1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS) is committed to promote and support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander doctors towards a career path in surgery. The Scholarship is aimed at junior doctors who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and are considering a career in surgery with an opportunity for career development.

This policy governs the awarding of the RACS Career Enhancement Scholarship for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Junior Doctors. It covers the application and selection criteria as well as the eligible activities, value, frequency and conditions of the Scholarship.

2. KEYWORDS

Education, Career Enhancement, Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, Indigenous, Scholarship, Junior Doctors

3. BODY OF POLICY

3.1. Background

The RACS Career Enhancement Scholarship for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Junior Doctors has been established by the Indigenous Health Committee to assist junior doctors to cover the costs of undertaking surgical-related education, training, professional development and/or research opportunities in Australia or New Zealand that will result in acquisition of new knowledge and skills which strengthen their career portfolios.

3.2. Eligibility

3.2.1. To be eligible for the Scholarship an applicant must:

3.2.2. Be registered as a doctor in Australia or New Zealand; and

3.2.3. Be eligible to be a member of the Australian Indigenous Doctors’ Association (AIDA); and

3.2.4. Be a permanent resident or citizen of Australia or New Zealand.

3.3. Eligible Activities

The Scholarship may be used for one or a combination of the following activities, commensurate with the level of the applicant:

3.3.1. JDocs registration fees.

3.3.2. Course fees for:

a. ASSET - Australia and New Zealand Surgical Skills Education and Training

b. CCriSP - Care of the Critically Ill Surgical Patient

c. CLEAR - Critical Literature, Evaluation & Research

d. EMST - Early Management of Severe Trauma

e. TIPS - Training in Professional Skills

f. GSSE – General Surgical Science Examination
3.3.3. Surgical related research projects.

3.3.4. Attendance or presentation of a paper at a medical, surgical or indigenous health conference in Australia or New Zealand. Preference will be given to applicants presenting research project results and outcomes.

3.3.5. Other professional development activities deemed appropriate and of benefit to the applicant by the Indigenous Health Committee and/or Scholarship Selection Panel which enhance their career portfolio.

### 3.4. Selection Criteria

3.4.1. Applicants are to submit an application on the prescribed RACS form, together with a current Curriculum Vitae and two (2) letters of reference supporting the application. Proof of eligibility to be a member of AIDA is required. Written confirmation from their institution or place of work that uptake of the scholarship will not be at detriment to their studies or work must also be included in application.

3.4.2. The application is to include a submission of up to one page on the benefit(s) of this professional development opportunity, and should address:

   a. Interest in pursuing a surgical career
   b. Relevance to current stage of training or medical career
   c. Details of study and/or research to be undertaken
   d. Proposed itinerary
   e. Envisaged benefits of this activity
   f. Details of any financial support or funding already secured (for example, research grants, sponsorship and/or other grants)
   g. A breakdown of the proposed use of the grant funds
   h. Current and future commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health activities

3.4.3. Selection will be dependent on:

   a. Demonstrated evidence on how the proposed further studies/experiences will enhance their career and promote interest in surgery.
   b. Provision of a clear plan of proposed studies, emphasising the benefits to be gained.

3.4.4. Award recipients will be selected by a Selection Panel consisting of:

   a. Chair, (or nominee), Fellowship Services Committee
   b. Chair (or nominee), Indigenous Health Committee
   c. Member, Indigenous Health Committee (Younger Fellow or Trainee)
   d. Chair (or nominee), Prevocational and Skills Education Committee
   e. President, Australian Indigenous Doctors’ Association (AIDA) (or nominee)
3.4.5. In the awarding of scholarships, the Selection Panel will where possible ensure gender balance in recipients.

3.5. **Value of the Scholarship**

The value of the scholarship is in Australian dollars.

3.6. **Conditions of 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.

3.6.1. **Financial Arrangements**

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

Payment of the scholarship will be made in one instalment.

In order for payment of the award funds original documentary evidence of expenditure incurred must be provided (i.e. Tax invoices/receipts).

3.6.2. **Reporting**

The scholar must provide a report of up to 500 words within four weeks of the completion of the activity for which funding has been obtained. The report may be used in promotional material by RACS and AIDA.

3.6.3. **Reapplication**

Applicants can reapply in subsequent years while eligible.

3.6.4. **Acknowledgements**

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

Recipients may be required to speak at a RACS event.

3.6.5. **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.

3.6.6. **Privacy**

RACS takes reasonable steps to protect the information it holds from misuse or loss and from unauthorised 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.
3.6.7. 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 of their award. From the date of either of these decisions, the entitlement to stipend and other allowances shall cease. Upon termination, monies already paid and not duly expended shall be refunded to RACS.

3.6.8. Acceptance of Offer

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

3.7. Administering Committee

The Scholarship is administered by Fellowship Services.

4. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

PRC: RACS Career Enhancement Scholarship for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Junior Doctors

FRM: Application form for RACS Career Enhancement Scholarship for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Junior Doctors