

ESF SCHOLARSHIPS POLICY

Introduction

ESF scholarships are offered annually to eligible individuals to cover the cost of travel and related expenses to enable the recipients to complete a program of informal study that will enhance Victoria's emergency management capacity for the benefit of our community. Since 2024 scholarships have been provided with support from Rotary (donor).

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to scholarship applicants and the scholarship committee to ensure ESF scholarships are awarded and administered in a fair and transparent manner.

Policy

The Emergency Services Foundation [ESF] will allocate and administer funds that provide annual scholarships to individuals [paid and volunteer] from its current member agencies (not associate members).

Previous unsuccessful applicants are welcome to reapply.

ESF staff and previous ESF scholarship recipients are precluded from applying again.

The ESF CEO will determine the total funds available for distribution as scholarships each year.

Individual grants will be calculated to cover the reasonable expense of economy class air travel, travel insurance, accommodation, ground travel and meal allowances.

Allowances are not paid for days of long air travel where meals and accommodation are catered for or for leisure days.

Recipients will be required to sign an Agreement and Indemnity form.

Scholarship grants make no provision for dependents or for completion of tertiary or other qualifications.

If it is mutually determined the Agreement to fulfill a scholarship commitment cannot be reached for any reason funds must be returned to ESF immediately.

Scholarship Committee

The ESF CEO will annually appoint and oversee a Scholarship Committee charged with the evaluation of candidates for scholarships covered by this policy.

The Scholarship Committee will include four people including an ESF scholarship alumni, a Rotary representative, an ESF Board or MHAG member and a mental health expert. One member of the committee will act as Chair be responsible for documenting the assessment of applications and providing feedback in written form to the CEO.

A donor may not chair the Scholarship Committee.

Each member of the Scholarship Committee covered by this policy must disclose any personal knowledge of, and relationship with, any potential grantee under consideration. It is understood that committee members may champion proposals they are familiar with but must refrain from

participation in the selection process in a circumstance where he or she would derive, directly or indirectly, a benefit if any potential grantee or grantees are selected over others.

Authorisation

Drafted by: Siusan MacKenzie

Version: 3

Reviewed by CEO: 2 February 2026

Scheduled review date: February 2028

ESF Scholarship Procedure

Definitions

Alumni – a person who has been granted an ESF scholarship and completed acquittal and reporting requirements

Donor – an individual or organisation, including a corporation, partnership or trust that contributes to fund an ESF scholarship[s]. The term also includes members of the donor's family and businesses controlled by the donor and family members.

Duties of the Board

The Board is responsible for including scholarships in ESF's annual plan and budget.

The Board may determine an annual theme for scholarships in line with its strategic priorities, which will then be considered as a selection criterion.

Duties of the ESF CEO

The ESF CEO is responsible for managing the administration of scholarship funds including:

- Setting the processing due dates relative to the scholarship program
- Ensuring scholarship opportunities are publicised widely
- Generating forms and documents related to the administration of scholarships
- Organising, training and evaluating the Scholarship Committee
- Receiving scholarship applications
- Confirming applicant eligibility
- Assisting the Scholarship Committee with the review and selection process.
- Publicising the outcome of the selection process
- Preparing and corresponding with scholarship applicants and recipients
- Issuing payments to the recipient
- Maintaining all scholarship correspondence and documentation
- Appointing a mentor for recipients
- Publishing and promoting final reports
- Acting as a liaison in communicating with Agency Heads
- Acting as a point of reference for scholarship enquiries
- Reviewing and updating scholarship governance
- Organising award ceremonies
- Sourcing and liaising with potential donors

Duties of the Scholarship Committee

The Scholarship Committee is responsible for assessing scholarship applications against selection criteria endorsed by the Board, making a recommendation according to an agreed schedule to the ESF CEO for the annual allocation of funds and recommending assessment process improvement.

Duties of Stakeholder Council Members

Stakeholder Council members, or their appointed delegate, must endorse any scholarship applications emanating from their workforce and are expected to actively sponsor any successful applicants.

Duties of scholarship recipients

Prior to the transfer of scholarship funds, scholarship recipients are required to sign an *Agreement and indemnity form* [Appendix A] which outlines ESFs expectations of the recipient in relation to execution of activities for which the scholarship has been granted.

Selection criteria

- Scholarship applications will be assessed by the Scholarship Committee against the following criteria:
 - Employment or registration as a volunteer with a Victorian Emergency Services Agency which is an ESF member
 - Stakeholder Council member support including arrangements for provision of leave for paid staff
 - A compelling case outlining how the scholarship study plan will meet an identified need and add value to the Victorian emergency management sector
 - A clear study plan, study timeline and outline of how funds will be spent
 - A compelling case outlining how the scholarship study plan will add value to the applicant's professional development
 - Capacity of the applicant to transfer and, or implement recommendations of the scholarship
 - Demonstrated written and oral communication skills
 - Conclusions as to the applicant's motivation, character, ability, or potential to meet the requirements of the scholarship.
 - If the Board identifies a theme, it wants pursued in scholarships this will also be included as a selection criterion.

Recordkeeping

The Foundation will maintain a data base of scholarship recipients including:

- All scholarship applications and associated evaluation forms pertaining to successful and unsuccessful applicants
- Specification of the amount and purpose of each scholarship
- All scholarship reports from recipients
- Note of recipient's involvement in events to share learnings of their scholarship

Procedure

1. Scholarships are widely promoted for three months prior to close of applications using a range of channels and with support from agencies
2. Potential applicants are invited to speak with the CEO for guidance with applications.
3. Scholarship applicants must complete and submit the online *scholarship application form* [Appendix B] making sure to reference application guidelines.
4. The CEO collates applications, does a preliminary check for eligibility and briefs the Scholarship Committee
5. The Scholarship Committee meets to assess each application against the agreed criteria.
6. Short listed applicants are invited to interview with the Scholarship Committee.
7. The Scholarship Committee determines scholarship grants guided by the annual allocation of funds.
8. The Scholarship Committee makes a recommendation to the CEO.
9. The CEO endorses recommendations of the Scholarship Committees.
10. The CEO advises successful applicants and their Heads of Agency.

11. The CEO advises unsuccessful applicants and includes a point of contact for further feedback *better together* if required.
12. The CEO meets the scholarship recipients to discuss and arrange for signing of the *Agreement and indemnity form*, bank transfer and a photo for promotional purposes.
13. ESF announces scholarship recipients using various media channels.
14. ESF transfers allocated funds to each scholarship recipient.
15. ESF introduces Scholarship recipient to an appropriate subject matter mentor.
16. The CEO provides a report writing briefing for scholarship recipients.
17. Scholarship recipients make final arrangements for their study tour.
18. Scholarship recipients provide ESF Executive Office with a copy of their travel insurance prior to departure.
19. Scholarship recipients undertake their study tour.
20. Scholarship recipients provide a report to ESF by an agreed date of no more than eight weeks after their study tour is complete.
21. ESF CEO arranges for scholarship recipients to present their findings at various forums and events, publishes a synopsis on the ESF website.

Typical Scholarship Program Schedule

July

- Scholarship related documentation reviewed
- Scholarship promotion begins at Emergency Management Conference
- Scholarship awardees presented with certificate

September

- Promotion of scholarships

October

- Promotion of scholarships
- Scholarship committee established
- Committee meetings scheduled

November

- Promotion of scholarships

December

- Early December scholarship applications close
- Applications collated by CEO
- Scholarship Committee evaluates and short lists applications
- Applicants invited for interviews
- Scholarship Committee interviews shortlisted applicants
- CEO endorses successful applicants
- Scholarship recipients advised and announced

January

- Scholarship recipients sign agreements and provide information for social media announcements

- Mentors are sourced

February

- Briefing for scholarship recipients
- Funds transferred to successful applicants

[Related documents](#)

[Emergency Services Foundation Scholarship Agreement and Indemnity \[Appendix A\]](#)

[Emergency Services Foundation Scholarship Application Form \[Appendix B\]](#)

[Emergency Service Foundation Scholarship FAQs \[Appendix C\]](#)

[Authorisation](#)

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Version: 3

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Emergency Services Foundation Scholarship Supported by Rotary Agreement and Indemnity [Appendix A]

This Agreement is made between the Emergency Services Foundation and Thomas Barber of FRV to undertake a study tour for the purpose of better understanding and making recommendations for the sector around how the use of psychedelic-assisted psychotherapy (PAP) can be sustainably integrated into workplace support systems for trauma-exposed organisations

Terms and conditions

- On my tour of study, I will represent the ESF and my employer in accordance with the Victorian Public Sector Code of Conduct.
- I agree to take up my scholarship and commence my study tour within six months of being notified of my successful application.
- All arrangements for leave to undertake the study associated with my ESF scholarship will be negotiated by me with my employer.
- I understand my scholarship grant of \$..... is intended to be exclusively used to cover travel expenses [economy class], travel insurance and all subsistence and incidental costs associated with my study.
- I understand my scholarship grant makes no provision for dependents to accompany me on my tour of study or for fees associated with tertiary or other qualifications.
- I understand that travel insurance is mandatory and that it is my responsibility to obtain an appropriate comprehensive policy for the duration of the tour.
- I agree to provide the ESF [admin@esf.com.au] a copy of my travel insurance policy certificate prior to my departure.
- I will provide the ESF with my personal banking details so that the allocated funds can be transferred directly to me.
- I agree to submit a comprehensive report of my study in an agreed format including an executive summary and digital images to the ESF and my Head of Agency within eight weeks of the tour completion. In my case this will be provided no later than
[insert date].
- I grant the ESF non-exclusive licence to summarise, distribute and promote my report provided that the ESF ensures in each instance that I receive proper attribution as the report's author.
- I will be the copyright owner of my report.
- Within reason I agree to share the findings of my study with the Victorian Emergency Management sector at conferences and events, if called upon to do so by the ESF.
- I will endeavour to work with ESF and my agency to implement any findings from my study that will benefit the Victorian emergency management community.
- I agree to use social media to promote my participation in the ESF scholarship supported by Rotary program using established hashtags.
- I agree that if it is mutually determined the Agreement to fulfill scholarship commitment cannot be reached for any reason funds must be returned to ESF immediately.

I, [name] hereby declare that I have read and understood the Terms and Conditions above and agree *better together* to abide by them.

Indemnity

I, [name], the undersigned hereby indemnify the Emergency Services Foundation and Rotary from and against all claims, demands, actions, suits, losses, costs, charges, expenses, damages and liabilities whatsoever including legal costs, which I may pay, sustain, suffer or incur by reason of my involvement in my scholarship awarded by the Emergency Services Foundation.

Signature.....

Date.....

Name.....

Emergency Services Foundation Scholarship Application Form

[Appendix B]

Personal details

Surname

Given name

Victorian Emergency Service Agency employed by or registered with

Position held

Business phone

Personal phone

Business email

Personal email

Professional referee name

Professional referee phone

Scholarship proposal

1. What is the problem/issue you wish to study?
2. What evidence can you provide that demonstrates this problem/issue been identified as a knowledge gap or need for the Victorian emergency management sector?
3. Who have you consulted with to garner support for your scholarship topic?
4. Why are you personally interested in this topic?
5. What are three SMART objectives you want to achieve from the study?
6. Where do you propose undertaking this study?
7. Why have you selected these locations?
8. Have you made preliminary enquiries about their interest in hosting a visit from you?
9. What are your credentials to undertake this study?
10. Where did you learn about this scholarship opportunity?
 - a. Word of mouth
 - b. Social media
 - c. Emergency Management Conference
 - d. Agency internal communications
 - e. Other _____

Study plan and associated costs

Proposed travel dates

Travel insurance quote

Air travel quoted costs

Number of nights away from home where accommodation and living allowance is required

Supporting Documents

Provide supporting documents such as evidence of Executive Leadership support of your application, provision of leave arrangements (if required), quotes for insurance or air travel costs.

Applicant statement

In applying for this scholarship, I understand the terms and conditions listed below:

1. Closing date for applications is *[date]* at midnight.
2. Scholarship recipients must be employed or registered as a volunteer with a Victorian Emergency Services Foundation member agency.
3. Application is endorsed by Head of Agency.
4. Scholarship recipients are required to provide a written report within eight weeks of study completion.
5. Scholarship recipients will be required to share their findings with the sector.
6. In 2026 preference will be given to applicants whose area of study aligns with ESF's focus on prevention of work-related mental injury

Signed _____ Date _____