application round, with First Class Honours or equivalent results (refer to Section 5.2 for details), or have completed a degree with an outstanding record of professional and/or research achievements since graduation; and

c) apply for admission to a Research Masters or Research Doctoral degree for the research period that corresponds to the application round; and be enrolling as a full-time* student, and

d) not have completed a degree at the same, or higher, level as the proposed candidature; and

e) have not previously held an APA, APA (Industry) or an Australian Government-funded postgraduate research scholarship, unless it was terminated within the first six months of the scholarship; and

f) not be receiving an equivalent award, scholarship or salary providing a benefit greater than 75% of the APA stipend rate, to undertake the proposed study (Salary for work unrelated to the student’s research is not subject to this limit); and

For applicants who already commenced their research degrees in any Australian universities, they must have a minimum of 12 months (including possible 6 months extension for Research Doctoral degree) candidature remaining at the time they commence the scholarship if successful. If Research Master applicants have less than 12 months remaining, they must upgrade to Research Doctoral degree to be considered.
*The University of Sydney may approve a part-time APA on a case by case basis where an applicant is able to demonstrate significant caring responsibilities, a medical condition or a disability which limits the student’s capacity to undertake full-time study.

1.2 Tenure and Conditions

a) A full-time APA may be held for three years for Research Doctorate studies, or two years for Research Masters studies. A Research Doctorate candidate may apply for a maximum extension of up to six months subject to satisfactory progress, provided grounds are related to study and are beyond the control of the student. No extensions are possible for Research Masters students.

   a. The maximum APA tenure will be reduced by any periods of study undertaken:

   b. towards the degree prior to the commencement of the APA;

   c. during suspension of the APA (when candidature has not been simultaneously suspended); and/or

   d. during the tenure of a previous Australian Postgraduate Coursework Award.

b) Awards will not normally be available to those who as a result of prior candidature and/or scholarship would be entitled to a maximum tenure of less than twelve months.

c) A part-time award holder is expected to progress at half the rate of a full-time award holder.

d) Each award is renewed annually conditional on satisfactory progress.

e) Students who wish to transfer to another institution may continue to receive their APA only if their new institution agrees to its continuation and is able to support the transferring student from its APA grant amounts. (See also Section 6 below.)

f) Students may conduct up to 12 months (18 months for students of anthropology and other special cases) of their research outside Australia. The request must be approved by the Faculty concerned and the student must remain enrolled at The University of Sydney.

g) Suspension of APA is generally not allowed within the first 6 months of the scholarship.

h) After the first six months of award, students may be granted up to 12 months suspension within the duration of their award. A suspension, or accumulated periods of suspension of more than 12 months, will only be considered if there are exceptional circumstances beyond the student’s control.

i) Full-time award holders may engage in paid employment up to 20 hours per week, evening, weekend and holiday work included. Employment must not interfere with the student’s study and progress. If employed by the University, the appointment must not exceed half time or 50% of a full-time position.

j) Part-time award holders may undertake employment up to 10 hours per week (evening, weekend and holiday work included).

1.3 Benefits

(a) Full-time award holders receive a stipend of $25,849 (2015 rate) which is currently exempt from taxation. Part-time award holders receive a taxable stipend of $12,925 p.a. (2015 rate). The stipend rate is indexed annually on 1 January.

(b) Students relocating their place of residence to take up the APA may be eligible for the relocation allowance in accordance with the University’s APA relocation allowance guideline. The value of the allowance is up to $515 for each eligible adult and $255 for each eligible child. The maximum value of relocation expenses that a student may receive is $1,485 (at the time of publishing).

(c) Reimbursement of up to $420 for Masters candidates and up to $840 for Doctoral candidates (rate at the time of publishing) will be made for eligible claims for direct costs of producing a thesis in accordance with the University’s thesis allowance policy. The allowance must be claimed within one year of submission of the thesis and no more than two years after termination of the APA.

(a) APA holders may take up to 10 working days sick leave and up to 20 working days recreation leave each year as part of the award. Recreation leave does not attract a leave loading. These leave entitlements will be forfeited on termination of the APA.

(b) APA holders may receive additional paid sick leave of up to a total of twelve weeks for medically substantiated periods of illness lasting longer than ten days. This period of leave is added to the tenure of the award.

(c) After APA holders have completed twelve months of their award, they are entitled to a maximum of twelve weeks paid maternity leave during the tenure of the award. Periods of paid maternity
leave are in addition to the normal duration of the APA. Unpaid maternity leave may be accessed through the suspension provisions.

(d) APA holders will be granted a HECS-exempt place under the Research Training Scheme (http://sydney.edu.au/study/finances-fees-costs/fees-and-loans/hecs-help.html) for the tenure of their award.

2. University of Sydney Postgraduate Awards (UPA)

Applicants who apply for APA will be considered for UPA. A separate application for UPA is not required. The eligibility criteria, tenure and conditions are similar to the APA (refer to Section 1 above). The UPA is tenable only at The University of Sydney and is not transferable to another institution. No relocation allowance is provided for award holders to take up the UPA. The University retains its discretion to award APA or UPA to successful applicants.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders

Special considerations will be given up to three suitable Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander applicants per year. To be considered, applicants provide confirmation that they are of Australian Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background. The confirmation can be in the form of a letter of identity from their local Aboriginal land council, Aboriginal legal service, Aboriginal medical service, or other official Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander organisation. If applicants cannot provide a letter from any of these organisations, they will need to provide a statutory declaration confirming their Aboriginality.

3. Other Postgraduate Research Scholarships

The University also offers other postgraduate research scholarships and supplementary scholarships. APA/UPA applicants may also be considered for these awards where funding is available.

3.1 A.E. and F.A.Q. Stephens Scholarship

This scholarship is funded by the assets of the estates of both Francis Stephens and his wife Alice. It will be awarded to the highest ranked APA/UPA applicant who is not awarded a VCRS. A separate application for this award is not required. The scholarship is tenable in any faculty at The University of Sydney. The value of the scholarship shall be the same as the current Australian Postgraduate Award (Industry) ($31,296 p.a. in 2015). Other benefits will be the same as the APA scheme.

3.2 Faculty scholarships

Faculties offer various PG scholarships. Please refer to faculty’s website for details.

3.3 Other PG scholarship opportunities

Scholarship opportunities are advertised on: http://sydney.edu.au/scholarships/research

4. Supplementary or top-up Scholarships

4.1 University-wide awards

Vice-Chancellor’s Research Scholarships

The Vice-Chancellor’s Research Scholarships (VCRS) are offered to students with an outstanding track record in academic achievements and research potential to pursue full-time PhD studies at The University of Sydney. VCRS are offered as top-up scholarships to highly ranked commencing PhD students who are awarded an APA or a UPA. The value of the VCRS will be up to $35,000 (tax-exempt) over a maximum period of up to 3.5 full-time years, payable at the rate of $5,000 p.a. for the first year and $12,000 per annum for the remaining tenure. Additional relocation allowance of up to $5,000 may be provided for students who need to relocate to Sydney to take up the scholarship. Relevant relocation guideline applies.

The VCRS will be awarded by the Vice-Chancellor on recommendation by the Academic Board’s Postgraduate Awards Sub-Committee. Selection criteria include academic excellence, e.g. a University Medal, and outstanding research potential.

The VCRS can be held at any Faculty at the University but is not transferable to other universities. Only Commencing PhD applicants who apply for APA/UPA will be considered. A separate application for the VCRS is not required.
University of Sydney Merit Awards
The Merit Awards are top-up scholarships offered to highly ranked APA/UPA applicants who pursue full-time PhD studies at the University of Sydney. PhD students who have commenced their candidature but have not held any postgraduate research scholarships at the time of APA/UPA application will also be considered. The Award will be $5000 p.a. for up to 3.5 years for a full-time PhD.

A separate application for the Merit Awards is not required The Merit Awards will be awarded by the Academic Board’s Postgraduate Awards Sub-Committee on the basis of academic excellence and outstanding research potential.

Alumni Scholarships
Established from donation by the University's alumni, the scholarships will be $5000 for one year, and are offered to highly ranked APA/UPA applicants across three faculty clusters, i.e. Health; Humanities and Social Sciences; and Sciences and Technology. A separate application for the Alumni Scholarships is not required. The scholarships will be awarded on the basis of academic excellence and outstanding research potential.

4.2 Faculty/School/Department specific awards

Val Street Scholarship
Established in 2011 from the estate of the late Valerie Ruth Street, one Val Street Scholarship of the same value and duration of the VCRS will be awarded annually for a period of around ten years depending on funding. The scholarship will be awarded as a top-up award in the APA/UPA Round One to the highest ranked female applicant who will commence full-time research doctorate studies. The recipient must have attained First Class Honours in the Arts, Sciences (currently Agriculture and Environment; Science or Veterinary Science) or Social Sciences (currently Arts and Social Sciences; Education and Social Work or Business) Faculties of the University of Sydney.

The scholarship will be awarded by the Chancellor on recommendation by the Academic Board’s Postgraduate Awards Sub-Committee. If there are students of equivalent academic merit as determined by the Postgraduate Awards Sub-Committee, in making a final recommendation to the Chancellor the Sub-Committee should take into consideration two other factors – whether the situation of the applicant is such that they may not be able to take up a PhD offer without further financial assistance and the extent of their involvement in the extra-curricular life of the University during their undergraduate enrolment.

A separate application for the Val Street Scholarship is not required and eligible highly ranked applicants for the APA/UPA will be automatically considered.

Other Top-ups
Some faculties, schools or departments offer top-up scholarships to successful APA/UPA applicants. In most cases, applicants will be automatically considered for these top-ups. Applicants will be notified by faculties separately if successful.

5. Selection Process

Selection is based on academic merit and research potential. Applications are initially assessed by nominated faculty. The lists will then be verified by one of the three 'faculty cluster' Ranking Committees: Health, Humanities and Social Sciences, and Sciences and Technology. The Academic Board’s Postgraduate Awards Sub-Committee will consider all faculty lists and determine the number of offers to be made.

Applicants are assessed based on a combination of:
• Undergraduate degree, i.e. UG WAM, and Master by Research Degree, or
• First class honours result (Honours 1 or H1), and/or
• First class honours equivalent degree (H1E), and
• The world rankings* of the institution that conferred the qualification above, and/or
• Research Potential Indicator/Research Experience Points.

*World rankings currently used are, i.e. Academic Ranking of World Universities, Times Higher Education World University Rankings, and QS World University Rankings. The ranking lists used may change from time to time.
UG WAM: The undergraduate weighted average mark (average mark, weighted according to the relative credit point value of the individual units of study) is obtained by averaging the marks the applicant obtained in all second and third year units of study in the relevant degree. Some faculties will also calculate the WAM according to the year-levels (2 for second year, 3 for third year) of the units of study. The UG WAM of combined degrees will normally be calculated from all units except those in the first year and the honours subjects.

H1 (or H1E) mark: This is the mark achieved in the First Class Honours (or equivalent) degree. The criteria for assessing Honours 1 equivalent qualifications are detailed in section 5.2 below.

Research Potential Indicator/Research Experience Points (RPI/REP) point: RPI/REP points are awarded for relevant research and/or professional achievements as detailed in section 5.3 below.

5.1 Calculating the UG WAM and First class Honours Mark

It is the responsibility of applicants to provide numerical marks of their academic results wherever possible. If the mark is not available or is unobtainable, the result will be entered at the respective mid-point for the equivalent Pass (i.e. 57) and Credit (i.e. 69.5) grades at the University of Sydney. A mark at the lowest one-third (i.e. 78.33) will be entered for the equivalent Distinction and the lowest mark (i.e. 85) for High Distinction grades. If the results are ungraded, applicants should provide information on the overall position in the class and/or thesis examiners reports if available.

It is important to provide the grading system showing the range of marks or the minimum mark required for each grade and different levels of Honours. Scaling of marks will be made to account for a) a pass mark other than 50, and b) H1 cut off is other than 80..

5.2 Honours 1 Equivalence

Where applicants do not have an Honours 1 degree, they can be ranked as having an Honours 1 equivalent degree on the basis of an additional qualification under the following criteria:

(a) A completed Master of Philosophy (or equivalent) by thesis.

(b) Overseas qualifications that are considered as equivalent to an Australian Honours 1 degree. The H1E WAM (average mark, weighted according to the relative credit point value of the individual units of study) is obtained by averaging the marks obtained in all second and third year units of study in the relevant degree.

(c) A completed Masters by coursework with a weighted average mark of at least 80 and a research component (requiring the completion of a dissertation, treatise, long essay or major report) of at least 25% of an (equivalent full-time student load (EFSTL)). In this case, the weighted average mark in all units of study, including the dissertation, will be the H1E mark.

(d) A completed Masters by coursework with a weighted average mark of at least 80 and a research treatise of ≥ 25,000 words as a requirement of the course. In this case, the weighted average mark in all units of study, including the treatise, will be the H1E mark.

(e) A completed Masters by coursework with a weighted average mark of at least 80 and a research component verified by the Faculty Research Committee to be academically demanding and a relevant foundation in research training for the proposed PhD project. In this case, the weighted average mark in all units of study, including the treatise, will be the H1E mark.

(f) A completed Masters Preliminary or Graduate Diploma with a research component (as per (c) above) of at least 25% of an EFSTL, requirements and assessment equivalent to Fourth Year Honours at Honours 1 standard (a minimum mark of 80). In this case, the weighted average mark in all units of study, including the treatise, will be the H1E mark.

(g) Graduates who did not have an Honours 1 result but have attained membership or fellowship of prestigious learned professional organisations by advanced study, examination and professional practice may be eligible for H1E. The relevant Faculty will be required to demonstrate an appropriate level of academic rigor. In all such cases, the H1E mark will be 80. In assessing whether membership or fellowship of a learned body confers the H1E status, consideration will be taken of the level of additional skills and training required for membership, the length of training required, and the academic level and pass rate of the entrance examination.
5.3 Research Potential Indicator/Research Experience Points (RPI/REP)

RPI/REP may be recognised on the basis of demonstrated research performance, relevant professional and direct research experience as per the following criteria.

(a) Criteria

i. Relevant academic qualifications in addition to Honours 1. Examples are a completed Masters degree by research (with a research component of at least 2/3 of the course).

ii. Scholarly publications (must contain original work or substantial original analysis, be published or accepted for publication by a reputable publisher) in the relevant field of research within the last five years. Self-publishing, publications by vanity publisher or in publications which lack basic publishing standards will not be accepted.

iii. Academic journals must either be:
   - listed on Thomson Reuters’ Master Journal (ISI) list – [link]
   - listed on the Scopus database ([link]) and then verified as peer-reviewed on Ulrichsweb: [link], i.e. ‘Refereed – Yes’.

iv. Conference publications must be in national and international conferences and not primarily arranged for research students and is listed on SCOPUS or ISI databases. If publication is not listed, applicant must provide a full copy of the paper and/or details of the conference for consideration.

Examples of scholarly publications are:
   - A published research article in a refereed international journal.
   - A published or refereed conference paper.
   - A patent that has been granted by a government agency after an examination process.

Do not include the following as they will not be recognised as RPI/REP:
   - Publications that are not research (e.g. newspaper or magazine articles).
   - Publications or outputs that are more than five years old.
   - Publications that have been submitted or under consideration.
   - Publications that have been considered but require revision before acceptance.
   - The same (or substantially the same) work being published/presented again in a book, journal or conference.
   - Published book/literature review or a published research report/case study
   - Prizes

v. Significant output in the art or music areas in the relevant field of research within the last five years.

Examples are:
   - An exhibition (with published catalogue) with multiple venues of international standard, or a series of performances of international standard, for which reviews in significant outlets are available.
   - An exhibition in a Public Gallery or Museum with published catalogue (excluding regional galleries), or in a Private Gallery of standing in which the artist is asked to exhibit by invitation (subject to documentary evidence).
   - Visual work(s) held in significant National and/or International Collections or commissioned by Government Bodies and/or the Corporate Sector.
   - A significant published musical composition or a significant commercially published CD of a musical performance.
   - Visual documentation of performance, installation and electronic creative works in significant National and/or International Collections.
   - Participation (as presenting author or equivalent) in significant National or International Festivals or professional conventions.
vi. Relevant professional experience at a responsible level or direct research experience since graduation and not in a training situation of at least 1.5 full-time (or part-time equivalent) years.

vii Other
- Participation in moots such as the Jessop International Law moot at an international level.

(b) Details and evidence required

It is the responsibility of the applicants to provide details and evidence of outputs or experience which meet the criteria in the form of an Appendix to their application. Please refer to RPI/REP Information and Appendix Guide.

ONLY the following documents will be considered after the closing date for a given scholarship round

1. Final examination/degree results if admission or ranking has been made on provisional results.
2. New English language certification, noting that strictly speaking these are not considered for ranking but are needed for admission
3. Correspondence from a publisher indicating that a submitted item has been accepted for publication or similar correspondence in support of eligible items.

6 APA Transfer Applicants

Current APA holders from another university who have at least 12 months remaining on their maximum scholarship tenure and wish to transfer their candidature to The University of Sydney must apply for APA at The University of Sydney. Their applications will be assessed with all applications received in the applicable round in accordance with the selection process described above.

7 Application Form

New applicants must lodge a separate application for admission into a postgraduate research degree prior to submitting the APA/UPA application or the Faculty admission closing date, whichever occurs earliest. Check with your Faculty for their admission closing date.

The APA/UPA application round is specific to admission for research periods. Applications for Round One APA/UPA scholarships is for admission to research periods one and two, and will open in September. Applications for Round Two is for admission to research periods three and four, and will open in May.

Information on how to apply for admission into a research degree is available from: http://sydney.edu.au/future-students/domestic/postgraduate/research/apply/.

The APA/UPA application form can be found on our website: http://www.sydney.edu.au/scholarships/research/postgraduate_awards.shtml.

The APA/UPA application form is an interactive PDF. Please type your answers and then print the form for signature. Electronic signature is acceptable. Two identical copies (a total of 2 sets) of the application form and supporting documentation (including the RPI/REP Information and Appendix Guide if applicable) must be submitted to the Scholarships and Financial Support Service by 5pm on the closing date, as specified on the APA/UPA application. Applications cannot be submitted by fax or electronically. Late applications will not be accepted.

The University of Sydney accepts scanned documents, and photocopy of documents in the hard copy of APA/UPA applications. All supporting documents must be true and complete records. You should be prepared to provide original documents or original certified copies of supporting documents upon request at any time. Detailed checking of supporting documents is an inherent element of our admissions and scholarship assessment processes and may involve contacting the original issuing authority or relevant tertiary admissions centre, or other organisation (whether education or otherwise), or individual, whether in Australia or overseas, to verify documents. A failure to provide documents on request, or the discovery of either fraudulent documents or a misrepresentation of true circumstances in association with your application, may lead to the rejection of your application for admission/scholarship, the withdrawal of your offer, or the cancellation of your enrolment.
Documents submitted in a language other than English must be accompanied by a complete English translation. The University only accepts translations to English made by an accredited translator with a government body, the Registrar of the issuing institution.

Questions 1-3: Details will be verified against the Student Identification Number (SID).

Question 4: Applicants must provide their 9-digit Student Identification Number (SID) on the application form, i.e. 305678910. The application will be considered incomplete without one of these numbers written on the form. New applicants must lodge a separate application for admission into a postgraduate research degree by the APA/UPA closing date or the Faculty admission closing date, whichever occurs earliest.

Questions 5: Read and complete these questions carefully. Applicants whose responses to these questions indicate that they are not eligible to apply should not lodge an application. Eligible applicants must provide copies of relevant documentation as indicated by the paperclip (晡) symbol.

Question 6-8: Applicants must provide information about their past, current, and proposed enrolment at the University of Sydney and/or tertiary institution. The tenure of an award will be reduced if a candidate is currently or has been previously enrolled in the postgraduate research degree for which the scholarship is sought.

Applicants must provide details of completed tertiary qualifications and enclose copies of official transcripts including from The University of Sydney (past or currently enrolled students).

Note: The transcripts must provide an explanation of grading (usually found on the reverse side). It is important to provide actual marks rather than grades where these are available (see ‘Calculating the UG WAM and Hons Mark’ in section 5.1 above). For transcripts in languages other than English, translations to English must be included. Current Honours year students, other than candidates from The University of Sydney, should provide copies of their results as soon as these become available. Please note that original documents included with your application will not be returned.

Applicants with overseas qualifications are strongly advised to provide information on their degree/s and how they compare with an Australian Honours 1 degree. Where possible/available, applicants should request their institution to provide information on what percentage of students in a class/year receives a certain overall grade/level of honours and the position of the applicant in the class/year.

Question 9: (if applicable): It is the applicant’s responsibility to check the criteria and follow the instructions given in section 5.3 Research Potential Indicator/Research Experience Points (RPI/REP) above and provide the required information and proof/evidence in the form of an Appendix. You should also refer to the format and examples in the separate RPI/REP Information and Appendix Guide document.

Question 10: Applicants who have previously held an APA, APA (Industry) or an Australian Government-funded postgraduate research scholarship are not eligible to apply unless it was terminated within six months of the scholarship’s payments commencing. Students who are currently on a research scholarship with value above 75% of APA rate for the proposed study will need to relinquish their current scholarship if they are successful in getting an APA/UPA.

Question 11: Applicants must review the checklist and attach all required documents (as applicable) and mark ‘Yes or N/A’ on the checklist as it applies. Please note that applications which are incomplete and/or without supporting documentation in accordance with these instructions will jeopardise the applicants’ chance of being considered for an award and may be grounds for exclusion.

Applicants must read the contents of the form and answer all questions truthfully. If there is any section that the applicant is unsure about, clarification should be sought from the Scholarships and Financial Support Service. There are severe penalties for providing false or misleading information, including exclusion of the application. Finally, print pages 1 to 6 of the Application Form, sign and date on the hard copy for submission.

Academic Referees and their reports are not required at the application submission stage. Applicants will be contacted separately should referee reports be required.
Applications may be *lodged in person* at:

Scholarships and Financial Support Service  
Level 5, Jane Foss Russell Building, G02  
City Road  
The University of Sydney  

between 9am and 5pm, Monday to Friday.

*Mailed applications should be addressed to:*

APA/UPA Applications  
Scholarships and Financial Support Service,  
Level 5, Jane Foss Russell Building, G02  
The University of Sydney NSW 2006

All applications must reach the Scholarships and Financial Support Service by 5pm of the closing date as listed on the APA/UPA application form.  
Late, faxed and e-mailed applications will NOT be accepted.

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8 What you can expect after submitting your application

8.1 Email Acknowledgment

An acknowledgment email will be sent about two weeks after the APA/UPA closing date to all applicants.

8.2 Notification of Results

Outcomes of application will be sent by email following relevant timetable on the checklist page of the application form.

The Scholarships and Financial Support Service would greatly appreciate your patience between the application closing date and notification period. Please do not contact us in regards the outcome during this period as outcome will only be released following the timetable.