1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy governs the awarding of the Royal College of Surgeons (RACS) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander SET Trainee One Year Scholarship. It covers the application and selection criteria as well as the duration, value, frequency and conditions of the Scholarship.

2. KEYWORDS

Scholarship, Indigenous, Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, Surgical Education and Training (SET), Trainee

3. BODY OF POLICY

3.1. Background

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander SET Trainee One Year Scholarship for has been established by the Indigenous Health Committee to support Trainees who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

3.2. Eligibility criteria

Applications for the Scholarships are open to SET Trainees who identify as being Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

To be eligible for the Scholarship an applicant needs to fulfil the eligibility requirements for membership of the Australian Indigenous Doctors' Association (AIDA). Details can be found on www.aida.org.com.au/membership/eligibility/.

All scholarships are conditional upon the applicant being a permanent resident or citizen of Australia or New Zealand.

3.3. Activities covered by the Scholarship

This scholarship could cover one or more of the following:

3.3.1. SET registration fees
3.3.2. SET course fees
3.3.3. SET examination fees
3.3.4. Research projects
3.3.5. Mentoring programs
3.3.6. Travel, accommodation and registration fees to attend conferences
3.3.7. Other relevant professional development activities

3.4. Selection criteria

The selection criteria includes:

1. Academic record
2. Strength of referees’ reports
3. Contribution to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
4. Other criteria as determined by the Indigenous Health Committee
The Scholarship will be awarded on the recommendation of the Selection Committee based on a written application, a current Curriculum Vitae, academic record and two letters of reference supporting the application.

In the awarding of the Scholarship, the Selection Panel will where possible ensure gender balance in recipients.

The application is to include a submission of up to 500 words describing the Trainee's aspirations, purpose in studying surgery, what the scholarship funding will be used for and current and future commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander activities.

The Selection Committee will consist of the following:

- Chair (or nominee) Board of Surgical Research;
- Chair (or nominee) Board Surgical Education and Training
- Chair (or nominee), Indigenous Health Committee;
- President (or nominee), Australian Indigenous Doctors Association (AIDA)

Applicants will be advised of the outcome of the selection process in August of the year of application.

3.1. **Value of the Scholarship**

The value of the Scholarship is in Australian dollars. Prospective applicants should refer to the RACS website at www.surgeons.org for information on the current value of the Scholarship.

3.2. **Duration of the Scholarship**

One year scholarship for Trainees in any year of SET.

3.3. **Frequency of the Scholarship**

The Scholarships are to be made available every year dependent on funding. They will only be awarded if there are worthy applicants.

3.4. **Conditions of the Scholarship**

The following conditions are based on information supplied at the point of application on which scholars’ applications were assessed and approved. Any changes from those originally approved will require RACS prior consent. To obtain this consent, scholars are required to notify RACS in writing.

3.4.1. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status

a. Provide a letter confirming membership AIDA.

3.4.2. Financial arrangements

a. The scholar must refer to his/her financial or taxation advisor to ascertain the taxability of the stipend. General information about whether scholarships are exempt from income tax is available on the RACS website. Please go to www.surgeons.org/scholarships/ and proceed to the FAQ section.

b. Payment of the award will be made in one instalment, prior to 1 March in the given year.

c. Award funds will only be paid on receipt of a valid tax invoice.
3.4.3. Additional scholarships /awards

a. A RACS scholar may hold additional external awards simultaneously with the RACS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander RACS award.

b. A scholar must notify RACS immediately on receipt of an award other than the RACS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander award.

c. The scholar may not hold two RACS awards simultaneously.

d. In the event that an additional external (other than RACS) award is received, RACS may review and amend its financial contribution to the scholarship holder.

3.4.4. Reporting

a. The payment of the award is conditional upon the recipient providing a final report in the requested format to RACS. If the report is not received, the recipient will be ineligible for any further financial assistance from RACS and may be required, at the discretion of RACS, to refund the award. A copy of the report will be sent to the Indigenous Health Committee and the Board of Surgical Research.

b. Scholars must be prepared to have an article published in Surgical News on the completion of their award if requested.

3.4.5. Timing of Scholarship

The commencement date for awards is 1 February each year.

3.4.6. Reapplication for the Scholarship

Scholars are eligible to re-apply in subsequent years through the normal application channels and observing the advertised application deadlines and formats in competition with all applications. Scholars are encouraged to apply for similar scholarships awarded by external bodies.

3.4.7. Acknowledgements

RACS is to be acknowledged in any relevant correspondence, public announcement, advertising, publication or other material relating to the award.

Recipients may be required to speak at a RACS event.

3.4.8. Publications and Patents

RACS must be notified of any publications as soon as practicable after acceptance by the journal, or patents arising from the award together with the results of any research that is to be commercially developed.

3.4.9. Privacy

RACS takes reasonable steps to protect the information it holds from misuse or loss and from unauthorized access, modification or disclosure. The scholar has the right to access his or her personal information and to have it corrected if inaccurate, incomplete or out of date.

3.4.10. Termination of the Scholarship

RACS may, at its discretion, for what is considered grave cause, suspend the tenure of an award for such time as is thought fit, or deprive a scholar
3.4.11. Acceptance of offer

Scholars must sign the Acceptance Form as acknowledgement of the above conditions and return it to the RACS prior to commencement of the award.

3.5. Access

This policy may be accessed by the general public, RACS and staff.

3.6. Communication

Scholarship recipients will be notified of the policy or any changes to the policy that impact them by email. Other stakeholders are encouraged to check the RACS website on a regular basis to keep up to date with policy changes.

3.7. Administering Committee

The Board of Surgical Research administers the Scholarship.

4. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

RACS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander SET Trainee One Year Scholarship Procedure

RACS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander SET Trainee One Year Scholarship application form

AIDA Constitution

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