



Department of
**Primary Industries and
Regional Development**

Sheep Industry Business Innovation (SIBI) Scholarships

Program Guidelines



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Sheep Industry Business Innovation (SIBI) Scholarships program at a glance

Key features of the SIBI Scholarships program are:

- Funding including stipend and operating expenses honours, masters and PhD research projects.
- Students may also be invited to complete vocational or internship work.

Should you read on?

To help decide whether you are eligible to nominate for a scholarship under this program, you should answer yes to both these questions:

- I am an Australian citizen, permanent Australian resident or New Zealand citizen
- I am enrolled in a Western Australian university

If you answered yes to the above questions, you should continue reading the SIBI Scholarships program guidelines.

Once you have read and understood the guidelines, submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) form on SmartyGrants including the required supporting documentation.

SIBI Scholarships Program

These guidelines relate solely to the SIBI Scholarships program in Western Australia, an initiative under the now-completed Sheep Industry Business Innovation project.

1. Program overview

This initiative was developed by the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) as part of the department's Sheep Industry Business Innovation project, which aimed to support the sheep industry to capitalise on growing markets for sheep products.

The SIBI project assisted the industry to build capacity to supply new markets for sheep meat and live exports, particularly in nearby Asia and the Middle East, generating flow on benefits to producers, industry, the regions, communities and the state economy.

The project recognised the value in supporting individuals to help solve industry relevant issues across the sheep supply chain through academic research. In addition the intention was to expose and excite students to choose a career in the agrifood supply chain. Demonstrating the value of postgraduate trained personnel to entities within the sheep industry, with the view to their long term employment.

While the SIBI project finished 30 June 2018, the SIBI Scholarships program will continue until 30 June 2021, unless funds are exhausted sooner.

The SIBI Scholarships program offers funding for students to carry out a research project as a vocational or internship, honours, masters or PhD.

Key funding sources may also include Meat & Livestock Australia Donor Company, Australian Wool Education Trust and the Australian Government Research Training Program.

2. Objective of the program

The SIBI Scholarships program is designed to support and encourage individuals who wish to pursue further study by addressing key industry questions relevant to the sheep industry supply chain in WA.

Overall the program is about building capacity and giving the student an appreciation and awareness of the industry. An immediate industry-ready outcome from any research study is not essential.

3. How will the program operate?

The program offers financial support for eligible research as follows:

- up to \$5000 for Honours plus negotiable levels of operating
- up to \$38 000 per annum for
 - two years for Masters plus negotiable levels of operating;
 - three years for PhD plus negotiable levels of operating
- students can be invited for vocational or internship opportunities.

SIBI's contribution towards project scholarships may be part of a funding mix. Key funding sources for PhD scholarships may also include Meat and Livestock Australia's Donor Company (MLADC), Australian Wool Education Trust (AWET) and the Australian Government Research Training Program (RTP), formerly the Australian Postgraduate Awards (APA). Prospective researchers and supervisors are encouraged to work together on presenting their ideas. Dependant on the research topic and level of proposed study the department will determine the best mix of contributions through industry partners MLADC and AWET.

Through the department's sheep industry engagement activities researchers will also have the opportunity to network and share ideas with industry peers and experts.

See Section 12 of these guidelines for information about how applications are assessed and Section 13 for information about the process.

4. What are the program priorities?

Applications need to be aligned to at least one of the SIBI outcomes and will be assessed on their own merit.

- To support the establishment of dedicated export supply chains that offer the level and consistency of returns needed to restore confidence in the industry.
- To increase the on-farm productivity of market-preferred products, through better genetic selection and higher stocking and reproductive rates.
- To improve business performance by improving farm business and production skills.
- To increase access to investment, both from within and outside of the industry, as a result of increased confidence among investors and more attractive business models.
- To establish the human and physical resources needed to research, develop and demonstrate the elements required to achieve success in the industry and the means of sustaining those resources into the future.

Research areas identified as relevant to the WA sheep industry supply chain may include, but are not limited to:

- Improving reproduction, lamb survival, growth and performance.
- Using sensors to detect date of conception and birth, growth and performance of lambs.
- Use of economic modelling (MIDAS) to explore opportunities to add value along the supply chain, and improve decision making using new business models.
- Desktop studies on adaptive enterprises and grazing management strategies to the changing rainfall patterns of south western Australia.
- Steps towards the development of algorithms and analytics to interpret proximity and activity data from livestock sensors.
- Use of sensors for on-farm sheep health decisions and to detect stock movement.
- Assessment of the impact on the WA sheep industry of outcomes from the project 'Market and consumer insights to drive food value chain innovation and growth'.
- Barriers to the adoption of new business models in the sheep industry.

5. Who is eligible to apply for funding?

You must be an Australian citizen, permanent Australian resident or a New Zealand citizen enrolled in a Western Australian university.

6. What qualifies for funding?

Stipend of up to \$3000 for internship and vocational scholarships (over 6-12 weeks) by invitation, \$5000 for honours (1 year) and up to \$38 000 per annum for masters (2 years) and PhD projects (up to 3 years).

Eligible operating expenditure will be assessed and approved on an individual application basis and must be directly related to the research project which may include:

- Field and lab consumables
- Staff technical support
- Travel and accommodation
- Conference fees and professional development
- Animal nutrition and husbandry costs

7. What does NOT qualify for funding?

Costs incurred that are not directly related to carrying out of the project are ineligible for funding. These include (but are not limited to):

- Preparation of application materials and travel as part of the application and interview process.
- Purchasing of equipment that could be considered part of normal business or ongoing operations.

8. How to apply

An online Expression of Interest (EOI) form should be submitted on the SmartyGrants system, including any required documentation.

If the EOI is approved, the successful applicants will be asked to submit a full project proposal and attend an interview with the assessment panel.

[The EOI online form can be found on SmartyGrants website](#)

9. Corrections

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure their application is complete and correct. The department will not accept responsibility for any misunderstanding arising from the failure by an applicant to comply with the guidelines, or arising from any discrepancies, ambiguities, inconsistencies or errors in an application.

If an applicant discovers any material discrepancy, ambiguity, inconsistency or errors in their application, they must immediately bring it to the attention of the department by email to Katherine Davies SIBIscholarships@dpird.wa.gov.au. The department may request clarification information from an applicant and allow them to remedy any

discrepancy, ambiguity, inconsistency or errors in an application. The department's decision will be final and will be made at its absolute discretion.

10. False and misleading information

Applicants should be aware that the giving of false or misleading information is a serious offence under the *Criminal Code Act 1995 (Cth)*.

11. Conflict of interest

A conflict of interest arises where a person makes a decision or exercises a power in a way that may be, or may be perceived to be, influenced by either material personal interest (financial or non-financial) or material personal associations.

Applicants are required to advise whether any actual or potential or perceived conflicts of interest exist in relation to their application.

If a conflict of interests arises, or appears likely to arise, the applicant must:

- make full disclosure of all relevant information relating to the conflict in their application; or
- bring it to the attention of the department in writing if the conflict arises after the application has been received; and
- outline the steps the applicant intends to take to resolve or otherwise deal with the conflict.

The department reserves the right to reject an application if it is not satisfied that there are arrangements in place to appropriately address or manage a perceived or actual conflict of interest.

All persons involved in the assessment of applications will be required to:

- sign and update as needed conflict of interest declarations which will ensure the appropriate identification and management of any conflicts of interest, and
- comply with the Western Australian Public Service Code of Conduct.

12. How are applications assessed?

Each application must meet the eligibility criteria to proceed to assessment.

Assessment criteria will be used to determine an application's suitability for funding and relevance to achieving the program objective (see clause 4 for program priorities and research areas). Applications that meet the assessment criteria are likely to be funded.

The assessment criteria are outlined below. Assessment criteria are equally weighted.

- Contribution to program objective
 - Alignment with the SIBI outcomes
 - Linkage to the Katanning Research Facility
- Scientific or technical basis
 - Research gaps and priority research areas

- Project and experimental design and methodology
- Risk management
 - Academic performance of the applicant and referee report/s
 - Supervisors and co-supervisors of the project
 - Quality of the submitted application
- Value for money
 - Total value of scholarship funds requested and other funding sourced
 - Value of project outcomes and deliverables to the Western Australian sheep industry

13. What is the selection process?

Applicants submit an expression of interest regarding their project.

The assessment panel will look at all applications and invite successful applicants to submit a full project proposal and attend a face to face interview.

14. Notification of funding decisions

Applicants will be notified in writing of the outcome of their EOI within two weeks after the round closure.

Successful EOI applicants will be asked to submit a full project proposal and attend an interview. Applicants who have submitted a full project proposal will be notified of the outcome of their proposal in writing within one week after attending an interview with the assessment panel.

Where an EOI application is unsuccessful, applicants will be notified in writing by the department. Feedback on unsuccessful applications will be provided in the written notification.

15. Funding conditions

Successful applicants will be required to sign a scholarship agreement. The agreements vary depending on the university in which you are enrolled.

If a successful applicant fails to comply with any requirements in the scholarship agreement, the applicant may be required to repay some or all of the scholarship money received.

16. Personal information and disclosure of information in application

The department may collect personal information from applicants for the purposes of administration, evaluation and assessment of an application. If the relevant personal information is not provided by applicants, the department will be unable to assess the application for funding.

Personal information may be disclosed to other Western Australian Government agencies and may be published on the department's website, provided disclosure is consistent with relevant laws, including the *Privacy Act 1988*. Personal information will be used and stored in accordance with the Privacy Principles.

The department's Privacy Policy is available on the department's website. Applicants may contact the department about their personal information or to make a complaint using the following contact details:

Telephone: 1300 374 731

Post: Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development
Locked Bag 4, Bentley Delivery Centre 6983

Applicants should note that basic information for awarded scholarships may be published.

As a recipient of public money, all successful applicants and their universities must report on the outcomes of the activity undertaken with the funds received. All reporting requirements will be detailed in full in the scholarship agreement. These may include (but are not limited to):

- Project progress reporting
- Financial acquittals and reporting
- A statutory declaration declaring that funds have been expended in accordance with the scholarship terms and conditions.

As per the scholarship agreement, media articles will be organised regarding the projects and their outcomes.

17. Program evaluation

The department will conduct an internal review of the program at the end of each round of funding, before initiating further rounds. The review will refine existing scholarships administration processes, practices and requirements.

An evaluation of the program will be undertaken in the fourth year of the program. It will examine whether the program has met its stated objective as well as whether, and how, the activities funded under the program had a positive impact on primary producers.

The program evaluation is also designed to help identify research gaps and frame future investment. This will be supported by successful applicants meeting all requirements of their scholarship, particularly reporting and providing information. This will assist the department in its evaluation of the program.

Successful applicants may be required to provide information to assist in the program evaluation.

18. Complaints handling process

If an applicant is dissatisfied with the way an application has been handled by the department, they can contact the program manager Katherine Davies at SIBIscholarships@dpiird.wa.gov.au and lodge a complaint. The department will not reconsider applications as part of the complaints process.

Instead, the complaint will be considered internally within the department by a departmental officer independent from the original process, and the applicant will receive a response from the department.

19. Key dates

Funding for SIBI Scholarships ceases 30 June 2021, unless funds are exhausted sooner.

Table 1: SIBI scholarship round closing dates

Round	Closing date
Round 1, 2017/18	30 April 2018
Round 2, 2018	31 October 2018
Round 1, 2019	30 April 2019
Round 2, 2019	31 October 2019
Round 1, 2020	30 April 2020
Round 2, 2020	31 October 2020
Round 1, 2021	30 April 2021

Assessment and notification of the outcome of EOIs will occur in the two weeks after round close date.

Successful EOI applicants will then have two weeks to submit their full project proposal. Assessment and interview will occur within 2 weeks after submission, with notification of the outcome of full project proposals one week after interview.

20. Additional information

Receipt of funding from this program may result in an applicant's business being ineligible for support from other government programs. Applicants are advised that funding may have taxation implications and that they should seek independent taxation and financial advice from a suitably qualified professional before submitting their application if they have any concerns. GST is payable on scholarships.

21. Contact us

Program Manager: Katherine Davies

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Email: SIBIScholarships@dpird.wa.gov.au

Website: www.agric.wa.gov.au/sibischolarships

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