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## POLICY FOR AB-CRC POSTGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIPS

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### **A. Administration of scholarship funding**

Universities which are core or supporting participants in the AB-CRC will administer AB-CRC scholarships through the procedures of the university, consistent with the terms of the Centre Agreement. Universities which are not core or supporting participants will be required to enter into a Project Agreement with the AB-CRC, to ensure administration of AB-CRC scholarships is consistent with the terms of the Centre Agreement.

### **B. Scholarship Subcommittee**

A Scholarship Subcommittee of the EUC Standing Committee will be established to manage AB-CRC postgraduate scholarships:

- To assess applications for AB-CRC postgraduate scholarships and make recommendations to the EUC Standing Committee.
- To ensure a balance of scholarships across the research subprograms.
- To review issues relating to each student's enrolment.
- To manage the funds for operating expenses and professional development.
- To monitor student progress for scholarship continuation.
- To review the Conditions of Award annually.
- To manage the student placement program.

### **Scholarship Subcommittee membership**

Research providers who are core or supporting participants in the AB-CRC may nominate a representative to the Scholarship Subcommittee<sup>1</sup> (AAHL, UQ, USyd, Curtin).

The membership of the Scholarship Subcommittee will also include:

- The E&T Program Coordinator
- One EUC Standing Committee member
- The E&T Senior Project Officer (secretary)
- Additional expertise may be coopted by the Subcommittee as required.

The committee shall appoint a Chair from within its members.

### **C. Harmonisation with partner university postgraduate student policies**

The AB-CRC will ensure that the candidates selected will be accepted into the degree programs specified. The universities will ensure that the candidates selected are eligible to receive an Australian Postgraduate Award without stipend (previously HECS exemption scholarship) in accordance with the policies of the university.

### **D. Conditions of Award**

To receive a postgraduate scholarship from the AB-CRC, students will sign-off on the Conditions of Award included as part of the scholarship application form. This document will be signed by both the student and the supervisor and will outline both the AB-CRC's rights and obligations, and the student's rights and obligations.

### **E. Eligibility**

- A recipient must be enrolled as a candidate for a PhD or Masters by research degree.
- It is desirable, but not essential, for candidates to be enrolled full-time. Candidates wishing to enrol part-time must seek special approval by the Scholarship Subcommittee.

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<sup>1</sup> Note: this person does not need to be the same individual who sits on the EUC Standing Committee.

## **F. Stipend and relocation allowances**

There will be two types of scholarship offered by the AB-CRC, a full scholarship, and a supplementary or “top up” scholarship. The full scholarship for a PhD shall carry an annual stipend valued at \$25,000. The full scholarship for a Masters will be 90% of that for a PhD scholarship. A “top up” scholarship shall provide funds to supplement a scholarship of lower value, thus bringing its stipend up to that of the equivalent AB-CRC scholarship. Students will be encouraged to apply for other scholarships, since this will increase their chances of being awarded a scholarship by the AB-CRC. The Scholarship Subcommittee may consider other types of scholarship on a case-by-case basis.

- A student required to move to a CRC site from another location to take up the award may, in special circumstances, and where funds are available, be eligible for reimbursement of travel and removal expenses up to a maximum of \$1,500.

## **G. Operating and professional development allowances**

### **Project-based scholarships**

*Operating allowance.* For postgraduate scholarships awarded to students within AB-CRC Projects, the operating allowance is provided for within the Project budget. Within Project Agreements the budgets may, or may not, reflect a separate operating allowance for the student. If students find they have inadequate support they may appeal to the Scholarship Subcommittee.

*Professional development allowance.* Provision for \$2,000 p.a. is made for professional development on submission of a professional development plan covering the term of the scholarship and an annual budget (as described under “Independent scholarships”).

### **Independent scholarships**

*Operating allowance.* For students undertaking research outside an approved AB-CRC Project, an operating allowance of \$5,000 - \$15,000 p.a. is available depending on the scope and logistics of the project. The student must submit an itemised budget for approval prior to the funds being released. Operating funds over \$10,000 will be considered on submission of a budget justification. Operating allowance can be used for research consumables, project-related travel, equipment and inter-library loans, but not items that should be provided as basic infrastructure by the host institution, including computers. Requests for computers will be considered by the Executive Committee on a case-by-case basis when purchase of a computer with particular specifications is essential for the project and is unable to be funded by the university. Additional operating funds will be considered on submission of a budget justification. The operating allowance can include thesis preparation costs.

*Professional development allowance.* To obtain the professional development allowance of up to \$2,000 p.a. students must submit a professional development plan covering the term of the scholarship and an annual budget prior to the funds being released. The professional development allowance is used to fund attendance at the compulsory annual workshop (travel and accommodation costs only, the AB-CRC will fund the day components), conference travel and fee-paying short courses. In exceptional circumstances, additional professional development funds will be considered on submission of a budget justification, but the total over a Masters and PhD program must not exceed \$4,000 and \$6,000 respectively. Unused operating allowance and professional development allowance may be carried over to the following year, but on cessation of the student’s AB-CRC scholarship, any unused funds will be returned to the Education and Training budget. An AB-CRC postgraduate scholarship holder who has submitted their thesis for examination and who has already attended two (Masters student) or three (PhD student) annual workshops may apply to the Scholarship Subcommittee for travel and accommodation support to assist them to attend a further annual workshop within nine months of their thesis submission date, at which they will present the outcomes of their research project. Travel and accommodation costs associated with an opportunity to undertake a student placement (national or international) can be applied for separately, and will be considered by the Scholarship Subcommittee on a competitive basis.

## **H. Duration of scholarships**

The duration of the full-time PhD scholarship will be for up to 3 years and for full-time Masters will be for up to 2 years, including professional development and student placements. An extension of up to six months may be granted to a PhD student, and of up to three months to a Masters student, where a written application for an extension is made to the AB-CRC Scholarship Subcommittee. The student is to satisfy the AB-CRC that the grounds for an extension are beyond his/her control and are related to the studies rather than of a personal nature. In exceptional circumstances an additional scholarship extension will be allowed beyond the six-month and three-month extensions for PhD and Masters scholarships respectively, on a case-by-case basis.

## **I. Awarding of Scholarships**

Scholarships will be awarded to postgraduate students based on academic merit to undertake research at a Masters and PhD level that has relevance to the activities of the AB-CRC. The AB-CRC will offer two streams for undertaking postgraduate research.

1. **Project-based scholarships.** Applicants are encouraged to choose or accept a research topic which will contribute directly to efforts within the Project, and to work as part of the Project team. Applicants will be responsible for contacting Project leaders to discuss research opportunities. Prospective students whose application is endorsed by the Project leader will complete an application form which will be reviewed by the Scholarship Subcommittee for approval. Project-based scholarships will be advertised if necessary. Project-based scholarships may commence, following Board approval, up to three months prior to the Project Agreement being signed. This is subject to the Scholarship subcommittee approving the application and assignment of Scholarship IP to the appropriate AB-CRC partner.
2. **Independent scholarships.** The AB-CRC will also offer scholarships to pursue any research that has relevance to the activities of the AB-CRC, where one supervisor is located within an AB-CRC partner university (Curtin University, UQ, USyd). Research that involves more than one CRC partner organisation will be encouraged. Students will be encouraged to have a co-supervisor based in an end-user organisation. In exceptional circumstances the Scholarship Subcommittee will consider an academic supervisor from a non-partner university if this offers advantages due to geographic proximity, or if this person offers the most appropriate skills and expertise for the research being carried out within an AB-CRC end-user organisation.
3. Scholarships will be advertised on a yearly basis, in early September. Students will be required to consult with AB-CRC research providers and end-users to develop project proposals, as the project proposal and supervisor endorsement will form part of the application. Applications (including 2 referee reports) will be due at the end of October. The Scholarship Subcommittee will finalise the awarding of AB-CRC scholarships in December once the results of the APAs have been made available. This will enable the allocation of full and top up scholarships.

## **J. Intellectual property**

### **Project-based scholarships**

Where the student's research forms part of an approved AB-CRC project, the Project Agreement outlines arrangements for ownership and management of the IP. As contemplated by clause 34 of the Centre Agreement [Scholarship Intellectual Property] students will enter into a written Scholarship Agreement with the university, vesting ownership of Scholarship Intellectual Property in the University according to the relevant Project Agreement.

### **Independent scholarships in partner universities**

In accordance with the Centre Agreement, students will vest ownership of Scholarship Intellectual Property in the University, through a Scholarship Agreement.

### **Independent scholarships in non-partner universities**

The AB-CRC will enter into an Agreement with the University to ensure the terms of the scholarship are consistent with the terms of the AB-CRC Centre Agreement.

## **K. International students**

AB-CRC postgraduate scholarships will be awarded preferentially to Australian residents and to students from the Asia-Pacific region. Currently universities charge international postgraduate students tuition fees of more than \$20,000 per annum. The AB-CRC will not fund these tuition fees; they will remain the responsibility of the individual student. Nor may other AB-CRC funds be used to cover tuition fees. The AB-CRC will advise students to contact the International Office at their intended university for information on other scholarships available to pay tuition fees. For example, International Postgraduate Research Scholarships (IPRS) funded by DEETYA (330 per annum Australia-wide) are allocated to universities according to performance criteria. It should be noted that the competition for IPRS is extremely tough. This AB-CRC policy may be reviewed under exceptional circumstances on a case-by-case basis.

## **L. Student placement program**

The AB-CRC will provide opportunities and funding for postgraduate students to enrich their research experience with short-term placements in relevant organisations, including international organisations,

and across the government, private and university sectors. These organisations do not need to be partner organisations, but must deliver an experience to the student which will enhance some aspect of their research or application of their research skills and broaden the student's understanding of biosecurity issues. These placements will be for up to three months. Limited funds will be available for travel and a living allowance during student placements; these will be issued through a competitive process. Students will make a formal application for a placement, and staff in the E&T and A&L Programs will be able to facilitate discussions with potential placement organisations. Funds from the student's Professional Development allowance (\$2,000 p.a.) may be used for expenses related to student placement.

The AB-CRC will also provide opportunities for international students to enrich their research experience and their understanding of regional and global biosecurity issues with short-term placements (up to three months) in Australian AB-CRC partner organisations across the government, private and university sectors. Partner organisations will make an in-kind contribution of their time and expertise for student supervision. The student will need to obtain funds from their home country for travel, accommodation and living expenses.

A student will only be eligible for one Student Placement during the tenure of their AB-CRC scholarship. In exceptional circumstances, however, if a second placement is requested and travel and accommodation expenses for both placements are less than \$2,000 (national) or \$4,000 (international), an application for a second placement may be considered by the Program Coordinators for E & T, and A & L.

#### **M. Completing students**

Students completing their studies under AB-CRC scholarships will:

- Notify the AB-CRC Education and Training Program Coordinator, in writing and within seven days of submission, the submission date of their thesis and any changes in contact details.
- Provide both an electronic copy and bound copy of the thesis to the Education and Training Program Coordinator once it has been passed and corrections made.
- Provide details to the Education and Training Program Coordinator of post-doctoral appointments, employment or further studies to be taken up post thesis submission.

Once a student has submitted their thesis for examination the AB-CRC scholarship award will cease. Any unspent PD and operational funds will be returned to the AB-CRC unless a student has applied for PD support (and this has been approved) before thesis submission for conference attendance that will occur after the thesis submission and which the student will present results from their PhD/Masters project.