



**RWAV**

RURAL WORKFORCE  
AGENCY VICTORIA

# Health Workforce Scholarship Program Grant Guidelines



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# 1. Grant Overview

The Rural Workforce Agency Victoria (RWAV) is a not-for-profit government-funded organisation focused on improving healthcare for rural, regional and Aboriginal communities in Victoria.

The Health Workforce Scholarship Program (HSWP) is part of the Australian Government Department of Health's Health Workforce Program Guidelines.

The HSWP is funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care and is administered in Victoria by RWAV.

The purpose of the HSWP is to improve access to the services needed in rural and remote areas (defined as locations categorised as Modified Monash Model (MMM 3–7)) by supporting an increase in clinical skills, capacity and/or scope of practice of privately employed health professionals in the fields of medicine, nursing and allied health.

HSWP funding is directly related to clinical training and upskilling within the field of the applicant's undergraduate qualification and is assessed on the relevance, value for money and the likelihood to meet identified primary healthcare needs of the community.

## 2. Eligibility

**To be eligible for the HWSP you will need to meet all of the following criteria:**

- a. Work as a health professional in a role on the list of eligible health professions.
- b. Provide (or can demonstrate that they will commence within the next three months) a minimum of 8 hours of face to face clinical care per week, in Victoria:
  - in the private or non-government primary health sector in a MMM 3-7 location; or
  - in an Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation in a MMM 1-7 location
- c. Propose to undertake clinical study or upskilling activities that will meet identified health needs in your community.
- d. Propose to continue to provide a minimum of 8 hours of face to face clinical care per week, in Victoria, after completing your course (as there may be a requirement to complete a return of service agreement of 12 months after the course is completed).
  - in the private or non-government primary health sector in a MMM 3-7 location; or
  - in an Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation in a MMM 1-7 location.
- e. Provide evidence that your employer is a private or non-government organisation (business ABN).
- f. For those eligible professions who are not registered with AHPRA, the applicant must be a member of their relevant professional peak body

The following health professionals are **not** eligible to apply:

- Health professionals employed solely by any Government entity (Local, State or Federal)
- Employees who solely provide Government funded services (e.g. NDIS, HACC, TAC, VOCAT, etc.). *Note that employees who provide at least 8 hours per week of face to face clinical care, which is NOT provided through government funding, may be eligible.*
- Employees of hospices, unless the employee provides at least 8 hours per week of home-based care
- Employees with a primary role of leadership, teaching, or supervision are not eligible as this is not considered as providing primary healthcare, unless you are also providing at least 8 hours per week of face to face clinical care
- Employees in aged care facilities are not eligible as this is not considered as providing primary healthcare
- Employees who solely provide telehealth

## LIST OF ELIGIBLE PROFESSIONS

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practitioner
- Aboriginal Health Worker
- Audiologist
- Chinese Medicine Practitioner
- Chiropractor
- Counsellor\*
- Dental Assistant
- Dental Hygienist
- Dental Practitioner
- Dental Prosthetist
- Dental Therapist
- Oral Health Therapist
- Diabetes Educator
- Dietitian
- Exercise Physiologist
- Medical Practitioner
- Medical Radiation Practitioner
- Midwife
- Nurse
- Nurse Practitioner
- Nutritionist
- Occupational Therapist
- Optometrist
- Orthoptist
- Orthotist/Prosthetist
- Osteopath
- Paramedic
- Pharmacist
- Physiotherapist
- Podiatrist
- Psychologist
- Social Worker
- Sonographer
- Speech Pathologist

*\*Counsellors must hold an AQF level 7 qualification or higher in Counselling, and must be registered with a relevant counselling professional association, such as ACA or PACFA.*

### 3. Eligible Activities

All courses must meet the learning and community needs identified in the current RWAV annual Health Workforce Needs Assessment.

Courses and activities do not need to be accredited, but will be assessed by the relevance, value for money and the likelihood to meet identified primary healthcare needs of the community.

The activity must relate to clinical study or upskilling the applicant and be directly related to the current role and undergraduate qualification which makes you eligible for this grant. For example, if you work in both private primary practice and a public hospital, the activity must directly relate to your role in private primary practice. If the activity relates primarily to your hospital role then it would not be eligible.

Limited funding is available to support the development of health professionals in clinical leadership, including training to become a supervisor or mentor. These applications will be assessed taking into account the clinical nature of the course as well as the expected benefit to the community.

**All activities must be completed by 30 June 2027.**

**Bursaries** can be used for courses such as:

- Short courses, workshops, conferences and seminars
- Vocational education and training courses (e.g. Australian Skills Quality Authorisation (ASQA) recognised training packages)
- Training that meets the professional development requirements of the applicant's professional registration and/or association (including General Practitioner Fellowship exam preparation courses)
- Recognised industry skills training and upskilling for individual health professionals
- Provisional Psychology supervision costs (must be completing either 4+2 or 5+1 internship program)

**Scholarships** can be used for post-graduate tertiary qualifications (undertaken at a tertiary institution) such as:

- Graduate Certificate
- Graduate Diploma
- Master Degree
- PhD

## 4. Expenses Not Covered by the HWSP

The following expenses will not be covered by a bursary or scholarship:

- Activities and related costs occurring before your application is submitted
- Any expenses related to an overseas face-to-face activity
- Resources such as text books, equipment (IT, clinical or diagnostic), software, memberships, subscriptions, exam fees, or similar
- Placement related costs (e.g. meals, accommodation, travel, wages lost, or similar)
- Any expenses related to attending or sitting an exam
- Travel between your booked accommodation and the activity venue
- Incidental expenses (e.g. local transport, meals, etc.)
- Applicants whose place of residence is in metropolitan Melbourne are not eligible to claim travelling expenses within the metropolitan Melbourne area
- Taxi/Uber etc. fares, transfers, parking fees, tolls, car rental fees or similar
- Credit card, administration, processing, booking, cleaning fees, etc.
- Any activity where a course completion certificate or proof of attendance is not issued
- General supervision, mentoring, membership, accreditation fees, or similar costs to maintain your professional registration
- Study funded by other sources
- Activities for which other Commonwealth, State, or Local Government bodies have primary responsibility. This includes training for health professionals working solely in a public hospital or government funded entity
- Training unrelated to the applicant's primary undergraduate qualification (e.g. management, personal self-improvement, marketing courses, re-training in a new career)
- Any costs associated with an activity which is cancelled by the service provider are not eligible
- If an activity is deferred and you cannot attend on the new date/s, no costs associated with this activity are eligible
- Any other expenses that are deemed unreasonable by RWAV.

## 5. Funding Available

The Health Workforce Scholarship Program will provide either:

### **Bursary**

A payment up to \$10,000 per financial year to support the cost of clinical upskilling, training or course fees, and related expenses such as accommodation and travel where appropriate.

### **Scholarship**

A payment up to \$10,000 per financial year for up to two years to support full or part-time post-graduate clinical studies within Australia, up to a maximum of \$20,000 in total.

Applicants can make more than one bursary and/or scholarship application up to the total value of \$10,000 per person per financial year.

Individual applications must be for a minimum total of \$200.

Funding is designed to support and subsidise successful applicants to undertake professional development, and as such, may not always provide full cost recovery.

### 5.1 Payment

Funding through the HWSP is via reimbursement. Grantees (successful applicants) are required to pay for the activities and associated costs, and then submit paid receipts to RWAV for reimbursement.

Note that you do not have to pay for the activity prior to applying for a grant.

[Refer to section 6.1.2](#)

#### **Bursary**

HWSP bursaries are payments that support the cost of clinical upskilling and training related expenses where appropriate.

Courses which are undertaken or paid for as “bundles” will be reimbursed one component at a time, on provision of a certificate of completion for each component.

Reimbursement for accommodation and airfares will be payable according to the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) rates considered reasonable for domestic travel allowance expenses.

Reimbursement for car travel will be payable according to the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) rates for the current financial year, and calculated based on a return trip from the applicant’s place of residence to the training location.

The maximum claim for reimbursement for car travel is capped at \$500 per application.

#### **Scholarship**

HWSP Scholarships are payments awarded as a contribution towards the annual cost of a post-graduate tertiary course.



<b>Postgraduate Qualification</b>	<b>Maximum Amount</b> <i>(per financial year, for up to two years from the commencement of study)</i>
Graduate Certificate	<b>\$5,000</b>
Graduate Diploma	<b>\$8,000</b>
Master Degree	<b>\$10,000</b>
PhD	<b>\$10,000</b>

Scholarship funds only cover study fees and do not cover administration fees, facility fees, or any other associated costs relevant to undertaking the study.

Applications for post-graduate courses must be submitted one semester at a time, prior to the commencement of the semester.

Course costs which have been deferred to FEE-HELP or HECS-HELP are not eligible for reimbursement through HWSP.

## 6. Application Process

Applications may only be made within 3 months of the start date of the activity.

All applications must be made through the [MyRWAV portal](#) accessed on the RWAV website.

Applications must be submitted by 11.59 pm on the day BEFORE the activity commences.

For self-paced online activities where access starts as soon as you pay (for example, GP exam preparation courses) applications must be submitted by 11.59 pm on the day BEFORE making payment for the activity.

You may only apply for one activity or course per application. Applications with more than one activity or course on the same application form will be declined.

You may be asked to provide more information to support your application. Submitting your application does not guarantee you will be successful.

### **Applications will be assessed based on:**

- a. The location of your employment (MMM 3-7 or MMM 1-7 if working in an Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation)
- b. Applicant eligibility criteria
- c. Professional development activity
  - Planned increase in skill capacity and/or scope of clinical practice; and

- Meeting one or more identified primary health workforce needs; and
- Demonstration of primary health service provision to rural and remote community.

## **6.1 Information Required in Application**

### **6.1.1 Proof of Employment in a letter that meets the following criteria:**

*Note that an offer of employment, employment contract, pay slip, etc. are not acceptable.*

#### **If you are an employee**

1. Is on your employer's letterhead and from your immediate manager
2. Is dated and signed by the employer or business manager, within the last three months
3. States your name as the applicant, including evidence of a name change if the receipt is not in your professional registration name
4. States your position title
5. States the number of hours of face to face clinical care provided by you each week
6. States the location of primary health services provided
7. States the start date of employment in your present position

#### **If you are self-employed or a sole trader**

1. Is on your business letterhead if you have one. At the very least you must include your ABN and detail the services provided
2. Is dated and signed by you within the last three months
3. States your name as the applicant, including evidence of a name change if the receipt is not in your professional registration name
4. States your position title
5. States the number of hours of face to face clinical care provided by you each week
6. States the location of primary health services provided
7. States the start date of employment in your present position

### **6.1.2 Anticipated costs**

As part of your application you will need to provide evidence of the anticipated costs of course fees (invoice or screenshot, noting that the activity does not need to be paid for at the application stage), and travel and accommodation (if required).

If you are relying on funding to attend the activity, you should note that you do not need to have paid for the activity and related travel and accommodation at the time of application. You must however provide evidence of the anticipated costs as an unpaid invoice, screen shot showing the course name and cost, or similar.

### **6.1.3 Bursary**

Once your grant has been approved, in order to receive reimbursement, you will need to provide a tax receipt paid in full (note that on-line cart receipts are not acceptable) with the following:

- Details of course/conference including dates and location;
- Name of attendee;
- GST;
- ABN of course/conference provider.

Reimbursement for accommodation and travel will be assessed against ATO reasonable travel allowance standards.

### **6.1.4 Scholarship**

Once your grant has been approved, in order to receive reimbursement, you will need to provide a receipt of your university fees on university documentation for the post-graduate course specified in your application.

This document must include all of the following:

- your name;
- the name of the course;
- the year of study;
- a list of the subjects in which you are enrolled.

Generic information about course subjects cannot be accepted for payment;

A letter of offer is not acceptable.

If enrolment confirmation is unavailable at the time of application, or you are waiting to receive notification of your scholarship application outcome prior to enrolling, you can upload details of the course you intend to enroll in and provide us with your enrolment confirmation when you receive it.

### **6.1.5 An explanatory statement addressing the following questions:**

- What is the health need that has been identified in your community?
- How will the local community benefit from your upskilling or training?

## 7. Notification of Applications

RWAV will notify you of the outcome of your application via email. Please note applications may take up to six (6) weeks to be assessed, approved and processed.

If your application is successful, we will email you a Grant Letter of Agreement for you to sign and return within 28 days. If RWAV does not receive your accepted Grant Letter of Agreement by the nominated date, the offer of funding will be withdrawn.

The Grant Letter of Agreement details:

- The funded course/activity
- The amount of funding available
- Your requirements as a Grantee
- The debt recovery process in the event that you do not fulfill your obligations set out in the agreement
- The Return of Service Obligation (if applicable – [refer to section 7.1 below](#))
- Information on the payment process, including documentation required for evidence before we can reimburse you.

A Certificate of Completion/Attendance and all claims for reimbursement and related documentation must be received by RWAV within 28 days of completion of the course. All grantees must also complete an evaluation survey within 28 days of completing the funded activity. If these documents are not provided or the evaluation is not completed by the nominated date, RWAV may seek to reimburse any funds paid to the applicant.

Failure to return the required documentation or complete the evaluation may impact on future grant approvals.

If your application is unsuccessful, RWAV will provide an explanation as to why your application has been declined. If you wish to appeal the outcome you must do so within 28 days. [Refer to section 11 below.](#)

### 7.1 Return of Service Obligations

A Return of Service Obligation (RoSO) is required for applications receiving a scholarship/bursary equal to the value of \$5,000 or more, or for course/study (including online) longer than 6 months. In this case, the applicant must continue providing at least 8 hours per week of face to face clinical care in a MMM 3-7 location, or an Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation in MMM 1-7 location, for 12 months after completion of their course.

The RoSO will be clearly stated in your Grant Letter of Agreement with RWAV.

## 7.2 Case management

Successful applicants who have a RoSO will be case managed by RWAV throughout their scholarship/bursary activity.

Details of the case management to be provided will be stated in your Grant Letter of Agreement with RWAV.

## 8. Changes to Grant Activities

Written approval from RWAV is required to change the activity outlined in your Grant Letter of Agreement. This includes a change in the start date or end date of the activity. RWAV will review any new activity against the identified health/workforce need, your original application and the reason for the change.

Changes to a proposed activity are at the discretion of RWAV and usually only permitted where the training provider cancels the training, or under exceptional circumstances. RWAV reserves the right to cancel the Grant Letter of Agreement if the original activity cannot be completed.

## 9. Termination of Grant Letter of Agreement

RWAV may terminate a Grant Letter of Agreement if it reasonably believes the Grantee:

- Has transferred to a different activity without consent from RWAV
- Has breached the Grant Letter of Agreement
- Provided false or misleading information in their application
- Has failed to complete the activity
- Has failed to complete the RoSO (if applicable)
- No longer meets the employment criteria for grant eligibility

## 10. Debt Recovery

Where a Grantee does not fulfil their requirements as detailed in the Grant Letter of Agreement, RWAV may seek to recover the relevant monies.

Each Grantee will be asked to sign a Grant Letter of Agreement, confirming that they have understood the terms and conditions of the agreement, including the process for debt recovery should the Grantee be unable to meet their obligations.

The debt recovery process will be outlined in your Grant Letter of Agreement.

## 11. Complaints and Appeals

Unsuccessful applicants who wish to appeal the outcome of their application should send an email outlining their reasons for appeal to [HWSP@rwav.com.au](mailto:HWSP@rwav.com.au). The case will be considered by the Manager - Strategy and Partnerships.

The RWAV CEO is the final arbiter for any appeal on the HWSP.

All formal complaints or appeals must be lodged within 28 days of notification of the grant application outcome. Requests received after this time will not be considered.

## 12. More Information

Any questions relating to the HWSP in Victoria should be directed to the Grants Officer at [HWSP@rwav.com.au](mailto:HWSP@rwav.com.au) or via phone on 03 9349 7800



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