

# GP Synergy Medical Student Scholarship Program Outline

2022

*Updated 22 October 2021*



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License. To view a copy of this license, visit <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>.



GP SYNERGY  
advancing medical training



# 1 About GP Synergy

---

GP Synergy is a leading provider of general practice education, delivering a diverse range of prevocational and vocational general practice training experiences across NSW/ACT.

Our reputation for excellence in general practice education is a reflection of our commitment to providing the highest quality training experience for trainees at any stage of learning.

## 2 About the GP Synergy student scholarship

---

The GP Synergy General Practice Scholarship provides medical students studying at a university located within GP Synergy training boundaries with \$2,000 to support their medical studies. In return, scholarship recipients are required to prepare a general practice research project in-conjunction with their university's academic GP unit (or equivalent) and undertake a general practice community placement (COVID-19 dependent).

General practice research plays an important role in primary health care provision. Academic GP units (or equivalents) have been established in most medical schools in recognition of this importance.

The scholarship program provides a platform where medical students can meaningfully explore opportunities available in academic general practice and the general practice profession, or further an existing interest in these areas.

## 3 Benefits of the scholarship

---

Participating in the GP Synergy General Practice Scholarship is a great way of trying out research and general practice under the supervision of some of the most experienced, widely recognised and respected academics, and practising GPs. The scholarship presents students with a unique opportunity to widen their perspective on research and the general practice profession and build important professional networks.

Recipients of scholarships will learn more about research and the general practice profession. They will acquire new skills, knowledge and perspectives that will serve to benefit them throughout their medical studies and clinical endeavours.

Importantly, recipients' involvement will meaningfully contribute to the evidence base for general practice and primary care outcomes for the community.

*"This program is exceptional in achieving its goal to encourage students to enter academic general practice. Without this scholarship I am not convinced I would ever have understood the importance, possibilities or appeal of academic general practice and am grateful GP Synergy has developed such an innovative scholarship."*

***Emma Kozianski, previous scholarship recipient.***

## 4 Scholarships available

---

GP Synergy is offering up to ten scholarship positions. One position will be available per university listed below. The remaining positions will be 'wild cards' from students at any university to a maximum of a total two scholarship students per university.

- Charles Sturt University (CSU) – 1 scholarship
- Macquarie University (MQ) – 1 scholarship
- University of New England (UNE) – 1 scholarship
- University of New South Wales (UNSW) – 1 scholarship
- University of Newcastle (UoN) – 1 scholarship
- University of Notre Dame (UND) – 1 scholarship
- University of Sydney (USYD) – 1 scholarship
- Western Sydney University of (WSU) – 1 scholarship

\* Please note: UoW and ANU are not participating in the scholarship program in 2022.

## 5 Scholarship requirements

---

Successful scholarship recipients will receive \$2,000 towards their medical studies. In return, scholarship recipients are required to complete the following **mandatory** requirements:

1. Attend an induction meeting with GP Synergy and submit a project plan by **Monday 7 March 2022**.
2. Participate in a general practice research project in conjunction with their university's academic general practice unit (or equivalent) and prepare a report about the project.
3. Undertake a 16-hour community GP placement in a GP Synergy accredited training facility. This facility must be in a rural or remote (MMM 3-7) area or be an Aboriginal Medical Service and will be coordinated by GP Synergy. Where travel and accommodation are required, this will be coordinated/subsidised by GP Synergy and a meal allowance provided. Please note this requirement is dependent on the situation surrounding COVID-19 and the impacts on the health system.
4. Keep GP Synergy informed of their progress by remaining in email/phone contact with GP Synergy's Academic Medical Educator throughout their placement.
5. Participate in evaluation activities:
  - a. upon completion of the community placement (if applicable)
  - b. upon completion of the program.
6. Fulfill all requirements by **27 November 2022**.

The following activities are **optional** for students, but **highly encouraged**:

1. Attend a one-day GP Synergy Foundations of Research Workshop (held on a Saturday in Feb/Mar). Where students require travel and accommodation to attend, this will be coordinated/subsidised by GP Synergy and a meal allowance provided (online or face to face workshop will be determined by COVID-19 restrictions).

## 5.1 General practice research scholarship component

Scholarship recipients are required to participate in a general practice research project under supervision of their university's academic general practice unit (or equivalent).

This project is required to be in an area relevant to general practice. It may be an existing project that the university is currently undertaking, or it may be a new project developed by the student.

The aim of this component of the GP Synergy scholarship is for students to meaningfully engage in general practice research. The amount of time and type of involvement required of a student is to be discussed and agreed between the student and the university at the outset of the scholarship.

Students are required to demonstrate meaningful engagement in the program through a project report to be submitted at the conclusion of their research participation. This report needs to demonstrate:

- a summary of the key components and outcomes of the research project
- an explanation of the student's active participation in the research project in any of the following areas:- initial project development, data collection, data analysis/interpretation, literature review, etc.
- the student's understanding of the research process, importance of research in general practice and its application to primary care outcomes.

## 5.2 Community placement component

Scholarship recipients are required to undertake a 16-hour community placement. Students will be placed with a GP Synergy mentor for their community placement. This may be a GP Synergy registrar, supervisor or medical educator.

### **Where can community placements be undertaken?**

The community placement must be completed within GP Synergy's training boundaries, within a GP Synergy accredited training practice in a rural and remote (MMM 3-7) location and/or a GP Synergy accredited Aboriginal Medical Service.

### **Who will arrange the community placements?**

All community placements will be coordinated by GP Synergy.

### **When can community placements be undertaken?**

Community placements are required to be completed by 27 November 2022.

Timing of placements will take into consideration students' study commitments and availability of mentors. Upon allocation with a GP mentor, students and mentors can liaise to make specific arrangements.

Community placements can occur across consecutive days (this is the preferred timing for rural placements where a student is required to travel) or across a number of dates.

### **What insurance is available to cover students during community placements?**

Students are required to have their own medical indemnity for community placements. Medical indemnity is free for students with a number of providers.

Where students require Workcover insurance, insurance can be obtained through IC Firths. GP Synergy will reimburse students with this cost up to \$130. Further information will be provided to students prior to the commencement of their placement.

### Can the community placement meet existing university requirements?

Students should discuss with their university whether the GP Synergy community placement is able to form part of any existing community placement requirements. Please note – community placements will be required to be in facilities arranged by GP Synergy as specified above.

### What impact will COVID-19 have on this requirement?

Please note this requirement will be confirmed at a later stage as it is dependent on restrictions surrounding COVID-19. If placement is not able to be completed due to health restrictions, the final payment will not be affected, and recipients will be required to complete the research project without this element.

## 6 Application and selection process

---

### 6.1 Application dates

The following application dates apply to students at the following universities:

- CSU, MQ, UND, UNE, UoN, UNSW, USYD, WSU - Please note that UoW and ANU are not participating in the program in 2022.

Item	Date
Scholarship applications open	5 October 2021
Scholarship applications close – all universities except CSU	5pm AEDT Monday 8 November 2021
Scholarship applications close – CSU only	5pm AEDT Monday 15 November 2021
Applicants notified of outcome	By Monday 6 December 2021
Deadline for successful applicants to accept offer	5pm AEDT Monday 13 December 2021

### 6.2 Eligibility

At most universities, medical students enrolled in any year of medical training at one of the participating universities are invited to apply\*.

To be eligible to apply, applicants are required to:

- be an Australian or New Zealand citizen or permanent resident
- be enrolled as a medical student in one of the participating universities for the 2021 year and intending to be a student at their university in 2022
- be able to meet the scholarship participation requirements.

\*PLEASE NOTE: There is additional eligibility criteria for the following universities:

- **UND:** UND NSW students are only eligible to apply for the 2022 GP Synergy Medical Student Scholarship.
- **WSU:** Only applications that confirm they have met with their academic GP unit (or equivalent) will be considered eligible.

### 6.3 Application process

To apply for the GP Synergy General Practice Scholarship Program students are required to complete the application form on the [GP Synergy website](#) by the specified date and provide proof of their medical student enrolment with their university for 2021.

**Important:**

In the application, students are asked to outline what research project they are considering participating in (such as an existing project at their university) or their idea/s for new research project.

Applicants are **strongly encouraged** to discuss their application with their university's academic general practice unit to find out what research opportunities may be available within the university or discuss their ideas for a new research project. A failure to do so may impact your application score or deem you ineligible to have your application considered (Please see eligibility criteria for WSU applicants). A list of contacts for each university are provided overleaf.

Applications should demonstrate:

- who the student has contacted at their university to discuss research project opportunities
- what project/s, or research topic/s, the student is considering for the scholarship
- what level and type of involvement the student anticipates having in an existing project, or the preliminary research method proposed for a new project.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** GP Synergy is unable to support scholarship applications that rely solely on GP registrars, GP supervisors, training facility or GP Synergy staff as their research participants.

Please see a list of university contacts overleaf.

## Academic university contacts

Uni	Contact	Position	Phone	Email
CSU	Dr Yann Guisard	Research Convenor   School of Rural Medicine Course Director   Doctor of Medicine	02 6365 7889	<a href="mailto:yguisard@csu.edu.au">yguisard@csu.edu.au</a>
MQ	Prof Simon Willcock	Professor of General Practice	02 9812 3944	<a href="mailto:simon.willcock@mqhealth.org.au">simon.willcock@mqhealth.org.au</a>
UND	A/Prof Charlotte Hespe	Conjoint Head, General Practice / Head, General Practice Research School of Medicine	02 8204 4450 / 4461	<a href="mailto:charlotte.hespe@nd.edu.au">charlotte.hespe@nd.edu.au</a>
UNE	A/Prof Michelle Guppy	Associate Professor General Practice School of Rural Medicine	02 6773 3579	<a href="mailto:mguppy2@une.edu.au">mguppy2@une.edu.au</a>
UNSW	Dr Kylie Voung	Senior Lecturer in Primary Care, School of Public Health & Community Medicine, UNSW Medicine	02 9385 1744	<a href="mailto:kylie.voung@unsw.edu.au">kylie.voung@unsw.edu.au</a>
UON	Dr Jessica Fitch	School of Medicine and Public Health Faculty of Health and Medicine	02 4394 9010	<a href="mailto:Jessica.fitch@newcastle.edu.au">Jessica.fitch@newcastle.edu.au</a>
USYD	A/Prof Melissa Kang	Sydney Medical School Faculty of Medicine and Health	02 9036 5023	<a href="mailto:melissa.kang@sydney.edu.au">melissa.kang@sydney.edu.au</a>
WSU	Prof Jenny Reath	Peter Brennan Chair of General Practice School of Medicine	02 4620 3725	<a href="mailto:j.reath@westernsydney.edu.au">j.reath@westernsydney.edu.au</a>
	Dr Steve Trankle	Research Fellow - School of Medicine   Dept. General Practice	02 4620 3930	<a href="mailto:S.Trankle@westernsydney.edu.au">S.Trankle@westernsydney.edu.au</a>

## 6.4 Selection process

All applications will be reviewed by the GP Synergy Scholarship Committee.

Applications will be reviewed against set criteria and scored. Referees of the highest scoring applicants will be contacted. Pending referee outcomes, shortlisted applications will be finalised with the nominated GP Academic Unit contact at each university.

Applicants will be notified of the outcome by the date specified in section 6.1.

## 7 Scholarship payments

Successful scholarship recipients will receive an initial grant of \$1000 upon submission and approval of a one-page project plan following their induction meeting with GP Synergy.

Recipients will receive the remaining \$1000 on completion of all requirements.

Travel subsidies and allowances for students will be reimbursed at the time incurred.

## 8 Scholarship completion deadlines

---

Scholarship recipients are required to have completed a project plan and attended an induction meeting with GP Synergy by 7 March 2022. Failure to meet this initial deadline may result in withdrawal from the program.

All remaining requirements of the scholarship must be completed by 27 November 2022.

## 9 Scholarship support

---

GP Synergy has a medical educator dedicated to general practice research who will oversee and provide support to scholarship recipients during the program.

## 10 Scholarship withdrawal

---

If a student decides they are unable to complete the program they may be required to return all or part of the funding they have received.

This will be reviewed on a case by case basis in discussion with GP Synergy's Director of Education and Training who will take into consideration the reason for withdrawal and progress the recipient has made towards fulfilling scholarship requirements at the time of withdrawal.

## 11 Further information

---

For further information about the GP Synergy General Practice Scholarship Program, please contact us on [applicant@gpsynergy.com.au](mailto:applicant@gpsynergy.com.au) or call us on 1300 477 963