

Scholarship Fund (Criteria and Process) Policy

On 4 February 2026, the Board of The Pinnacle Foundation approved, and adopts, the following policy:

1. Name

This is The Pinnacle Foundation Scholarship Fund (Criteria and Process) Policy.

2. Commencement

This Policy is effective from 5 February 2026.

Objectives

This Policy sets out:

- (a) the scope of the Scholarship;
- (b) the eligibility and selection criteria for the Scholarship;
- (c) the process of selection of recipients for the award of the Scholarship;
- (d) provisions for the measurement and monitoring of the performance of recipients of the Scholarship; and
- (e) the arrangements to establish and monitor the Mentor/Scholar relationship.

3. Definitions

In this Policy:

Board means the Board of Directors of The Pinnacle Foundation.

Bursary means the monetary grant provided by the Foundation as part of a Scholarship.

Government Allowance means the sum of any of the following payments made by the Australian Government for the coming year, either directly to the applicant for a Scholarship or to the educational institution at which the applicant studies or proposes to study:

- (a) HECS-HELP (including TAFE);
- (b) Youth Allowance;
- (c) Austudy;

- (d) ABSTUDY;
- (e) Assistance for Isolated Children; and
- (f) Any other payment, allowance, benefit or stipend of whatever description which, by resolution of the Managing Committee, is deemed to fall within the scope of this definition.

LGBTQIA+ means anyone who is diverse in their sex characteristics (intersex), sexuality (not heterosexual) and/or gender (not cisgender).

Managing Committee means the Managing Committee administering the Scholarship Fund pursuant to rule 8.5 of the Foundation's Constitution.

Mentor means the person assigned by the Scholarship & Mentoring Programs Manager to provide the scholarship recipient with guidance and feedback on academic and related issues.

Named Scholarship means a scholarship funded by a specific benefactor and named after an individual, company or organisation and may focus on a course discipline, approved tertiary institution or location.

Scholar is the applicant in receipt of The Foundation's Scholarship or Bursary.

Scholarship means The Pinnacle Foundation Scholarship or Bursary or a Named Scholarship.

Scholarship Fund means The Pinnacle Foundation Scholarship Fund.

Selection Committee means the Committee established under section 5 of this Policy.

The Foundation means The Pinnacle Foundation.

Vocational Placements, Internships and Volunteering means those formal work experience arrangements that are recognised in The Fair Work Act that are a mandatory part of an education or training course.

4. Scope of the Scholarship

4.1. The Scholarship is available only for full-time education at a public institution of higher education in Australia, including a semester at an international higher educational institution where it is an approved part of the course. Part-time studies are only allowable when an existing Scholar can demonstrate that exceptional circumstances exist. The Scholarship will be for the purpose of gaining an educational or vocational qualification in any profession, trade or the arts.

4.2. The Bursary amount is paid directly to the Scholar.

- 4.3. It is intended that Scholarships are primarily for study related costs such as the following the following items:
- (a) technology (inclusive of laptop/PC, printer, storage devices i.e. hard drives/cloud membership, course relevant software, tablet/iPad, laptop/tablet cables and charging devices, keyboard, mouse, stylus/electronic pencil);
 - (b) the cost of uniforms, clothing and/or shoes associated with the education/vocation being undertaken;
 - (c) the cost of textbooks and online related services;
 - (d) the cost of fees or dues to an approved educational institution;
 - (e) student union and professional association fees;
 - (f) professional equipment, memberships or tools of trade associated with the education or vocation being sought;
 - (g) public transport student concession passes;
 - (h) additional travel and accommodation costs associated with Vocational Placements, Internships and Volunteering which is undertaken as a requirement of an Australian based educational or training course;
 - (i) a contribution towards the costs of attending an overseas educational course as described in 4.1;
 - (j) cost of fees associated with tuition to address a learning disability; and
 - (k) relevant (to their academic studies and career) registration costs associated with attendance at domestic conferences or forums.
- 4.4. Recognising that Scholars face significant cost of living pressures, up to 49% of the Bursary may be spent on living expenses to support the Scholar's capacity to study. Living expenses include rent, food, utilities and similar.
- 4.5. Scholarships are granted on a multi-year basis. The Scholar does not need to reapply for the Scholarship, but renewal of the Scholarship each year will be subject to their continued satisfaction of the Scholarship criteria notified to them (which are expected to include, at a minimum, an excellent attendance record, acceptable academic performance, a positive Mentor review, and having contributed positively to The Foundation community).
- 4.6. The Scholar is ultimately responsible for spending the Bursary in accordance with 4.3 and 4.4. Variations to this may only be approved in writing by the Scholarship & Mentoring Programs Manager or CEO in exceptional circumstances.

4.7. Misuse of the Bursary will result in Scholarship termination.

5. Managing Committee and Selection Committee

5.1. Role of the Managing Committee

Pursuant to rule 8.5 of The Foundation's Constitution, the Board has delegated the administration of the Scholarship Fund to the Managing Committee. The Managing Committee may, in relation to the Scholarship Fund:

- (a) formulate policies;
- (b) make rules in respect of a policy;
- (c) revoke or amend a policy or rules and formulate others,

subject always to consistency with the objective of the Scholarship Fund. If required by law, a majority of the members of the Managing Committee must be 'Responsible Persons' within the meaning of the Constitution.

5.2. Composition and experience required

- (a) The Managing Committee will nominate a Selection Committee. Members of the Selection Committee should collectively have:
 - (1) experience in interviewing and selection processes;
 - (2) an understanding of contemporary youth issues relating to gender identity, sexual orientation and sexual characteristics; and
 - (3) familiarity with Australian academic structures and processes.
- (b) The Selection Committee must comprise a minimum of 4 and maximum of 6 people and include:
 - (1) at least 2 persons who are members of the Board or of the Managing Committee;
 - (2) 1 or 2 members experienced in dealing with people or issues related to gender identity, sexual orientation or sexual characteristics; and
 - (3) 1 or more members of State/Territory Committees.
- (c) A single person may satisfy more than one requirement of paragraph (b).
- (d) Subject to paragraph (b), the Managing Committee may appoint any person at any time, to be a member of the Selection Committee, and the appointment takes

effect when the written acceptance of the person is received by the Managing Committee.

- (e) In appointing a person to be a member of the Selection Committee, the Managing Committee may (but need not) specify a fixed term for the appointment.
- (f) A person who has been appointed as a member of the Selection Committee may, by written notice to the Managing Committee, request:
 - (1) a leave of absence from the Selection Committee, either for a fixed or for an indefinite period; or
 - (2) being on leave of absence from the Selection Committee, to return to active duty on the Selection Committee,
 - (3) and the Managing Committee may accede to the request.
- (g) A person ceases to be a member of the Selection Committee when:
 - (1) the person dies;
 - (2) the Managing Committee receives a notice of resignation from the Selection Committee signed by the person;
 - (3) the Managing Committee resolves that the person should cease, as of a certain date (not being a date before the carriage of the resolution), to be a member of the Selection Committee; or
 - (4) the person being a member of the Selection Committee appointed for a fixed term, that term has expired.

5.3. Powers

- (a) The Selection Committee will consider, and determine short listed candidates for interview, subject to the number of scholarships available to be awarded in the forthcoming year. In shortlisting candidates, the Selection Committee may receive assistance from State/Territory Committees.
- (b) The Selection Committee's decision whether or not to award a Scholarship to a particular applicant is final and conclusive.
- (c) The Selection Committee may establish an interview panel which may include State/Territory Committee members to interview the Scholarship applicants, however, the Selection Committee is responsible for determining successful applications for funding in the forthcoming year.

- (d) The Selection Committee in consultation with the CEO may at any time and for any reason rescind the award of a Scholarship or suspend for a stated period the payment of the Bursary.
- (e) The Selection Committee is under no obligation to give an applicant or any other person (other than the Managing Committee, on the latter's request) reasons for any decision that it takes.

5.4. Exercise of powers

- (a) In this section 5.3, an active member is a member of the Selection Committee who is not currently on leave of absence from the Selection Committee.
- (b) The Selection Committee will make a determination in relation to each application for a Scholarship by majority vote of all its active members, where each active member has one vote.
- (c) In the event that the votes for and against a particular application for a Scholarship are equal, the application is taken to have been refused.
- (d) The members of the Selection Committee may deliberate and vote in any manner which they consider convenient, including (without limitation) by meeting in person, via video link or by telephone conference.

6. Scholar Eligibility and Selection Criteria

6.1. Eligibility

The Scholarship is open to any eligible person. An eligible person is someone who meets all of the following requirements:

- (a) is at least 18 years of age and younger than 27 years of age on the closing date for Scholarship applications (currently 31 August) for study commencing the following calendar year;
- (b) is an Australian citizen or Permanent Resident of Australia;
- (c) identifies as being a member of the LGBTQIA+ community, both commonly understood and as defined; and
- (d) has achieved good or reasonable results given the applicant's circumstances.

6.2. Selection

Eligible applicants will be assessed for a Scholarship by the Selection Committee and State/Territory Committees based on the following criteria:

- (a) has faced and attempted to overcome challenges because of their gender identity and/or sexual orientation and/or sexual characteristics;
- (b) has personal or social circumstances which may hinder completion of their education. Personal and social circumstances may include whether the applicant is first in family to attend a tertiary institution, identifies as being from Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent, is culturally and linguistically diverse, has a disability, has been in foster care, has been homeless, or was raised or lived in a regional, rural or remote area of Australia;
- (c) can demonstrate sufficient motivation to complete a course or the remaining years of a course (as the case may be) of full-time study and demonstrates understanding of the rigours of academic life;
- (d) is clear about where their studies may take their career; and
- (e) is proud to be a part of a diverse Australian community, including with respect to gender identity, sexual orientation and sexual characteristics.

6.3. Selection Committee Discretion

The Selection Committee has discretion in applying the upper age limit in 6.1(a) where a current Scholar seeks support for a further year or years of study.

7. SCHOLAR DESIRABLE ATTRIBUTES

When determining the award of a Scholarship, the Selection Committee ensures compliance with section 6 and prefers an applicant who in the opinion of the Selection Committee demonstrates:

- (a) leadership qualities including self-awareness, courage and determination;
- (b) problem solving capacity and initiative;
- (c) social and political awareness; and
- (d) involvement in extra-curricular activities including causes related to the LGBTQIA+ community, politics, sport, music, a trade and/or the arts.

8. Scholarship Procedure and Responsibilities

8.1. Procedure to assess applications for the Scholarship

- (a) The following procedure will generally be followed when processing applications for the Scholarship:
 - (1) use of a checklist to ensure compliance with eligibility requirements and a scored evaluation tool to rank applicant suitability against selection criteria and desirable characteristics.
 - (2) short listed candidates selected by the Selection Committee will be interviewed by representatives of the Selection Committee. References will be checked before unsuccessful candidates are notified.
 - (3) the Selection Committee will determine which applicants are most suitable to be awarded a Scholarship and advise the CEO of their decisions.
 - (4) the CEO and Scholarship & Mentoring Programs Manager, with the support of the Selection Committee, will match each successful applicant against an available Scholarship. The CEO will attempt to advise Named Scholarship benefactors prior to successful Scholarship applicants being informed.
- (b) A selection process implementation timetable sets out all the necessary steps and identifies responsible persons.
- (c) To avoid doubt, the steps outlined in paragraph (a) or in the selection timetable referred to in (b) are not mandatory, and a failure to take any step as outlined in that paragraph, or at all, or the taking of additional steps or the employment of other procedures will not vitiate any award of Scholarship that is ultimately determined by the Selection Committee.
- (d) An offer of a Scholarship can be accepted only by the execution of a written agreement between the candidate and The Foundation.
- (e) The Selection Committee is not required to provide applicants with reasons for declining their application for scholarship.

8.2. With oversight from the Chair of the Selection Committee, the Scholarship & Mentoring Programs Manager is responsible for:

- (a) ensuring that the annual Selection Process is undertaken in accordance with this policy and the implementation timetable;
- (b) all selection communications with Scholarship applicants;
- (c) arranging interview schedules and providing oversight to reference checks;

- (d) coordinating Selection Committee meetings and providing overviews on status of shortlisting and selection;
- (e) providing the Board with timely reports on the selection process;
- (f) bringing forward for discussion any significant proposed changes to the selection process or policy to the Managing Committee.

9. Scholar Performance: Measurement and Monitoring

9.1. Expectations

- (a) Every holder of the Scholarship will perform to the very best of their ability and will conduct themselves in a way that enhances the dignity and prestige of the Scholarship and The Foundation. Every Scholar must maintain regular communication with The Foundation, responding promptly as required.
- (b) Poor academic performance, failure to attend compulsory classes, lectures, seminars, meetings and the like, anti-social, delinquent or criminal behaviour, and association with others involved in such behaviour, are incompatible with the expectations of paragraph (a). Additionally, Scholar failure to actively maintain their mentoring relationship, submit their academic transcripts within 14 days of receiving them or complete required progress reports and updates will also be considered non-compliant.
- (c) The Scholar will ensure to the best of their ability that the relationship with their assigned Mentor is maintained. This includes regular communication with the Mentor.

9.2. Measurement and monitoring

- (a) Every current holder of the Scholarship must forward their academic results to The Foundation's Scholarship & Mentoring Programs Manager within 14 days of receiving them.
- (b) The CEO may, from time to time and from whatever source they see fit, seek to inform themselves as to the academic and general progress of any current holder of the Scholarship.
- (c) The CEO in consultation with the Scholarship & Mentoring Programs Manager and the Chair of the Selection Committee may from time-to-time conduct a formal appraisal of the performance and behaviour of any current holder of the Scholarship. The Scholarship holder will be entitled to be heard in the course of such an appraisal, and may be accompanied by a parent, guardian or friend, but may not be legally represented.

- (d) Without limiting the operation of section 5.3(d), the Selection Committee and CEO may exercise their powers under that clause as a result of any matter referred to in this section 9.

10. Mentor Arrangements

10.1. Mentor eligibility and accountability

- (a) Prospective Mentors are required to self-assess their abilities to meet The Foundation's requirements before lodging a Mentor application form on the Foundation's website.
- (b) Mentors are required to sign a Volunteer Agreement which sets out compliance with The Foundation's requirements.

10.2. Mentor identification and selection procedures

The Scholarship & Mentoring Programs Manager:

- (a) is responsible for identifying and selecting Mentors. They may involve suitably qualified members of State/Territory Committees in a process to attract suitable Mentors;
- (b) undertakes potential Mentor interviews and may conduct reference checks (typically where a potential Mentor is not a licensed or registered member of a professional services organisation) to ensure Mentor suitability;
- (c) makes reasonable efforts to ensure the Mentor has the relevant professional background and sound communication skills;
- (d) ensures the proposed Mentor meets the selection requirements detailed in 10.3.

10.3. Selection

Potential Mentors will be assessed based on the following criteria:

Essential

- (a) is an accomplished professional or a leader in their field of endeavour or a person specifically suited to the needs of the Scholar at that stage of their personal development;
- (b) is currently or has operated in roles of influence or leadership in an organisation;
- (c) is open about their gender identity, sexual orientation or sexual characteristics (mandatory);

- (d) has excellent community standing.

Desirable

- (a) has been formally recognised by peers for their achievements;
- (b) has managed or professionally developed others;
- (c) has had counselling, vocational guidance, teaching or mentoring experience.

10.4. Monitoring

The Scholarship & Mentoring Programs Manager:

- (a) is responsible for periodic liaising Mentors to ensure the Scholar/Mentor relationship complies with the guidelines established in the Mentor Handbook and the Foundation's Code of Conduct;
- (b) ensures the Mentor provides feedback on the Scholar's academic endeavours.

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