

The Henry and Rachael Ackman Travelling Scholarships



For early career researchers and graduate research students

2026 Guidelines

Background

As a result of a generous bequest to the University of Melbourne, the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences is able to offer research travel awards, known as *The Henry and Rachael Ackman Travelling Scholarships*, to eligible early career researchers (ECR) and graduate research students (GR) from the Department of Paediatrics and the Department of Obstetrics, Gynaecology & Newborn Health.

Aims & Eligibility

This scheme supports *overseas* research travel only (i.e., outside of Australia). The types of activities that are eligible for funding under this scheme include conference travel (airfare, registration, and accommodation), research training and study tours at prominent overseas institutions, and other international research career development opportunities. Priority will go to applicants who have firm travel arrangements in place. Applications for retroactive payments may be considered where travel was undertaken after 1 January 2026.

Two categories of award are available:

1. *Graduate Research (GR) students*
2. *Early Career Researchers (ECRs)*

GR awards exist to support single-year travel projects (i.e., travel activities that commence and conclude within a period of 12 months). The travel should relate directly to the GR project and commence within 12 months of notification of award. ECR awards can support either single or multi-year travel projects of up to 3 years' duration. For ECR awards, a major component of the travel activities should occur within 12 months of notification of award.

Applicants from the Department of Paediatrics may only ever receive *one* Ackman Travelling Scholarship *within each category* – that is, an individual may only receive one GR award and one ECR award. Previous recipients of an Ackman Travelling Scholarship are ineligible to reapply within the same category in which they were previously awarded funding.

Only one application as allowed per individual per year. Applicants from the Department of Obstetrics, Gynaecology & Newborn Health may be eligible to re-apply if they have already been successful in a category, but priority will be given to applicants who have not previously received an award.

Please note: While the maximum value that can be requested for a single award (in either category) is outlined below, each department has the right – based upon their priorities and the number of applications they receive – to award less funding than was originally requested in the application.

GR Applicants

GR applicants must have an Australian bank account and be enrolled in a course in either the Department of Paediatrics or the Department of Obstetrics, Gynaecology & Newborn Health when applying and must undertake their travels within the period of their candidature (prior to Thesis submission). It is anticipated that:

- GR applicants will have passed confirmation and be in the mid-to-late stage of their research study program and thus in a position to have an abstract / poster accepted at an international conference in their field.

GR applications will be for single-year projects to occur within 12 months following the date of award of the scholarship.

Provide budget details for the funding you request to support this activity.

GR applicants typically are awarded ~\$3,500 to cover research travel costs. Requests for higher levels of funding may be considered by the allocation committee on a case-by-case basis. Justification for additional funding should be included in the application.

ECR Applicants

ECR applicants must hold a salaried academic appointment of at least 0.5 full-time equivalent (FTE) at Level A, B or C in either the Department of Paediatrics or the Department of Obstetrics, Gynaecology & Newborn Health. ECR applicants must hold or have reasonable expectation (at the time of application) of holding an appointment until 31 December 2026.

ECR applicants must have been awarded a PhD within the last 5 years and before submission of an Ackman Travelling Scholarship application. However, applicants who have held their PhD for longer than 5 years can make a claim for eligibility if their full time equivalent (FTE) research opportunity since award of PhD equates to 5 years or less:

1. *experienced one or more significant periods of career disruption, and/or*
2. *worked in non-research positions in industry or outside of the higher education sector.*

Applicants under these circumstances must provide an eligibility exemption statement as an attachment to their application. Consideration of these cases is modelled on the NHMRC's Career Disruption policy and equivalent ARC framework.

For the purposes of this scheme, special cases that qualify for career disruption include circumstances (since award of PhD) where one's research career has been significantly interrupted or affected by lengthy serious illness, child bearing or child rearing, primary care-giving for a family member or working with industry or outside of the higher education sector where research was not the primary focus of the employment.

Applicants wishing to claim periods of career disruption (including periods of non-research employment) should clearly quantify how much equivalent full time (EFT) – in years and months – can be accounted for by the career disruption so that the time since award of PhD falls within the 5-year period specified above.

Applicants seeking consideration for Career Disruption to meet eligibility requirements of this scheme must enter a concise statement in SmartyGrants (300-word limit). Consideration of these cases will be modelled on the NHMRC's Career Disruption policy and equivalent ARC framework.

1 The award of the PhD is defined as the date of the official notification letter or, for those awarded PhDs where the institution does not supply such letters, the date that the applicant has completed all the required steps to be eligible to graduate with a PhD. Submission of a PhD for examination is not an indication that all steps have been completed.

For how to quantify this, applicants can reference NHMRC Sample Career Disruption Template.

ECR applicants should demonstrate in their application that they have the basic infrastructure resources at their planned destination(s) and adequate time available, within the context of existing research, teaching, and higher degree supervision responsibilities.

Research-only staff, whose salary is external, must demonstrate to their department that their appointment allows them to pursue additional research activities, and they have the time available to do so.

ECR applicants can request funding for single or multi-year projects up to a combined maximum value of \$7,500 provided they hold or have a reasonable expectation of holding an appointment for the duration of their proposed project. Higher requested levels of funding may be considered on a case-by-case basis and will need justification included in the application.

For multi-year projects, most travel should occur within 12 months following the date of the award of the scholarship. For multi-year projects, where ongoing employment cannot be confirmed at the time of application, additional years of funding will be contingent upon the re-appointment of the recipient within their respective department.

Additional years of funding will also be contingent upon the recipient providing annual project progress reports to mdhs-grants@unimelb.edu.au to demonstrate the value of the research travel activities undertaken to date.

Provide budget details for the funding you request to support your international research travel.

Note: normally funds should be requested up to a maximum value of \$7,500 AUD across all project years. Include in your budget an itemised list of the major separate expenses involved in the activity, e.g., return flights, conference registration, accommodation, etc. Add additional rows as required.

CV

Graduate Research students:

Upload a brief, one-page CV including details on education and training, awards and prizes, publications, conferences, clinical / vocational experience, professional memberships, etc.

Early Career Researchers:

Upload a concise, two-page CV including details on education and training, awards and prizes, publications, conferences, clinical / vocational experience, professional memberships, funding, supervision, etc.

How to Submit

- ii Applicants must complete the Henry and Rachel Ackman Travelling Scholarship application form submitted online using SmartyGrants online grants administration system.

Follow the links from the **Henry and Rachael Ackman Travelling Scholarship** [scholarships page](#).

Applications must be submitted according to these guidelines. Non-compliant applications may be excluded from the application assessment process:

- use the application form provided.
- be written in English.
- submitted before the close date.
- adhere to all word and page limits for each question.
- upload signed certification page to upload to SmartyGrants (**GR students**): applicants must sign the Certification section and arrange Supervisor and Head of department to also sign. (**ECR**): applicants must sign the Certification section and arrange for Head of Department to also sign.
- upload relevant CV (refer to CV section for format)
- upload career disruption statement (if applicable)

Documentation to be uploaded using the specified naming protocol (as listed in SmartyGrants).

Assessment Process and Conditions of Award

Each department will assess applications.

By accepting the award, recipients agree to the following:

The Minnie Ackman Lecture

As a condition of accepting funding through the Ackman Travelling Scholarship, each recipient must present a full account of the overseas research activities supported through this travel award. This report is to be known as 'The Minnie Ackman Lecture.' The respective s may help to coordinate or identify an appropriate forum for the delivery of this Lecture, which should be presented in a format befitting the recipient's level of experience and the scale of the research activities undertaken. This must occur prior to the completion of your course of study.

Annual Report

Each recipient of an Ackman Travelling Scholarship will also be required to provide to mdhs-grants@unimelb.edu.au an annual report of no more than 500 words. These reports should outline the international travel arrangements made possible through the scholarship, benefits gained thus far, and what follow on activities and outcomes are anticipated because of the travel.

Acknowledgment of support

This award is the result of a generous bequest by the late Emanuel Percy Ackman.

The Ackman Trust reference UTR6.170

MDHS graduate research trust scholarships are funded from trust funds established through the generosity of alumni,

former staff and other benefactors as well as philanthropic foundations. Recipients of MDHS graduate research trust scholarships are required to acknowledge the support of the donor or trust on publications and in the thesis, provide a progress report so that donors may understand the use to which the funds are being put, or be asked to attend thank you, award, prize-giving or other ceremonies to acknowledge the generous support that has made the scholarship possible.

Conditions of Payment

Awarded funds can only be used for the travel specified in the awardee's application.

GR Recipients

1. Ensure you have accepted your course offer and completed all enrolment requirements. Once you have completed these via the Student Portal <https://my.unimelb.edu.au>, enter your **Australian banking details** via the 'Admin' tab - 'financial support' - 'Scholarships.'
2. Recipients are to apply for Graduate Research Study Away, as per the [Student Travel and Transport Policy](#), and study away guidelines ([Study Away | University of Melbourne](#)).
3. Payment will be processed on receipt of approved Graduate Research Study Away approval notification and supporting documents (including evidence of a paid deposit for your flight overseas) provided to mdhs-grants@unimelb.edu.au.
4. Note: In exceptional circumstances, e.g., financial hardship, if approval is gained by the applicant from the relevant Department, reimbursement may be processed in advance of travel-related purchases. A detailed quote will be required in this scenario.
5. Upon purchasing research travel activities (flights, accommodation etc.) with the scholarship funds, supporting documentation must be submitted no later than 1 month prior to travel.

ECR Recipients

1. Recipients will receive a Research Grant Acceptance Form (RGAF) which lists the relevant Workday tags for *The Henry and Rachael Ackman Travelling Scholarships*, for charging the travel expenses.
2. Travel expenses such as flights should be booked through the UOM Travel Portal (Refer [Employee Travel Policy \(MPF1300\): Policy](#))
3. Other expenses must be processed through **Workday** using the Workday tags provided, and the line item description: **RECIPIENTS FULL NAME** and **ACKMAN** and **YEAR of AWARD**.

Example: "NAME_ ACKMAN TRUST 2026".

Date for Applications:

Scheme Open: **Mon Mar 23, 2026, 9.00AM**

Scheme Close: **Fri April 24, 11.59PM**

Application Certification Page

Step 1: Download the scheme guidelines and print this Certification Page

Step 2: To obtain a copy of your SmartyGrants application to accompany the Certification Page for signing - before submitting, in SmartyGrants please navigate to the review page and download the PDF. For guidance on how to navigate through the form please see [SmartyGrants Help Guide](#).

Step 3: Once the certification page is signed upload to SmartyGrants in the Certification section, then press submit.

Certification by the Applicant

I certify that all details given in this application are correct, and that if successful, I will hold the Henry and Rachael Ackman Travelling Scholarship in accordance with the scheme guidelines.

(For students) I certify that, if this application is successful, I will hold the Henry and Rachael Ackman Travelling Scholarship in accordance with my current conditions of candidature.

Signature	Date

Certification by Supervisor (for student applications only)

I support the application and consider that the research activities outlined therein will benefit the development of the student's research career.

Name	Department/School
Signature	Date

Certification by the Applicant's Head of Department

I certify that the applicant has the time and resources available to pursue the international research activities outlined in the application. I support the application and consider that the research activities outlined therein will benefit the development of the applicant's research career.

Name	Department/School
Signature	Date

Henry and Rachael Ackman Travelling Scholarships

Annual / Progress Report (including Financial Summary) ERC

Complete and return to mdhs-grants@unimelb.edu.au by the annual anniversary of your award date.

Name:			
Department:			
ECR or GR:	<i>If GR, please provide student ID:</i>		
Single Award:	<i>Date of travel:</i>		
Multi Year Award:	<i>No of Years:</i>	<i>YY Start:</i>	<i>YY End:</i>
Round and Date / Year Awarded:			

As a condition of accepting funding through the Ackman Travelling Scholarship, each recipient must present a full account of the overseas research activities that were supported through this travel award. This report is to be known as *'The Minnie Ackman Lecture.'* The respective departments may help to coordinate or identify an appropriate forum for the delivery of this Lecture, which should be presented in a format befitting the recipient's level of experience and the scale of the research activities undertaken. This must occur upon completion of your course of study.

Minnie Ackman Lecture presentation date:	<i>This can be marked TBC during a multi-year award; however, a date must be indicated in the final year's report.</i>
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Each recipient of an Ackman Travelling Scholarship will also be required to provide their department with an annual progress and/or final written report of no more than 500 words. These reports should outline the international travel arrangements made possible through the scholarship, benefits gained thus far and what follow on activities and outcomes anticipated because of the travel.

Please indicate: Annual (for multi-year) or Final report (for single year award)
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(Maximum of 500 words)

Financial Summary

What was the total funding amount awarded?	\$			
Indicate which year you are currently in with an * and indicate how amount spent in each year	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
	\$	\$	\$	\$
What is the balance (total funding awarded minus total spent so far)	\$			
Have there been any extenuating circumstances that have resulted in funds not being spent? If yes, please indicate here				
If this is the final report, are there any unspent funds?				

It is up to the recipient to retain financial records relating to this award to complete this section.