



**2025 Westpac Research Fellowship  
Funding Guidelines**

## Contents

1. Introduction to the Westpac Scholars Trust .....	3
2. The Westpac Research Fellowship .....	3
2.1 Overview.....	3
2.2 Fellowship Program .....	4
2.3 Fellowship Funding .....	5
2.4 Participating Universities .....	6
2.5 Funding Priorities .....	6
2.6 Funding Period .....	6
3. Eligibility .....	6
3.1 Eligibility Criteria .....	6
3.2 Eligibility Exemption .....	7
3.3 Letter of Support.....	7
4. Selection Criteria .....	8
5. Selection Process.....	8
6. Key Dates.....	9
7. Application Form.....	10
8. Westpac Professional Development Fund Budget Guidelines.....	10
9. Fellowship Conditions .....	11
10. Reporting Requirements .....	12
10.1 Annual Progress Reports.....	12
10.2 Final Report .....	12

## 1. Introduction to the Westpac Scholars Trust

In celebration of Westpac Group's 200th anniversary, the Westpac Scholars Trust was established with the aim of educating and advancing Australians. The Westpac Scholars Trust believes investing in Australia's future leaders through education and leadership development is the primary way our country will thrive in the next century.

The Trust supports 100 scholars a year, forever, across five scholarship programs: Asian Exchange, Young Technologists, Social Change, Future Leaders and the Research Fellowship.

## 2. The Westpac Research Fellowship

### 2.1 Overview

The Westpac Scholars Trust is partnering with Australia's leading research universities to offer up to two Westpac Research Fellowships each valued at over \$400,000 over three years (co-funded with university partners), with the option to extend to five years by agreement. These Fellowships offer early career researchers a unique opportunity to support their groundbreaking research, provide access to networks, open career pathways and provide global experiences.

Fellowship recipients will be exceptional people, chosen for their intellectual ability, leadership qualities, and commitment to the community. Successful Fellows will be undertaking research that has the ability to make a difference to Australia's future in one of the Trust's priority areas:

<p><b>Sustainable Futures</b> Responding and adapting to climate change is one of the world's most urgent challenges. We want to accelerate innovative solutions to reduce Australia's environmental impact and build a more sustainable future.</p>	<p><b>Australia in Asia</b> The Asia Pacific is a dynamic and complex region deeply intertwined with Australia's future. We want to strengthen people to people connections and foster ideas beyond borders.</p>
<p><b>An Inclusive Country</b> Our nation holds enough space for all Australians to be included. We want to back changemakers building resilient communities and overcoming social injustice.</p>	<p><b>Thriving Tech Sector</b> Technology is intertwined with our future, and today's bold ideas will transform lives tomorrow. We want to back the next generation of innovators creating solutions to benefit all Australians.</p>

Fellows will be invited to join the *Westpac 100 Scholars Network (W100)*, which spans all five scholarship programs. The alumni program offers more than just

membership to a network that will help the Fellows' careers. It's an incredible platform that will enable them to surround themselves with a diverse group of other inspiring leaders.

## 2.2 Fellowship Program

Each Fellowship will be valued at more than \$400,000 over three years (with an option to extend and apportion that amount over five years by agreement). The final value may be more as each Fellow's salary and on-costs will vary according to the host university and at what level the Fellow is employed. The Fellowship includes:

- **Support for your research**  
The Fellowship will fund the Fellow's full-time salary and on-costs for a period of up to three years from the date of award. The three years of salary funding can be apportioned over five years by agreement and must be utilised within five years of the date of award.
- **Westpac Professional Development Fund (WPDF) & Leadership 360 Program**  
The Fellowship will include access to a \$30,000 Westpac Professional Development Fund provided and is administered by the host university. The Westpac Professional Development Fund is to be used by the Fellow to tailor professional development and global experiences that maximise their potential to contribute in their area of research and enhance their career opportunities. This could include conferences, travel for research or experiences and courses that support leadership development.

The Leadership 360 Program is a compulsory part of the WPDF and includes:

- Comprehensive assessment of current leadership capability via a 360-feedback assessment, including a one-to-one debrief; and
- Facilitated group workshop with all current Westpac Research Fellows.

For more information on the funding inclusions, please see section 8. [Westpac Professional Development Fund Budget Guidelines](#).

Access to the Westpac Professional Development Fund does not preclude you from accessing other support (e.g. existing department-based support, applying for a VC travel grant etc.).

- **Westpac 100 Scholars Network – W100**  
Money can help launch a vision, but it takes a network of inspired and inspiring people to sustain it. That's why every Westpac Research Fellow will be part of the *Westpac 100 Scholars Network or W100*. Currently at over 840 scholars and growing by 100 scholars a year across our five scholarship programs, this network connects those with bold ideas to build a better future for all Australians.
- **2025 Westpac Scholars' Summit – 7-8 April**

All 100 Westpac Scholars from our five scholarship programs will come together in Sydney in April 2025 to participate in tailored workshops, hear from business and academic luminaries, and form connections with fellow scholars. It is compulsory to attend the Summit (paid for by the Trust).

## **2.3 Fellowship Funding**

The Westpac Research Fellowship is co-funded by the Westpac Scholars Trust and the host university, as follows:

### **a. Salary Funding**

Funded by Westpac Scholars Trust.

Amount: \$110,000 per year, for three years.

The Westpac Research Fellowship does not fund salaries of Fellows who are receiving another salary funding Award (e.g. DECRA) at the same time. If you are currently on another salary funding Award / Fellowship, or are the recipient of a salary funding Award at the time the Westpac Research Fellowship is awarded, you may request:

- A reallocation of the Westpac-funded amount (\$330,000 or part thereof) to another resource (or resources) that will directly contribute to your research (e.g. research costs and / or a research assistant); and/or
- An extension of up to an additional two years to utilise the Westpac Research Fellowship salary funding (which for the avoidance of doubt is capped at \$330,000). For example, (i) the Westpac-funded amount could be apportioned over five years, (ii) the Westpac-funded amount could be utilised over years three to five following two years of a DECRA Award; or (iii) the Westpac-funded amount could be utilised over years four and five following three years of a DECRA Award with the remaining \$110,000 reallocated to another resource that will directly contribute to your research.

These requests must be approved by the Westpac Scholars Trust and your host university and will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Please refer to Section 9. Fellowship Conditions for other options for the Fellowship.

### **b. Salary Top-Up**

Funded by host university.

Salary top-up is provided by the university to top up the \$110,000 provided by the Trust each year to fund the Fellow's salary. The salary top-up is over three years and subject to changes in the university award rate over the period.

### **c. Westpac Professional Development Fund**

Funded by host university.

Amount: \$30,000 over the length of the Fellowship.

#### **d. Research Budget**

Funded by host university.

Amount: as agreed by the host university.

A fully costed budget for the research project is required in the application. This budget should be prepared with the support of the university.

The Research Budget must exclude those costs funded by the Fellowship (i.e. salary, on costs and Westpac Professional Development Fund).

Note, the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research) or equivalent will be required to confirm support for the proposed Research Budget in their **Letter of Support**.

#### **2.4 Participating Universities**

The Westpac Research Fellowship is offered at the following host universities:

- The Australian National University
- The University of Melbourne
- The University of Queensland
- The University of Sydney

#### **2.5 Funding Priorities**

Successful applicants will need to be able to demonstrate how their proposed research will contribute to the future growth and prosperity of Australia in at least one of the following priority areas:

- An Inclusive Country
- Australia in Asia
- Sustainable Futures
- Thriving Tech Sector

Funding requests for the purpose of **medical and health research** as defined in the ARC Medical Research Policy available on the [Australian Research Council](#) website will not be considered.

#### **2.6 Funding Period**

Funding is available to commence by 30 June 2025 for a maximum of five years (subject to agreement per sections 2.2 and 2.3(a)).

### **3. Eligibility**

#### **3.1 Eligibility Criteria**

- a. You must be an Australian citizen or permanent resident.

- b. You must have been awarded a PhD between 2018 and 2021 or have obtained an Eligibility Exemption from the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research) or equivalent (refer to section 3.2).
- c. You must commence your Fellowship by 30 June 2025.
- d. Your proposed research must contribute to the future of Australia in one of the Trust's priority funding areas, refer section 2.5, and be able to demonstrate impact and world-class research excellence.
- e. Your proposed research must include international opportunities which will develop your leadership skills and global networks, such as: study tours for the purpose of research, attending a short course or conference, an internship or volunteering.
- f. You must supply the supporting documentation as detailed in section 7 below.
- g. Should your application progress to the final stage, you must attend the **National Assessment Centre** in person in Sydney on **4-5 December 2024** (paid for by the Trust); and
- h. If successful, you must attend the **Westpac Scholars' Summit 7-8 April 2025** in Sydney (paid for by the Trust).

### 3.2 Eligibility Exemption

If your PhD was awarded before 2018, you may be considered for an exemption to the eligibility criteria detailed in section 3.1b if you have received an Eligibility Exemption from the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research) or equivalent.

An Eligibility Exemption will be provided up to a maximum of four years for the following career interruptions:

- Carer's responsibility.
- Illness.
- Maternity or parental leave; and/or
- Non-research employment not concurrent with research employment.

Confirmation of your Eligibility Exemption must be included in the Letter of Support accompanying your application.

### 3.3 Letter of Support

Each applicant must obtain and include in their online application a Letter of Support from the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research) or equivalent that the proposed research meets the Fellowship eligibility criteria. The template is available on the [Westpac Scholars Trust](#) website.

If your PhD was awarded before 2018, the Letter of Support must include a confirmation of your Eligibility Exemption by the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research) or equivalent.

The Letter of Support must also include confirmation from the host university of support for the proposed Research Budget.

#### **4. Selection Criteria**

Successful candidates will be able to demonstrate the following:

- Academic excellence and demonstrated impact to date.
- Ability to articulate how their proposed research has the potential to contribute to the future growth and prosperity of Australia in one of the Trust's priority funding areas.
- A supportive and high-quality research environment.
- Demonstrated leadership and alignment with the attributes of a Westpac Research Fellow (see Appendix A).
- A desire to be part of and contribute to the Westpac 100 Scholars Network; and
- A strong sense of connection to Australia and commitment to improving the lives of others.

#### **5. Selection Process**

The selection process is a comprehensive approach that draws on a range of online assessment tools and the expertise of selection panels within the Westpac Scholars Trust, participating universities, and a National Selection Panel. This may be subject to changes.

##### **Stage 1: Eligibility assessment**

Westpac Scholars Trust to assess all applications for eligibility.

##### **Stage 2: Online assessment (TBC)**

All eligible applicants will be invited to participate in an online assessment tool. The results, along with the applications and CVs, will be provided to each relevant university to assist in their assessment.

##### **Stage 3: Shortlisting – host university shortlisting**

Each university's selection panel will assess applicants for their university. The universities may interview applicants at this stage. Each university will select two finalists.

##### **Stage 4: National Assessment Centre – 4-5 December**

Finalists will be invited to attend the National Assessment Centre in Sydney to be interviewed by a National Selection Panel. The National Selection Panel will comprise 10 senior industry, academic and research representatives who will select up to two 2025 Westpac Research Fellows.



The Westpac Scholars Trust will notify all finalists of the National Selection Panel outcome by mid-December 2024.

## 6. Key Dates

4 July	Applications open
16 July	Information webinar
28 August	Applications close 5:00pm AEST
29 August – 12 September	Westpac Scholars Trust eligibility checks
15 September – 10 October	University shortlisting
14 October	Shortlisted applicants invited to attend the National Assessment Centre. Unsuccessful applicants notified of outcome
4-5 December	National Assessment Centre, Sydney. All shortlisted applicants will be required to attend an interview in Sydney. The Westpac Scholars Trust will nominate which date candidates will attend and advise of date allocated when finalists are selected. Travel and accommodation costs will be covered by the Westpac Scholars Trust
Mid-December	Notification of Fellowship recipients
7-8 April 2025	Westpac Scholars' Summit in Sydney
30 June 2025	Latest commencement date for Fellowship

## 7. Application Form

All applications must be submitted through Westpac Scholars Trust's online application system. Click [here](#) to apply.

The following documents are the only supporting documents that will be considered with your application. Please do not include any additional documentation:

- your **Curriculum Vitae**, including at a minimum:
  - a) Formal qualifications and any prizes, awards, honours and other esteem indicators.
  - b) Appointments, including consultancies.
  - c) Research/creative activity outputs, including bibliographic details, year of publication, individual contribution by percentage, and evidence of impact; and
  - d) Research/creative activity funding, including title of grant, funding body, grant category, individual contribution and role in the grant, year, total grant value, any patents and evidence of impact.
- **Letter of Support** from the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research) in the form of the template provided on the [Westpac Scholars Trust website](#) (will be live once applications launch 4 July 2024).
- **Two references**, from different referees, using the reference templates located on the [Westpac Scholars Trust website](#):
  - a) The first is an **Academic Reference** and needs to be completed by a person who is familiar with your academic record and understands the importance of your research; and
  - b) The second is a **Personal Reference** and needs to be completed by a person who can demonstrate that you have the attributes of a Westpac Research Fellow and has known you for at least two years. This can be a previous work colleague or supervisor, however, should not be a family member or a person who currently reports directly to you (or previously reported directly to you).

Any additional documentation will not be considered.

You may be required to present proof of citizenship or permanent residency at any time during the selection process.

## 8. Westpac Professional Development Fund Budget Guidelines

You are required to prepare a draft Westpac Professional Development Fund budget as part of your application. The Westpac Professional Development Fund provides \$30,000 over three years to support global experiences and professional development. If your application is successful, the host university will work with you to finalise your Westpac Professional Development Fund.

The Westpac Professional Development Fund specifically excludes the following:

- Bench fees or the costs of scientific equipment or similar academic resources. The Trust expects such core costs to be covered by the host university; and
- Costs not directly related to studies (e.g. professional association fees, fees for patent applications, costs of dependents, mobile phones etc.).

The Westpac Professional Development Fund may include the following components (excluding GST):

Item	Description	Guidance
Leadership 360 Program	This is a mandatory component of the Fellowship. Include \$5,000 in the budget.	\$5,000, one off cost.
Professional Development	This is a mandatory component of the Fellowship.	
Conference & Short Course Fees	Fees related to attending and/or presenting at conferences and short courses that support your proposed field of study or research.	Convert to AUD at rate prevailing at date of application.
Travel	Travel costs reasonably associated with your proposed research and international experience e.g. airfares, travel, accommodation, visa costs, insurance, etc.	

## 9. Fellowship Conditions

When applying for the 2025 Westpac Research Fellowship the following should be considered:

- The recipient must commence no later than 30 June 2025.
- Funding will typically be paid over the three-year Fellowship with options to extend to five years on approval: (i) subject to the Fellow submitting an Annual Progress Report; (ii) subject to the Fellow continuing to undertake the research as agreed with the host university and the Trust; and (iii) in line with the agreed final Research Budget administered by the host university.
- Options can be explored to pursue the Fellowship on a part-time basis (up to 0.5FTE), subject to approval by both the university partner and Westpac Scholars Trust to accommodate carer/parental responsibilities and/or health-related factors.

- The completion date of the Fellowship may be extended by the length of any parental leave approved by the host university.
- The Fellowship aims to provide a research-intensive focus for the applicant.
- If undertaking the Fellowship on a full-time basis, Fellows may allocate up to 0.2FTE for 'other duties/responsibilities' which serve the purpose of supporting the Westpac Research Fellow advance their professional development, academic experience and enhance community engagement. This may include teaching, leadership roles and/or administrative responsibilities.

## **10. Reporting Requirements**

### **10.1 Annual Progress Reports**

Fellows are required to submit an Annual Progress Report.

Progress reports (in a form to be agreed between the Trust and host university) must be submitted to the Trust one month prior to the annual anniversary of the Fellow's commencement date.

### **10.2 Final Report**

Fellows must submit a Final Report to the Trust within three months of completing their Fellowship.

## Appendix A - Westpac Research Fellow Attributes

We are looking for Westpac Research Fellows who possess the following attributes. This is a comprehensive list, and successful candidates may not have all of these. Applicants will be assessed on the demonstration of these attributes throughout the selection process.

Attribute	Definition
<b>Collaborative Team Builder</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Works collegially with others, is inclusive, and builds effective teams and partnerships.</li> <li>• Shares knowledge to bring academia and broader society together.</li> <li>• Seeks to mentor and share skills and information with others.</li> <li>• Identifies opportunities to work with others and leverages different skills for common goals.</li> </ul>
<b>Comfortable with Complexity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can identify issues quickly and has the ability to draw linkages to root causes and introduce new ways of looking at problems.</li> <li>• In determining the way forward, thinks laterally and considers different perspectives in developing the approach and the solution and tolerates a degree of risk.</li> </ul>
<b>Connected Communicator</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Patient, attentive listener who seeks to understand and relate to others.</li> <li>• Can clearly communicate their ideas to diverse groups of people.</li> <li>• Adapts own style to better connect with others.</li> <li>• Can translate complex ideas into simple concepts.</li> <li>• Influences others through robust storytelling.</li> </ul>
<b>Driven to Succeed</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sets high standards, strives for excellence, pushes for positive results.</li> <li>• Inspired to seek out challenges, identify gaps and seize opportunities to progress thinking and change.</li> <li>• Can make things happen and achieves results in a manner that doesn't have negative impacts on their team or stakeholders.</li> </ul>
<b>Emotionally Intelligent</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understands their own strengths and weaknesses.</li> <li>• Is aware of their impact on others and ensure their behaviour creates a positive culture and environment.</li> <li>• Insightful and reflective.</li> <li>• Willing to take on feedback and suggestions from others, including advice on development and growth.</li> </ul>
<b>Exercises Good Judgment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has ability to determine and focus on what is most important and impactful.</li> <li>• Analytical, thorough, and detailed.</li> <li>• Takes in information from all perspectives before drawing conclusions.</li> <li>• Thinks outside of own discipline, maintains a vision of the big picture.</li> </ul>
<b>Enables Diversity &amp; Openness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fundamentally believes in the strategic advantage of diversity and enables a culture of open expression of diverse ideas and opinions.</li> <li>• Interested in and respectful of people with different backgrounds and ideas to their own.</li> <li>• Has empathy and concern for the wellbeing and welfare of others and fosters such culture.</li> </ul>
<b>Innovative Thought Leader</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adopts an entrepreneurial approach to own field of study.</li> <li>• Future focused, has clarity of purpose to work towards long term goals.</li> <li>• Shows vision and imagination and enables creative thinking in others.</li> <li>• Leads debates and inspires intrigue.</li> <li>• Uses knowledge, insights to shape long term advancement in their field.</li> </ul>
<b>Resilient</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When faced with obstacles and setbacks, perseveres, remains optimistic, committed, and focused.</li> <li>• Courageous and confident to take on challenges.</li> <li>• Willing to go outside of their comfort zone, they remain calm and lead with clarity and empathy.</li> </ul>