Wine Australia

Application guide

Wine Australia PhD Top-Up Scholarships

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Introduction

The guide is designed to assist candidates applying for PhD top-up (supplementary) scholarship funding from Wine Australia.

The guide provides information on:

- opportunities available and topics of interest
- eligibility and selection criteria
- the process for applying for funding, and
- how to commence an online application for funding.

Please contact us at applications@wineaustralia.com or on (08) 8228 2000 if you require further information or assistance.

About us

Wine Australia is the single Australian Government statutory service body for the Australian grape and wine community. We support a prosperous Australian grape and wine sector by investing in research and development, building the international and domestic markets, disseminating knowledge, encouraging adoption and protecting the reputation of Australian wine.

We are funded by grape growers and winemakers through levies and user-pays charges, and by the Australian Government, which provides matching funding for research, innovation, extension and adoption investments.

We focus on extracting the full value of our investments for the benefit of our levy payers, the Australian Government, and the wider community. Our investments are guided by the priorities within the One Grape and Wine Sector Plan (OGWSP) which are captured in six themes:

- Our place and product
- Our markets
- Our consumers, customers and community
- Our sustainability
- Our people, and
- Our systems and infrastructure.

Wine Australia's 2025-2030 Strategic Plan has been framed around these OGWSP themes.

About the PhD top-up scholarship program

Wine Australia offers a PhD top-up scholarship program to help attract postgraduate students to the fields of wine science, viticulture and wine business research.

The aims are to:

- encourage high-achieving PhD candidates whose research explicitly aligns with Wine Australia's priority topic areas,
- boost research capacity and capability in the wine and grape sector to address strategic challenges, and
- supplement the RTP stipend to attract high quality candidates and accelerate impact.

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The program is an important component of Wine Australia's investment in developing researcher capacity and ability, ensuring we have researchers developing the skills and expertise needed for working on opportunities that will help improve sustainability and profitability of the Australian wine sector. **This program is supported by Wine Australia with levies from Australia's grape growers and winemakers and matching funds from the Australian Government.**

Key dates

Applications open on **Thursday 1 October 2026**.

Applications close on Friday **13 November 2026**, at 5pm (Australian Central Daylight Savings Time).

Candidates will be advised of the assessment outcome as soon as practicable.

Wine Australia Scholarships are not paid retrospectively. If successful, funding will begin from 1 January of the next year or at a later subsequent agreed date.

Eligibility criteria

Wine Australia offers **supplementary scholarships** for up to 3.5 years full-time PhD study.

Candidates must:

- Be enrolled in, or have applied for, full-time PhD study.
    - Please include your PhD start date, applicants who have already commenced their PhD may apply.
- Hold, or have applied for, an Australian Government Research Training Program (RTP) Stipend Scholarship or another equivalent stipend scholarship through their host university.[1]
    - A statement to this effect should be included in the online application and if the Scholarship has already been awarded, a copy of the letter of offer should be included with the application.

The application, selection and offer process for RTP Stipend scholarships and other scholarships is the responsibility of each individual university.

Part-time awards may be available in certain circumstances. Candidates undertaking part-time study will be eligible for half the funding of a full-time candidate. Part-time PhD candidates may receive funding for up to six years.

Only supplementary funding may be requested from Wine Australia.

Not eligible

- Domestic candidates enrolled at an overseas university.
- International candidates **not** based in Australia enrolled at an Australian university.
- International candidates enrolled at overseas universities.

[1] For more information on the Australian Government Research Training Program visit https://www.education.gov.au/research-training-program

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Selection criteria

Scholarships are awarded based on:

- academic excellence and research ability
- research feasibility and methodology
- industry alignment, considered against the priority areas of interest
- industry impact, considered against industry partnerships and engagement with industry, research outputs path to market or adoption by industry
- expertise of the proposed supervisor(s) and supervisor support, with the supervisor affirming that the project is feasible and that the candidate has a good track record, and
- quality of an applicant's Curriculum Vitae, and perception of the likelihood for ongoing involvement in the Australian wine sector.

Wine Australia assesses scholarship applications through a process that uses clear and objective criteria and excludes any individuals with a conflict of interest from the assessment.

Wine Australia may request successful recipients to contribute knowledge transfer to the sector via extension activities and public summarised reports as required throughout the project.

Dr Tony Jordan OAM Award

In 2019 Wine Australia inaugurated the Dr Tony Jordan OAM Award, an annual award for the most outstanding Wine Australia PhD scholarship applicant.

This Award recognises the distinguished contribution of Dr Tony Jordan OAM to Australian wine. Over his distinguished career, Dr Jordan was an influential and determined advocate for the advancement of Australian wine as a winemaker, researcher, mentor, wine show judge and wine sector leader. Dr Jordan was crucial to the establishment of the wine science program at Charles Sturt University in the 1970s, influencing modern Australian wine practices. He has chaired Australian wine shows and judged shows internationally; he is a former president of the Australian Society of Viticulture and Oenology (ASVO) and the Yarra Valley Wine Growers Association and was a Board member of the Wine Australia Corporation for six years.

The Dr Tony Jordan OAM Award recipient will receive a stipend top-up to the value of **$10,000** annually to support their study.

The Tony Jordan award is offered to the **most outstanding applicant** taking all eligibility and selection criteria into account. Wine Australia reserves the right to not offer this award annually.

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Types of projects and topics of interest

You must be able to identify and nominate the **focus area of your PhD** from the One Grape and Wine Sector Plan (OGWSP) themes addressed in Wine Australia's Strategic Plan. Please only choose one theme. If your topic aligns with more than one, choose the most appropriate fit. Wine Australia will consider alignment during the evaluation process. All documents are available on our website at www.wineaustralia.com.

Wine Australia Strategic Plan 2025-2030

Annual Operational Plan 2026-2027

One Grape and Wine Sector Plan

2027 priority topic projects

Wine Australia has identified several priority topic areas of interest.

Preference may be given to applicants addressing a topic from this list, and additional supplementary funding may be offered to successful candidates.

- Novel strategies for pest, disease and virus management in Australian vineyards.
- Plant breeding and gene target identification.
- Novel mid-strength wine production processes.
- Nonchemical control of disease, for example using UV-C and autonomous technology.
- Environmental, Social and Governance challenges as outlined in the ESG investment plan.
- Novel strategies across waste circularity, treatment, safe reuse of secondary materials and circular markets
- Consumer insights, with a focus on moderation and health, export and emerging markets, macro and external drivers, value perception.
- Development and adoption of digital, data and Artificial Intelligence.
- Improving the adoption and evaluation of impact arising from research, innovation and extension activities across the Australian grape and wine sector.

Alternative consideration

Project design: Research academics in Australian universities may consider designing a project against the 2027 priority topic projects list with Wine Australia; with the aim of attracting a suitable nominated student for PhD supplementary funding. Email research@wineaustralia.com if this is of interest.

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Available funding – supplementary stipend

Typically, the supplementary funding available is calculated from the RTP base rate, which from 1 January 2027 is **$35,550**.

In most cases, Wine Australia's supplementary funding offer will bring the total student stipend up to the value of **$40,550** (GST exclusive) per annum, including funding received through an RTP or other scholarship.

Outstanding applications against the **2027 priority topics list** demonstrating compelling industry alignment and impact may be awarded **additional supplementary stipend**, taking all eligibility and selection criteria into account.

Wine Australia reserves the right to determine the base level from which supplementary funding is offered per candidate.

Wine Australia is the sole arbiter of the number of applications supported, and decisions are made within the context of annual budgets.

Available funding – operating

Candidates may request a maximum amount of **$4,000** (GST exclusive) in supplementary operating funding per annum. The maximum amount of operating funds available per project is capped at $12,000 (GST exclusive).

The operating funds must be justified for expenses directly associated with a candidate's research project, against the following categories:

- Research lab supplies and consumables
- Winery and Vineyard consumables
- Analytical testing services

Wine Australia reserves the right to determine the amount of operating funds awarded.

Exclusions

Support for purchases of computer hardware and software, conference attendance, living away from home and travel is **not provided** through the program.

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Applying

Applications for a top-up scholarship must be submitted online through Wine Australia's PRISM portal. To access the portal, applicants must first register for an account to obtain a username and password. For registration and application instructions, please contact applications@wineaustralia.com.

Evidence must be provided that the university supports the proposed project and candidate. You can negotiate a supervisor after the application has been submitted however you are required to have a supervisor in place before the project is contracted.

The following documents are required to be attached to PRISM online application:

- one certified copy of your Undergraduate Academic Transcript
- one certified copy of your Postgraduate Academic Transcript (if any postgraduate study undertaken, excluding the PhD you are currently enrolled in and for which you are seeking support)
- one copy of your current Curriculum Vitae, and
- one signed copy of your supervisor's confirmation of support (or university's if supervisor is not in place).

You must obtain the required approvals from your host university or administering organisation before submitting your application. Please make sure you leave enough time for the process to be completed **BEFORE** the closing date.

Need help?

Email Research Team **applications@wineaustralia.com** **Phone** 08 8228 2000	**Address** Industry House, National Wine Centre Corner Botanic & Hackney Roads, Adelaide SA 5000 **Postal Address** PO Box 2733, Kent Town SA 5071