



Sports & Exercise Podiatry Australia Research Scholarship

Funding Guidelines

Prepared by the Sports & Exercise
Podiatry Australia Board



1. OBJECTIVES

Sports & Exercise Podiatry Australia (SEPA) is a professional society representing registered podiatrists with an interest in sports and exercise. The SEPA Research Scholarship is a top-up scholarship for research higher degree students who are undertaking projects that are related to fields of sports and exercise podiatry. The purpose of the research scholarship is to provide financial aid to promote the development of clinician-scientists, while also advancing the evidence base within the field of sports and exercise podiatry. The Scholarship also seeks to encourage the dissemination and promotion of research findings within the sports and exercise medicine community.

2. ELIGIBILITY

The SEPA Research Scholarship is offered annually, on a competitive basis to those who meet the following criteria:

1. The applicant must be enrolled as a Research Higher Degree student within an Australian university.
2. The applicant must be able to show evidence that they have completed the confirmation (or equivalent) milestone, prior to funding being awarded.
3. The proposed research project (thesis) must be related to sports and/or exercise podiatry. This includes (but is not limited to) musculoskeletal pathology, exercise interventions, arthritis, biomechanics, exercise and diabetes, and active children.
4. The applicant should be able to provide evidence of a strong and supportive advisory team, with appropriate experience in the research area
5. A weighting will be given to applicants who are a) podiatrists and, b) financial members of SEPA.

3. GRANT DETAILS

3.1 Financial Value

The financial value of the Research Scholarship is \$5,000 per year, over a period of three years for applicants undertaking a PhD, or one year for applicants undertaking an M.Phil. The Scholarship will be paid in annual installments upon receipt of ethics approval for the project outlined in the application, as well as evidence of completing the confirmation milestone. The instalments will be paid on a date agreed to between the SEPA Board and the successful candidate. All successful applicants will enter a legally binding agreement with SEPA for the funding period. All money not spent during the funded period shall be returned to SEPA.



3.2 Scholarship Rules

1. The SEPA board (or representative) shall appoint a review panel (minimum three members) to judge applications. The panel's decision is final.
2. If, in the opinion of the review panel, entries are not of a sufficiently high standard to justify an award, the panel reserves the right not to offer a Research Scholarship.
3. Applications will be acknowledged on receipt.
4. Final decision and application feedback will be provided by the SEPA Board.

3.3 Selection Criteria

1. Applicant - (Relative to Opportunity, 50%)
 - Clinical Qualification (Podiatrist, other)
 - Academic record
 - Clinical practice record
 - Medals, prizes and awards
 - Research achievement (publications, presentations, posters, seminars)
 - Postgraduate/research training and/or research/professional experience
 - Broader community engagement.
 - SEPA Membership
2. Research Environment and Advisory Team (20%)
 - Advisory Team have relevant experience and expertise
 - Mentoring and training environment
 - Institutional support
 - Advisory team contains a podiatrist
3. Research Project (30%)
 - Aligned with SEPA objectives
 - Aims that are well-defined
 - Appropriate design
 - Feasible
 - Will contribute to the applicant's future career aspirations.

4. CONFIDENTIALITY & PRIVACY

Information contained in applications is regarded as confidential unless otherwise indicated and will be received and treated as confidential by SEPA. It is a legislated responsibility of all SEPA board members and authorised staff/individuals not to disclose to any person confidential information to which they become privy as a result of the exercise of their responsibilities to SEPA.

Information comprising the names of the successful research scholarship holder and the title of the research project will be published on the SEPA website and via appropriate social media avenues. SEPA makes publicly available information about the areas of research of the scholarship and a brief description of the project provided by the applicant. Documents containing personal information are handled and protected in accordance with the provisions of the *Privacy Act 1988*, which sets standards for the collection, storage, use and disclosure of, and



access to, personal information. Personal information is disclosed only with permission of the individual to whom it relates or where the Act allows.

5. SCHOLARSHIP OBLIGATIONS

It is expected that the applicant actively disseminates the findings of their research to the podiatry and broader sports and exercise medicine community. Publication in peer-reviewed journals and presentations at a scientific conference are expected outcomes. SEPA must be acknowledged as a funding source whenever the research is published or presented. It is expected that during the period of the Research Scholarship, the candidate will present at either:

- The SEPA Conference
- The Sports Medicine Australia Conference
- The Australasian Podiatry Conference

Unless provided elsewhere, the provided budget must account for these expectations as no additional funding will be provided from SEPA for conference expenditure.

6. APPLICATION PROCESS

The application must contain all the information necessary for consideration of the proposal without the need for further written or oral explanation, or reference to additional documentation, including the internet. All details in the application must be current at the time of application.

An application for the research scholarship can be downloaded from the SEPA website. All applications must use this template. Applications not using this template will not be considered. The application should include;

1. A maximum **two-page** curriculum vitae outlining the professional and academic achievements of applicant.
2. A maximum **three-page** proposal outlining the proposed project, including a brief background, project aims, proposed methods and anticipated outcomes.
3. A **one page** supporting statement from the applicant's advisory team outlining the experience and expertise of the team relative to the proposed project. The supporting statement should also outline the institutional support available to the applicant to ensure success of the project.

Any queries regarding the criteria, rules, procedures and application process, as well as the final research scholarship application can be emailed to:

Attn: Research Chair

Subject: SEPA Research Scholarship

Email: contact@sepa.org.au

Receipt of your application will be acknowledged by the committee. Once the application has been peer reviewed by the review committee you will be notified in



writing four weeks after the close of applications. All applicants will be notified of their success / non-success and will receive feedback on their application.

7. SELECTION AND APPROVAL PROCESS

7.1 Review Panel

The SEPA Board will appoint a Board Member to facilitate the research scholarship review process and act as Chair of the committee. The Chair must also appoint an independent review board which must consist of at least three additional members of which:

1. Two (2) must have a PhD from an approved tertiary institution
2. One (1) must have a demonstrated track record in sports and exercise podiatry research

All applications will be reviewed by at least three (3) individuals.

7.2 Conflicts of Interest

SEPA has procedures for declaring conflicts of interest and for members of the SEPA Board and/or Review Committee to withdraw from considering particular applications if they, or any research student associated with a board/review panel member, choose to submit a research scholarship application.

7.3 Exclusion

Exclusion of ineligible applications for SEPA funding may take place at any time during the selection process. Applications may be excluded under the following circumstances:

- the application contravenes, or is inconsistent with, this funding policy;
- the application does not address the selection criteria;
- the application includes any incomplete or misleading information;
- the applicant or advisory team are previous recipients of the SEPA scholarship and have not completed the dissemination and reporting requirements relating to the previous scholarship.

7.4 Assessment of Applications and Recommendations

Once an application has been successful in gaining funding, the SEPA research scholarship review committee will conduct an assessment of the application including any final checks of eligibility. Each application is assessed against the selection criteria and a recommendation forwarded to the SEPA Board.

7.5 Feedback

The SEPA Board will provide a short feedback report to all applicants based on the reviewer's comments.



7.6 Offer of Funding

A nominee of the SEPA Board (normally the research chair) will advise the successful applicant within four weeks of the closing application.

8. ADMINISTRATION OF GRANTS

8.1 Formal Agreement

All research scholarships are offered in accordance with a Formal Agreement between SEPA and the University representing the successful applicant. This Formal Agreement includes Schedules that detail specific conditions for each scholarship (e.g. budget). By initialing the Schedule, the applicant is agreeing to the conditions contained in the Formal Agreement and the Schedule.

The SEPA Research scholarship will not be paid prior to:

- A formal agreement between SEPA and the nominated University being in place;
- Evidence of ethics clearances and approvals being obtained.

Requests to vary the terms contained in the Formal Agreement or its Schedule must be submitted to the SEPA Board.

8.2 Payments

Payment of funds will be made to the nominated bank account of the University or public health institution at the commencement of the funding period and subject to ethics approval being provided. Funds must be used only for the purposes approved and detailed in the Formal Agreement and its Schedule.

8.3 Responsible Conduct of Research

Research funded by SEPA must comply with the Podiatry Board of Australia's Code of Conduct guidelines which can be accessed from www.podiatryboard.gov.au. Any misconduct, breach or non-compliance with the Podiatry Board of Australia's Standards and/or Guidelines will be acted on in accordance with the Complaints Procedure and Disciplinary Tribunal process from the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA). www.ahpra.gov.au.

9. ETHICS AND OTHER REQUIRED APPROVALS

SEPA reserves the right to request all information relating to decisions regarding ethical issues arising from an application. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that written consent and/or approval is granted regarding potential ethical issues related to the research. Formal approval must be provided to the SEPA board before funding is released. The offer of funding may be withdrawn if approvals are not obtained.



9.1 Use of Personal Information

Under the *Privacy Act 1988*, any form of research involving humans (including epidemiological research) that uses personal information obtained from a Commonwealth Department or agency must be considered by a Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC).

An Australian Government Agency includes Australian Government Ministers and Australian Government Departments (other than the Commonwealth Parliamentary Departments), bodies or persons established and performing functions under Commonwealth laws. Specifically included are the Federal Courts, the Australian Federal Police and the Australian Capital Territory Courts. Examples of some other agencies include the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the Australian Electoral Commission, Telstra, the Department of Veterans' Affairs, the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, the Department of Health and Ageing, the Health Insurance Commission and the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

Under section 95 of the *Privacy Act 1988*, SEPA is able, with the approval of the Privacy Commissioner, to issue guidelines for the protection of privacy in the conduct of health and medical research. Under section 95 of the *Privacy Act 1988*, acts of agencies undertaken in the course of health and medical research will not be an infringement of the Information Privacy Principles contained in the Privacy Act.

9.2 Administration of Drugs to Humans

All research studies involving the administration to humans of drugs, chemical agents or vaccines must be considered by the relevant HREC to assess the appropriateness of their use. They may also be subject to the Clinical Trials Notification/Exemption schemes administered by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA). Further information on the Clinical Trials Notification/Exemption schemes can be obtained from the TGA: <http://www.tga.gov.au/>

9.3 Ethical Implications of Human Research

SEPA requires assurance that research involving humans has been reviewed and is approved by a relevant HREC as complying with the National Health & Medical Research Council's National Statement, which is available on the NHMRC website at: <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/publications/national-statement-ethical-conduct-human-research-2007-updated-2018>. Such approval must be provided to SEPA before funds are released.

Human research, as defined by the National Statement, is conducted with or about people, or their data or tissue. Human participation in research is therefore to be understood broadly, to include the involvement of human beings through:

- taking part in surveys, interviews or focus groups;
- undergoing psychological, physiological or medical testing or treatment;
- being observed by researchers;
- researchers having access to their personal documents or other materials;



- the collection and use of their body organs, tissues or fluids (eg skin, blood, urine, saliva, hair, bones, tumour and other biopsy specimens) or their exhaled breath; and
- access to their information (in individually identifiable, re-identifiable or non-identifiable form) as part of an existing published or unpublished source or database.

9.4 Use of Datasets for Research Purposes

Applications for funding to support datasets for use in research must comply with the Minimum Guidelines for Health Registers for Statistical and Research Purposes, which is available on the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare website at: <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/corporate-publications/minimum-guidelines-for-health-registers-for-statis/contents/table-of-contents>

10. OBJECTIONS AND COMPLAINTS

Applicants may contact the SEPA Board seeking clarification on the outcome of their application for a research scholarship or to state an objection to that outcome. Objections must be lodged in writing through to the SEPA Board within 28 days of the date on the letter notifying the outcome of the application. The Board will provide a written response to all objections.

11. ANNUAL REPORTING

Annual financial reports will be required by December 1 to the SEPA Board stating YTD expenditure and on completion of the funding period 30th December stating total overall expenditure and surplus funds. In the case of funds not spent and/or surplus funds at the end of the funding period, SEPA will initiate recovery procedures.