



# Health Workforce Scholarship Program (HWSP)

Guidelines 2023 - 2026



## 1. General Information

**The Health Workforce Scholarship Program (HWSP) is an initiative of the Australian Government Department of Health.**

The objective of the HWSP is to improve access to the services needed in rural and remote areas (i.e. locations categorised as Modified Monash Model (MMM) 3-7) in response to identified needs by supporting an increase in skills, capacity and/or scope of the rural health workforce.

HWSP funding will improve access to services in rural and remote communities in response to identified local needs. HR+ conducts an annual Health Workforce Needs Assessment (HWNA) and uses the information from the HWNA to inform the priorities and allocation of scholarships and bursaries within rural communities in Tasmania.

Under the HWSP health professionals (in the fields of medicine, nursing and allied health) working in rural and remote locations (MMM 3-7) in Tasmania are eligible to apply for a scholarship or bursary to pursue further education or attend training courses.

HR+ administers the HWSP in Tasmania.

## 2. Funding Available

The HWSP offers two types of funding:

- **Scholarship:** a payment toward the cost of completing a postgraduate course leading to a postgraduate qualification;
- **Bursary:** a payment for completing a short course, workshop or to attend a conference etc. This funding may include reimbursement for the cost of both the course and travel related expenses.

Health professionals can make more than one application, to the total value of \$10,000 per year.

However, priority will be given to new applicants and those in most remote areas.

### Scholarship

Scholarships are available for health professionals who are planning to undertake further study in the fields of medicine, nursing or allied health, and must be related to their primary degree.

Scholarships of up to \$10,000 per year can be provided for up to two years to undertake full or part time study (maximum of \$20,000 in total over two years) to attain the qualification of either a postgraduate Certificate, Diploma, Master or PhD.

Scholarships must be directly related to training and upskilling health professionals who are, or will be (with evidence), providing services to MMM 3-7 areas in Tasmania. Scholarship values will be determined against the perceived workforce benefit of the training.

Funding is only available to undertake courses offered by universities and training organisations in Australia. Courses and activities do not need to be accredited but will be assessed by HR+ for relevance, value for money and the likelihood of meeting the identified learning need.

### Bursary

Bursaries are available to rural health professionals who are planning to undertake further study in the fields of medicine, nursing or allied health.

Bursaries are payments that cover the cost of training or course fees and/or cover or partially cover training related expenses such as accommodation and transport where appropriate. Reimbursement will be provided for major accommodation and travel expenses. It is expected that incidental expenses (local transport and meals) will be covered by the applicant.



Bursaries must be directly related to training and upskilling health professionals who are, or will be (with evidence), providing services to MMM 3-7 areas in Tasmania. Bursary values will be determined against the perceived workforce Benefit of the training.

Funding is only available to undertake courses offered by universities and training organisations in Australia. Courses and activities do not need to be accredited but will be assessed by HR+ for relevance, value for money and the likelihood to meet the identified learning need.

## 3. Eligibility

### Eligibility criteria

To be eligible for a scholarship or bursary under the HWSP the applicant is:

- A currently registered health professional who has obtained professional qualification and who is actively practicing in one of the following fields:

- > Aboriginal Health Worker
- > Audiologist
- > Chiropractor
- > Dentist
- > Diabetes Educator
- > Dietitian / Nutritionist
- > Exercise Physiologist
- > Medical Practitioner
- > Nurse
- > Optometrist
- > Osteopath
- > Pharmacist
- > Physiotherapist
- > Podiatrist
- > Psychologist
- > Radiographer
- > Social Worker
- > Speech Pathologist
- > Occupational Therapist

- Providing services full time or part time in the private or non-state government health sector (e.g. general practice, private allied health practitioner or a non-government organisations).
- Currently providing, or able to demonstrate that you are about to provide (by providing a service or employment agreement) health services in rural Tasmania (MMM 3-7 locations). To determine your MMM location please use the following link - <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/apps-and-tools/health-workforce-locator>
- Intending to continue working in a MMM 3-7 location in Tasmania after completing your course (as you may be required to complete a return of service obligation of 12 months after your course is completed).

If your employment location is based in a MMM 2 location but some of your work is delivered in an outreach capacity to MMM 3-7 locations, you may be eligible. Please contact us to discuss.

### Not eligible participants and expenses

- Health professionals solely employed by the State government (THS, DHHS, DoE, etc.)
- Training unrelated to the applicant's primary degree
- Management, personal self-improvement and marketing courses.

Funds cannot be used for:

- Retrospective costs (any expenses incurred prior to approval of your application).
- AHPRA or other professional registration fees.
- Clinical supervision of fully registered professionals (supervision expenses for professionals with provisional registration is allowed if it is part of their training program)
- Fellowship examination fees.
- Undergraduate degree programs.



- IT equipment or software.
- Clinical diagnostic or therapeutic equipment.
- Travel, accommodation or courses outside Australia.
- Study funded by other sources, including those which other Commonwealth, State, Territory or Local Government bodies have primary responsibility - this includes training for health professionals working in a public hospital.

## 4. Application and Selection

Applications are open from 1st of August to 30th of June each year and are received and processed on an ongoing basis.

The amount of funding is limited, priority will be given to those participants in the most remote areas (MMM 5-7).

To apply please complete a registration form at <https://www.hrplustas.com.au/hwsp-registration-application-form>. You should receive a confirmation email and an invite to the online portal; all the management of the scholarship program is completed through the portal including applications, expense claims and evaluation forms. The portal can be accessed here: <https://crm.zoho.com.au/portal/hrplus/crm/login.sas>.

Applications will be assessed on the basis of:

- Location of employment (MMM 3-7) or demonstrating service provision to a MMM 3-7 area in Tasmania
- Applicant eligibility
- Ability to meet the Return of Service Obligation (RoSO)
- Activity:

- > Demonstrating planned increase in skill, capacity and/or scope of clinical practice.
- > Meeting one or more identified health priorities for the rural community (as determined by the HWNA).
- > Demonstration of how the completion of the activity will benefit the local rural community in which you work.

Applications will be competitive based on the priorities identified within Tasmania. HR+ may work with applicants in priority communities to support and promote specific workforce needs.

All applicants will be informed via email of the outcome of their application. Successful applicants will receive via email an approval letter outlining the scholarship/ bursary amount and the next steps to confirm the scholarship/bursary.

The provided Memorandum of Understanding needs to be signed by the successful applicant and their employer (if applicable) and returned to the HWSP Program Manager within 30 days for the scholarship/bursary to be confirmed; if the Memorandum of Understanding is not returned within the required timeframe the application will be considered withdrawn, and the funding will be reallocated.

The Memorandum of Understanding will outline the maximum amount authorised for payment and the required return of service obligation.

All claims are processed on a refund basis upon presentation of paid receipts/invoices. If you are unable to pay upfront for your study please contact us for alternative arrangements.

All claims must be lodged within a month after the end date of the course as stated in the application form, any unclaimed funds will be reallocated to new participants.

All participants are required to complete an evaluation form in the online portal and upload a certificate once they finish their nominated course.



## 5. Return of Service Obligation

A Return of Service Obligation (RoSO) applies for scholarships or bursaries granted above \$5,000. The RoSO states that recipients must continue to provide service to agreed MMM 3-7 communities in Tasmania for a period of 12 months from completion of their nominated activity.

Recipients who are unable to meet their RoSO due to exceptional circumstances can request to negotiate alternatives with the HR+ HWSP Program Manager.

Exceptional circumstances are any events beyond the control of the successful applicant, which were not reasonably foreseeable by them at the time they entered the contract, and which prevent that them from meeting their RoSO.

## 6. Ongoing Management

Recipients will be contacted on a regular basis by HR+ throughout their scholarship/ bursary time. Activity, expenditure and RoSO will be recorded against individual files, and can be accessed by the recipients through the online portal at any time. The HR+ HWSP Program Manager will ensure all required documentation is completed and can be contacted to answer any questions throughout the life of the scholarship/bursary.

## 7. Debt Recovery

If a participant is in breach of their Memorandum of Understanding, by means of not participating in or completing the educational activity or not meeting the agreed RoSO, HR+ will seek to recover the relevant monies.

HR+ will explore alternatives to allow the recipient to meet their MoU but reserves the final right to hold the participant to their MoU and will pursue recovery of the funds if a mutual agreement cannot be reached.

## 8. Complaints & Appeals

Unsuccessful applicants who wish to appeal the outcome of their application should initially discuss their situation with the HR+ HWSP Program Manager to determine if they may be eligible for a future round of grants or if there are other avenues to access funding and/or support to meet their upskilling or professional development needs.

If the matter is not resolved the applicant can appeal to the HR+ CEO to consider their case. The HR+ CEO is the final arbiter for any appeal on the HWSP.

### Contact Details

For further information on the HWSP, please contact the HR+ HWSP Program Manager:

**E** [scholarships@hrplustas.com.au](mailto:scholarships@hrplustas.com.au)

**P** 03 6332 8600

[www.hrplustas.com.au/scholarships](http://www.hrplustas.com.au/scholarships)