

Research Higher Degree Student Grant Frequently Asked Questions -

Guidance

The Defence Science Centre (DSC) Research Higher Degree Student Grant (RHDSG) frequently asked questions for students considering applying for a grant.

Applying

Where can I find all the grant documentation?

All documents relevant to this grant scheme are published on the [Defence Science Centre grant programs](https://www.wa.gov.au/organisation/defence-west/defence-science-centre-grants-programs) (<https://www.wa.gov.au/organisation/defence-west/defence-science-centre-grants-programs>) webpage, including:

- Guidelines for applicants
- Application form
- Frequently Asked Questions

How do I apply?

The Guidelines for Applicants document outlines the application process, eligibility, selection criteria, funding scheme, closure date and how to seek further assistance from each university.

Can I propose my own project?

Yes, however the proposed project must be aligned to the [Defence IS&T priorities](https://www.defence.gov.au/sites/default/files/2024-09/Defence-IST-Priorities_0.pdf) (https://www.defence.gov.au/sites/default/files/2024-09/Defence-IST-Priorities_0.pdf), AUKUS Pillar I or AUKUS Pillar II

Can I amend my proposal after submission?

You can make revisions to your submission by submitting an updated version through the same application process. Please note that we will only accept amendments until the closing day of the round.

Eligibility

I'm a student. Can I apply?

Not directly. Whilst students are highly encouraged to consider how their future studies could be funded under this scheme, all applications must be made by a university staff supervisor.

Are part-time projects eligible?

Yes.

I've previously applied / received a DSC grant. Am I still eligible?

Yes. Your application will only be assessed in accordance with the Selection Criteria as detailed in the Guidelines for Applicants, and not if you have/have not received a grant in the past.

I live in WA but work / study for an interstate, online, or overseas research organisation. Can I apply?

No. To apply, the supervisor/applicant and the student must be from a DSC partner university (Curtin, ECU, Murdoch or UWA).

Are pre-existing projects which have already commenced still applicable for a RHDSG?

The intent of the RHDSG is to encourage and grow new projects with relevance to Defence and national security. Pre-existing projects are still to be eligible if they have commenced within six months at the time of application. Projects may consist of extensions to existing research if they are clearly defined as new work.

For instance, a PhD candidate could apply for RHDSG with a proposal to write additional chapters to their thesis addressing how their research may have defence relevance/application. The Grant Agreement will consider the new chapter(s) as the 'project', rather than the existing PhD topic.

Can multiple applications be made to address the same program of work? Such as multiple Masters or PhD projects contributing to one over-arching Program?

Yes, however the Supervisor will need to submit separate applications for each prospective student.

To ensure the application is correctly assessed, each application will need to define each students' contribution (their separate 'Projects' which together form the one Program) and articulate the nuances of each Project within the three selection criteria. Each application will be assessed independently.

Security**Does the applicant or proposed student require a security clearance or AS4811 Personal Screening?**

A personal security clearance is not required when applying for the RHDSG, unless:

1. the applicants' university has an internal policy regarding personnel checks whilst applying for national security-related projects; or
2. if applying for a topic within the 'suggested-projects' list, and the project sponsor has indicated this in the constraints column.

If your application is successful, the Grant Recipient in consultation with the university's Defence Industry Security Program Security Officer, must indicate in the Project Protocol how they intend to reasonably protect the proposed research, which may include (examples only):

- AS4811 screening of all research personal;
- personal AGSVA security clearance to the required protection level;
- use of certified research ICT system.

Additional Resources:

[Guide to Assessing and Protecting Official Information \(PDF, 3.54 MB\)](https://www.defence.gov.au/sites/default/files/2025-04/Assessing-Protecting-Official-Information-Guide.pdf) (<https://www.defence.gov.au/sites/default/files/2025-04/Assessing-Protecting-Official-Information-Guide.pdf>)

[Quick reference Guide to Assess Official Information \(PDF, 1010.29 KB\)](https://www.defence.gov.au/sites/default/files/2025-04/QuickReferenceGuidetoAPOI.pdf) (<https://www.defence.gov.au/sites/default/files/2025-04/QuickReferenceGuidetoAPOI.pdf>)