

Welcome

Welcome to the Division of Health Sciences Dunedin-based Summer Research Scholarship Programme for 2023/2024.

The Summer Research Scholarship Programme encourages participation from students and staff of the School of Biomedical Sciences (BMS), the Dunedin School of Medicine (DSM), the Faculty of Dentistry, and the Schools of Pharmacy and Physiotherapy. The main objective of the programme is to give undergraduate science and health professional students their first introduction to research. Many eventually go on to take up a career in research. Some of our most successful researchers gained their first taste of research as summer students. Those that do not make research a part of their future, will find nonetheless that exposure to a research environment enriches their degree, and hones their critical thinking ability - a skill that is of prime importance in today's workplace.

Professor Greg Jones

Chair
Summer Research Scholarship
Assessing Committee

Dr Manon Knapen

Manager
Summer Research Scholarship
Programme

Contacts and Assistance

For all queries related to the Summer Research Scholarship Programme contact:

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Important Dates

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| Early June 2023 | Advertising to students and staff |
| June -July 2023 | Students approach supervisors and decide on a project |
| 10 August 2023, 5.00pm | Closing date for applications |
| September 2023 | Summer Research Scholarship Assessing Committee meets to assess applications and allocate Scholarships |
| October 2023 | Students receive notification of outcome Successful students receive their contracts |
| Early November 2023 | Contracts due |
| November 2023 | Research projects commence First payment made to students |
| 20 November 2023 | Latest date start for summer scholarship projects |
| December 2023 | Second payment made to students |
| 25 Dec 2023 – 2 Jan 2024 | University's Christmas break |
| January 2024 | Third payment made to students |
| 22 February 2024, 5.00pm | Project reports due |
| March 2024 | Committees meet to assess reports and award student prizes |
| April 2023 | Final payment made to students once the final report and completion form are received, and reports are deemed satisfactory by the respective Committees |

General Information

The Summer Research Scholarship Programme (SRS Programme) involves a student completing a research project over the summer break in an area of interest such as clinical or laboratory-based research, biomedical science, ethics, or public health.

The Dunedin-based Scholarships are of 10 weeks' duration and participating students are awarded a tax-free educational grant with a minimum stipend of \$6,000.

This handbook is designed for supervisors wishing to support a student to carry out a Summer Research Scholarship in Dunedin.

Supervisors from Dunedin-based Schools who are permanently based outside of Dunedin are able to host a student locally. The nature of this locality arrangement must be explicitly stated in the application.

Staff from Dunedin-centred Schools based at UOC or UOW can apply to the Dunedin-based SRS Programme or their local UOC / UOW Programme but not both.

Further information is available from the Division of Health Sciences website. Application forms and an up-to-date list of some of the available projects and Scholarships can also be found there: www.otago.ac.nz/healthsciences/research/summerscholarships

**Applications for Summer Research Scholarships are due
Thursday 10 August 2023, 5.00 pm**

Guidelines for Supervisors

Supervisors are expected to read this handbook to ascertain the rules of the SRS Programme and their obligations under the scheme.

Important Information:

In order to be eligible for a tax-free summer scholarship in any given year a student must be intending to enrol at any University in the following year. This is to ensure that the University meets its tax and legal requirements when advertising and paying a tax-free scholarship. If the student does not return to study in 2024, they will be required to pay withholding tax by the Inland Revenue Department (IRD). Students can get guidance on the IRD website on how to do this. The University requires all summer students to sign a contract stating that they are intending to enrol for University study in 2024.

Supervisor eligibility

- Project supervisors must be academic staff of the University of Otago or health professional staff of the Southern DHB. If the primary supervisor is a member of the DHB then the project must have a University staff member as secondary supervisor (all DHB staff should discuss this with Health Research South).
- Staff of other institutions will be accepted as secondary supervisors only where it is clear that the project represents a genuine collaboration between the external supervisor(s) and supervisor(s) from the University. The collaboration must be made explicit in the application.
- Research Fellows are eligible to be primary supervisors.
- Postdoctoral Fellows can be primary supervisors if they have a senior academic as a mentor.
 - * One mentee per mentor
 - * Mentoring a PDF is equivalent to being a primary supervisor i.e.: a mentor cannot also be a primary supervisor in the same year (unless one of the student is Māori or Pacific, see clause below)
- Each supervisor can supervise **two summer students as primary supervisor if one of those students is either a Māori or Pacific Island student.** If applications for more than one (or two) student(s) per supervisor are received by the Committee, they will be returned to the supervisor to choose which applicant(s) they wish the Committee to consider.
- Each supervisor can be secondary supervisor of no more than **two** further students.
- A project will not be funded if the supervisor has a family or personal relationship with the applicant/student. This is in line with the University's Ethical Behaviour Policy (see below) which states that members of staff should not be involved in the

supervision or assessment of students with whom they have a family, or personal relationship.

<https://www.otago.ac.nz/administration/policies/otago003161.html>

Finding a Student

Each year in June an advertising flyer and handbooks will be sent out to all departments advising of the opening of the new round for Summer Research Scholarships, and encouraging staff to plan projects in advance of student enquiries.

If you have any projects to advertise please forward details to summer.research.scholarship@otago.ac.nz and these will be placed on the Division's website.

Details of available projects could also be posted on departmental noticeboards, blackboard, or other websites as appropriate for your students.

Advertising should take place at the end of Semester 1 / early in Semester 2 as the closing date for applications for the 2023/24 programme is **10 August 2023, 5.00 pm.**

Guidelines for projects

- More than one applicant for the same project will not be accepted.
- Only one project application per student will be accepted.
- The project should be technically sound and should give the student a broad experience of research, from design through to write-up i.e. a project that consists of a literature review only is unlikely to score highly.
- There should be evidence that the project provides sufficient work for the student for ten weeks, and that the data collection and analysis will not exceed ten weeks.
- Take care not to be overly ambitious when designing the project – ten weeks is not a long period of time.
- Projects that are entirely data gathering (i.e. no interpretive component) will not be funded.
- Where volunteers are to be recruited, the number of cases should be sufficient to form a conclusion. For clinical projects, please be aware of the **difficulty of recruiting patient participants over the extended Christmas period** due to the closure of clinics.
- If the project involves a survey or requests for lay or patient participants, any consent letters sent out by the student must include all relevant information related to project including: funding body, supervising academic, sponsoring School, confirmation of ethical approval etc.

- Any travel-related costs associated with the project **must** be funded by the supervisor.

Supervisor's contribution to the application

The supervisor should not write the application but may advise on its content.

Assessment of applications

The scholarships are awarded on the basis of the:

- student's academic record
- merits of the proposed project
- student's skills in relation to the project
- **feasibility** of completing the proposed project within the allotted 10-week period

Assessment of the applications for Summer Research Scholarships is carried out by the Summer Research Scholarship Assessing Committee. It is composed of clinicians and scientists from a broad cross section of academic disciplines.

Supervisor's responsibilities

Supervisors must be available to the student during the scholarship period or provide suitable cover (i.e. a secondary supervisor) if they are to be absent for short durations (limited to no more than 30% of the duration of the scholarship). Any secondary supervisors **must** be named on the cover sheet.

Support letter

A letter from the proposed supervisor supporting the project and the student must be submitted with the application by the due date of 10 August (the letter can be sent under separate cover personally by the supervisor but only with prior approval).

The support letter must be endorsed by the Departmental Head or Dean and supervisor's mentor, if applicable.

The letter **must** contain:

1. A statement that the facilities, running expenses, bench skills and equipment necessary to carry out the project are available within the department concerned.
2. A statement about the supervisor's contribution to the writing of the application.
3. A statement as to who is supervising day-to-day activities when the primary supervisor is on annual leave.

The letter also constitutes a reference for the student. Comments from supervisors and Departmental heads are considered very helpful by the Summer Research Scholarship Assessing Committee. A poor-quality reference will work against your student.

REMINDER: If the letter does not contain the forementioned elements the application will be sent back to the student.

Ethical approval

It is an essential requirement that ethics and compliance approvals, including SDHB or other Locality approvals, are in place prior to the commencement of the project.

- Projects that fail to receive all appropriate approvals by 8 December 2023 will be reviewed by the PVC Health Sciences with possibility of cancelling the summer scholarship.

It is the primary supervisor's responsibility to obtain all necessary approvals so that the student can commence their Summer Scholarship on time. **Ethics approval (and SDHB or other Locality approvals, if relevant) must be in place before the start of the scholarship.** Please be aware that some projects have been delayed considerably by supervisors leaving these permit applications to the last minute or designing projects that are too ambitious.

All work involving animals requires approval of the University of Otago's Animal Ethics Committee. Work involving human subjects requires approval of the Health and Disability Ethics Committee or the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee. Work involving any SDHB patients, medical records, SDHB staff time or resources requires Locality approval from Health Research South.

Please note that the Animal Ethics Committee has expressed concern regarding the suitability of some animal-based projects for summer students. A memorandum is circulated annually to departments hosting summer students, which attempts to provide guidance on the appropriate ethical cost-benefit balance that such activities would be expected to achieve.

EPA approval

Work involving genetically-modified organisms requires approval from the EPA or the University of Otago's Institutional Biological Safety Committee (IBSC). Once again it is the supervisor's responsibility to ensure these approvals are in place before the start of the summer scholarship.

Health and safety training

It is important for supervisors to be aware that they are responsible for ensuring that their students receive appropriate health and safety training for the particular techniques and materials that they will be using during their project.

Building access over summer

Supervisors should also ensure that students have access to necessary buildings and laboratories, computer facilities and libraries and that they are provided with security or ID cards if needed. Planning in advance can save valuable time once the student arrives.

Late completion of projects

Students need to be available to fully participate in coursework once this commences in 2023. If a staff member is supporting their summer student to complete and/or present work after a course commences then this must not infringe on teaching and course requirements in any way. No allowances will be made if a project runs into semester 1.

Changes to projects

The scholarship is awarded for the project and student specified at the time of application. The scholarship cannot be transferred to another student. Prior permission must be sought (with justification provided) if the project starts to undergo major changes. If this is the case, then please advise Manon Knapen, who will consult with the Chair of the Summer Research Scholarship Assessing Committee if required.

Concerns arising during project completion

If supervisors have any concerns about the quality of work, student attendance, or progress of the project, these must be conveyed to Manon Knapen as soon as they become apparent. Scholarship payments are made on the assumption that good progress is being made. Any situation to the contrary should be reported at the earliest opportunity.

OMRF Science Communication Workshop

Successful summer students funded by the Otago Medical Research Foundation (OMRF) must participate in a science communication's workshop that will be offered by the OMRF and conducted by the Department of Science Communication - Te Paepae Pūtaiao. During the workshop the students will produce videos about their research to be displayed on the OMRF website. Supervisors must advise Manon Knapen if the video cannot be made public.