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Background

In 2010 the Commonwealth announced its intention to re-invigorate the Commonwealth - ANU strategic relationship. This agreement included a one-off $7 million contribution by the Commonwealth to match the donations of the Wilson family and the ANU, to expand the operations of the Sir Roland Wilson Foundation.

Under this agreement, employees of the Australian Public Service at the Executive Level 1 and Executive Level 2 undertake a PhD of national significance and enduring interest for the Australian Public Service (APS). In addition, candidates are required to participate in a substantial overseas component funded by the Foundation. Candidates will also be expected to participate in Foundation activities, and will be required to provide reports and other research contributions to their home agencies.

These scholarships aim to strengthen ties between academia and the APS, while equipping the public service to excel at policy analysis and public sector leadership.

This program aims to be a flagship of academic-practitioner ties in Australia. The program is expected to produce a cohort of highly accomplished professionals who are likely to become senior leaders of the APS, as well as a body of research of direct and priority relevance for the APS.

Target Group

The Sir Roland Wilson scholarship targets high performing APS employees. Candidates are expected to complete a PhD at the ANU, and to make an active contribution to academic discourse that is of direct relevance to the APS. It is anticipated that scholarship holders will be in a position to go on to be future senior leaders of the APS.

Candidates will:

- be Executive Level 1 or 2 officers;
- have at least three years’ experience in the APS;
- have a record of high performance;
- have a demonstrated commitment to the pursuit of a long term career in the public service;
- have outstanding potential for senior leadership in the APS generally, or for specialised professional and technical leadership in their field;
- have the required academic credentials and show a capacity for the conduct of sustained study and research (meet ANU-PhD Admission requirements);
- be prepared to conduct a substantial overseas component, and;
- to undertake research in areas of priority public interest, which are of relevance and enduring interest for the APS.
Selection Process

The selection process for the Sir Roland Wilson Foundation Scholarship is rigorous and consistent with application process for PhD study at the ANU and consistent with merit based selection in the APS.

- All applications must be endorsed by the applicant’s home Agency.
- Candidates’ academic credentials are consistent for admission to a PhD program at the ANU.
- Short-listed candidates are interviewed by a joint ANU-APS panel of the Sir Roland Wilson Foundation Board. The panel’s final recommendation will be made to the Dean of the appropriate ANU College for admission to a PhD program.
- Selections will be based on merit and will have regard to key priority areas of research to the Australian Public Service and the Australian Government more broadly.

Scholarship information

Number of scholarships to be awarded

The scholarship program is intended to continue in perpetuity. It is proposed that three scholarships will be awarded each year.

Financial Support for Scholarship holders

Scholarship holders will be paid by the home agency at their normal salary level. All normal taxation, superannuation and other employment conditions will continue to apply.

APS Deed of Agreement

On acceptance of the Sir Roland Wilson Scholarship, candidates enter into a Deed of Agreement with their home agency. This Deed covers the candidate and agency responsibilities for the duration of the scholarship. These can include but are not limited to: payment arrangements, leave arrangements, return to service agreements and extension conditions.

Scholarship

All candidates will be enrolled as PhD candidates at the ANU and will need to comply with the rules of their PhD program.

The scholarships are funded for a period of three years. Additional time, and/or funding may be requested from the candidates’ home agency in accordance with the SRW Extension Policy. All candidates are bound by their Deed of Agreement and are expected to return to the APS on the completion of their PhD, for a period no less than the duration
of their PhD. This phase of reintegration will be carried out in accordance to the SRW Return to Service Policy.

**International Travel Component**

All students are expected to complete a significant international component as part of their PhD program. Each student is able to access a $45000 travel stipend to meet the costs of this travel.

This may include, but is not limited to:

- Meeting with research groups under visiting scholar arrangements
- Attending and presenting at international conferences
- Attending Summer School programs for skills development
- Conducting fieldwork

**Maintaining linkages to the Home Agency**

All scholars are expected to maintain meaningful linkages to their home agency. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Hosting events for, or inviting public servants to events at the ANU
- Hosting events for, or inviting ANU colleagues to events at their home agency

All candidates are required to present a mid-term review and a final thesis presentation to a public sector audience during their candidature.

**APS Mentoring program**

All SRW Scholars are required to nominate a senior public servant as their Mentor. Mentors play a significant role in ensuring candidates’ work contributes to their home agency and the wider APS; and securing a return on the Commonwealth’s investment in these candidates by keeping them connected to their home agency and facilitating their access to the appropriate advancement opportunities throughout and at the conclusion of their candidature.

**Events and activities**

SRW Scholars are expected to participate in a number of Foundation events including:

- Foundation Board meetings (once a year)
- Mentor lunches (up to three per year)
- Major networking events (one to two per year)
- SRW Scholars retreat (2 days)
- SRW Scholars conference

**PhD structure**

SRW Scholars are expected to remain engaged with their home agencies as their research topics are of high interest to their colleagues. The structure of the PhD program
may warrant some thought as a thesis by publication may be more amenable to communicating results in a timely fashion back to the APS agencies.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Sir Roland Wilson Foundation and the Australian Public Service Commission (APSC) will work together to establish the nomination, selection and marketing processes for the establishment and ongoing management of the proposed scholarship program. The roles and obligations of the parties are as follows.

The Sir Roland Wilson Foundation:

- coordinate and facilitate contacts with the ANU and other academic bodies to support the program’s operations and outcomes;
- coordinate supervisors from the ANU or other academic institutions;
- coordinate the selection process and confirms applicants’ academic credentials;
- assist with the development of key research areas;
- manages the overseas travel component of the program;
- collect regular feedback from individual scholarship holders and conduct end of cycle reviews of the program’s operations, costs and outcomes from the APS and individual candidates’ perspectives;
- provides annual reports to the ANU Council and other organisations as required, and
- reimburse home agencies for the ANU component of their stipend.

The Sir Roland Wilson Foundation Board:

- shortlists applicants
- interview and select candidates
- provides support to candidates through professional networks
- Chair Mentor meetings

The Australian Public Service Commission:

- coordinates and facilitates contacts with the APS to support the program’s operations and outcomes;
- helps home agencies to identify candidates and to establish mentoring and other support arrangements;
- provides advertising, information and communications to support the objectives and quality of the scholarship program, including advertising for candidates and for lectures they provide;
- obtains regular reports from home agencies on their mentoring, case management and other support to candidates, and
- assists the ANU with the evaluation of individual scholarships and the program.
Participating APS agencies:

- broadcast the scholarship program to employees within the agency
- host an information session for interested applicants (SRW representative to attend)
- advertise the ANU information sessions
- develop and conduct an internal selection process
- provide the Sir Roland Wilson Foundation with a shortlist of candidates provide support to candidates to assist in their preparation of the application and interview process
- provide financial support to successful candidates
- provide regular reports to the APSC on their mentoring, case management and other support to candidates and assist the APSC with the evaluation of the program, and
- provide candidates with home IT, remote access, office space or other support as needed.

Scholars:

- provide mid-term reports to their home agency and an academic audience and other research contributions they may agree with their home agency, and
- participate in the Sir Roland Wilson Public Lecture program, providing an end-of-program public lecture on the outcomes of their research,
- conduct overseas research as agreed with their academic supervisors and the SRW Foundation Executive Director
- attend Sir Roland Wilson Foundation events when appropriate

It is expected that all candidates will return to their home agency on completion of the program.

Mentors:

- act as the candidates’ ‘champion’ in the home agency, including:
  - maintaining regular contact with the candidate, including meetings; arranging for presentations by the candidate on their work to the appropriate audience; inviting candidates to important events on the home agency calendar;
  - attending bi-annual Mentor meetings hosted by the SRW Foundation
  - ensuring candidates have the appropriate performance and development plans;
  - ensuring candidates have access to career advice, particularly during the last year of their candidature, and
  - facilitate candidates’ reintegration with their home agency.

Academic Supervisors

- Assist students to design an academic program that is achievable in the agreed timeframe.
- Assist students to develop international contacts through networking opportunities.
• Attend bi-annual mentor meetings hosted by the SRW Foundation