Australian National University

Sir Roland Wilson Foundation

Guidance for scholar champions

Who we are

The Sir Roland Wilson Foundation is a partnership between The Australian National University (ANU), Charles Darwin University (CDU) and the Australian Public Service (APS), honouring the remarkable contributions of Sir Roland Wilson and Dr Pat Turner AO to public policy in Australia.

What we do

We contribute to a stronger APS with the leadership and capability to achieve better outcomes for all Australians. Our scholarships programs, professional development and networking opportunities contribute to public sector leadership and capability development, fostering productive connections between academia and policymakers.

The scholarships

The Sir Roland Wilson scholarship is a three-year, full pay scholarship for PhD research at ANU for high performing EL1 and EL2 (or equivalent) APS and eligible Commonwealth public sector employees.

The Pat Turner scholarship is a one-to-three-year full pay scholarship for any level of postgraduate study at ANU or CDU for high performing Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander APS 4 to SES Band 1 (or equivalent) APS and eligible Commonwealth public sector employees.

Scholar champions

Eligibility

Scholar champions should:

- be senior leaders at the scholar's agency (we generally recommend SESB2 or equivalent)
- be interested in scholar's area of research or study
- be willing to monitor scholar performance
- be available to invest in the relationship, and join Foundation events and activities
- meet with Foundation staff once a year
- meet with the scholar individually at least four times a year
- continue to support the scholar for at least six months post-completion.

Roles and responsibilities

Scholar champions provide advice and support to scholars and ensure they return to regular service successfully on completion. They:

- are the scholar's senior contact point, for agency connection and troubleshooting
- ensure study and research remain focused on significant public policy issues
- facilitate access to professional networks and career development opportunities
- work with scholars to plan and implement a successful return to regular service.

Approaches vary between people and over time, so stay flexible in how you support scholars to develop and achieve their professional and academic goals.

Use the 'Return to Regular Service' agreement to establish clear forms of communication and expectations at the outset of your relationship.

Further information

Contact srw.foundation@anu.edu.au

TEQSA Provider ID: PRV12002 (Australian University)
CRICOS Provider Code: 00120C

Benefits

- connect with other senior public servants, academics, scholars and alumni
- receive invitations to attend high profile events including the Foundation's Commencement Dinner and Secretaries Dinner
- play your part in developing emerging public sector talent.

Supporting diversity

The Foundation is committed to ensuring scholars from a broad range of backgrounds, experiences and locations can participate fully and authentically in our programs.

As a scholar champion, you can support this by:

- checking in early with your scholar about support or adjustments that would help them succeed in the program
- being mindful that scholars may be navigating additional barriers related to their background, location or circumstances, and creating space for them to raise this with you directly
- advocating on your scholar's behalf to help remove agency-related barriers.

Our website has more information on the support available. If you think your scholar would benefit from additional support, please reach out to the Foundation team.

Supporting First Nations scholars

Commit to cultural understanding and respectful communication from the outset. When supporting First Nations scholars:

- practice relational accountability - ground your engagement in respect, relevance, reciprocity and responsibility. Allow time and invest early to establish trust, cultural safety and mutual respect, to learn from each other.
- embrace critical self-reflection - be transparent about your own social location, background and cultural blind spots and value your scholar's unique standpoint.
- respect communication styles - listen actively, be curious and reflective. Welcome silence as a space for reflection and resist the temptation to interrupt, talk over or rush your scholar.
- support wellbeing, recognising that many First Nations scholars continue to carry a cultural load regardless of whether they are working or studying.
- act as a champion and advocate. Use your influence to create opportunities, challenge barriers, open networks and support the visibility and advancement of First Nations scholars.
- seek advice from your agency's Learning & Development or First Nations support teams or networks for further resources.

Scholars – roles and responsibilities

Scholars bring working knowledge of public policy and programs to their study and research. They understand the challenges faced by the public service and opportunities for academia to contribute. Scholars are required to:

- complete their degree in the minimum requisite timeframe
- remain engaged with home agencies, including through their Scholar Champion
- participate in Foundation events and activities
- build professional networks between academia and the public service
- return to regular service in the APS or Commonwealth public sector for a period equal to the length of the scholarship
- adhere to the APS Code of Conduct and APS values.

Each scholar will enter into a deed of agreement with their agency, and accept Conditions of Award from the university which set out additional obligations.

FAQs

Can a scholar have more than one scholar champion?

Scholars have one scholar champion from their home agency. They are welcome to seek guidance or mentoring from other academic and/or public sector stakeholders through the course of their scholarship.

What happens if the scholar champion or scholar moves agency?

If you change roles or move agency, please identify a new champion and provide a 'warm handover' to them to support continuity.