

QuakeCoRE PhD Scholarship Policy

Overview:

QuakeCoRE is New Zealand's Centre of Research Excellence in earthquake resilience. As part of its research budget, QuakeCoRE has a limited number of PhD scholarships that are available on a contestable basis. Applications for a QuakeCoRE PhD scholarship will be assessed biannually by the Scholarship Assessment Committee. Applications are to be submitted to applications@quakecore.nz via the intended PhD primary supervisor, who must be willing to sign an agreement with QuakeCoRE if the application is successful.

The proposed research must be undertaken through enrolment at a New Zealand university. The primary supervisor must be either a QuakeCoRE Leadership Team Member, Principal Investigator (PI) or Associate Investigator (AI); additional information on becoming a QuakeCoRE AI is available on our website ([here](#)). The application for a QuakeCoRE PhD scholarship does not require a detailed research plan, but must articulate the primary characteristics of the intended research in a manner that demonstrates alignment with QuakeCoRE mission and research programme. Successful applicants and the primary supervisor must sign an agreement, which will include the research plan and a copy of the scholarship regulations (see below).

QuakeCoRE PhD scholars must complete annual reporting to confirm that their research is progressing appropriately and continues to be aligned with QuakeCoRE research priority areas. Scholarship funding may be terminated if the research does not maintain alignment with the QuakeCoRE research priority areas.

QuakeCoRE PhD scholars are expected to present their findings at the QuakeCoRE Annual Meeting and other QuakeCoRE events, participate in relevant QuakeCoRE Flagship video conferences, and are required to acknowledge the funding support provided by QuakeCoRE when presenting or publishing their research findings.

The intent of all QuakeCoRE scholarships is to attract outstanding candidates to undertake PhD research within the scope of activities covered by QuakeCoRE, and increase diversity amongst QuakeCoRE PhD students. QuakeCoRE scholars are expected to act as advocates for QuakeCoRE and the development of a national collaboratory.

Two categories of scholarship support are available:

- 1) a 3 year PhD Scholarship for the commencement of a PhD. Students must not have completed more than 12 months of their PhD at the time applications close to be eligible. In most cases application will be prior to starting PhD. Students must commence studies on or before the 1st January 2018.

- 2) a 1 year PhD Extension Scholarship to cover the 4th year of PhD study (i.e. beyond an existing 3yr PhD Scholarship). Students must have completed 18 or more months of their PhD at the time applications close, in order to be eligible.

Only one application under each category can be submitted by any one academic staff member as the principal supervisor in any QuakeCoRE Scholarship round.

QuakeCoRE may elect to ring-fence certain scholarships for key groups; these scholarships will be clearly identified in the call for applications.

Assessment criteria:

Successful applicants must be able to establish that they will be outstanding PhD researchers, primarily by articulating their exceptional past performance as related to their intended scope of research for their PhD degree. Because of the broad range of skills necessary to excel at research within the scope of QuakeCoRE, and the need to accommodate applicants from a wide range of backgrounds, the assessment criteria below are intentionally broad.

A Scholarship Assessment Committee will be formed to review each of the applications. Where a member of the Scholarship Assessment Committee is listed as a primary supervisor for an applicant, they will not be able to serve on the Scholarship Assessment Committee and an alternate member will be recruited.

The Scholarship Assessment Committee will consider the following in allocating scholarships:

1. Evidence the applicant and proposed supervisor have a good understanding of the QuakeCoRE goals and research priorities, clear research objectives and overall goals. The primary evaluation for these criteria will be via the following 3 documents: student ambitions and future career aspirations, summary of the research and letter of support from Primary Supervisor.
2. Evidence the applicant has high potential for research excellence as indicated through: (i) reference letters; (ii) relevant leadership and extra-curricular activities; and (iii) any high quality publications (which will be considered an asset, but not a requirement, for attaining a QuakeCoRE PhD Scholarship).
3. Academic performance of applicant in past qualifications.
4. Quality of the institution(s) attended for past qualifications.
5. The 'fit' of the proposed research within QuakeCoRE research activities (refer to Annual QuakeCoRE Collaboration Research Plan). The application form must indicate the relevant research area that the proposed PhD topic aligns to. The relevant Flagship Leader or Technology Platform Leader (or substitute in cases of a conflict of interest) will provide supplementary information to the scholarships assessment panel as to the 'fit' of the proposed research within the QuakeCoRE activities.
6. Increasing opportunities for New Zealand citizens, under-represented groups and gender equality in QuakeCoRE disciplines.
7. Ensuring diversity of QuakeCoRE PhD Scholarships across the spectrum of QuakeCoRE disciplinary research areas.

8. Track record of the proposed supervisors in terms of: (i) commitment to the vision and mission of QuakeCoRE as a national collaboratory; and (ii) research deliverables, particularly with respect to QuakeCoRE research.

In the case of applications for the 1 year PhD Extension Scholarship to cover the 4th year of PhD study, additional consideration will be given to the progress to date that the student has made in the PhD.

Submission requirements:

Applications will be considered biannually (specific deadlines will be provided for each round).

All applications are submitted by the proposed primary supervisor; NOT by the PhD student themselves. The expectation is that these scholarships will be awarded to the most outstanding PhD students, and it is intended that primary supervisors will only propose students that meet this criterion. This process is intended to reduce the burden on the QuakeCoRE Scholarship Assessment Committee tasked with evaluating applications. Only one application per primary supervisor per category is permitted each round. The application must include the coversheet and supporting documentation detailed in Appendix 2. **All materials must be integrated into one PDF document in the order specified.**

Application outcome and feedback:

Applicants will generally be notified within 1 month of the closing date of applications (a specific outcome date will be announced for each round). Applicants will be assigned a final rank of 1–3:

- Ranking 1: Successful.
- Ranking 2: Unsuccessful, but may re-apply in the subsequent round.
- Ranking 3: Unsuccessful, and cannot reapply in subsequent rounds.

Note that due to funding limits, Ranking 2 and 3 above will be combined in Round 5 (Sept-Oct 2017). The Primary Supervisor will be able to seek summary feedback on unsuccessful applications.

Contracting:

An agreement must be signed by the primary supervisor and the student after a student has been selected to receive a QuakeCoRE PhD Scholarship, and before scholarship payments commence. This contract will sit under the QuakeCoRE Collaboration Agreement with the Partners. The intent is to ensure the nature of the research activities are in line with the mission of QuakeCoRE. The contract will include the following items:

1. A research plan.
2. Identification of the secondary external supervisor and any other co-supervisors. Consistent with QuakeCoRE's vision and mission related to a national collaboratory, all QuakeCoRE PhD scholars must have at least two supervisors from two or more different NZ research institutions. Where a second NZ-based co-supervisor from a different institution than the primary supervisor is not pragmatic, international co-supervision is required. All supervisors are expected to be actively engaged in the research programme. 1 Year extension scholarships are exempt for this requirement.
3. Agreement to QuakeCoRE PhD Scholarship regulations (see below).

QuakeCoRE PhD Scholarship Regulations:

Below are the QuakeCoRE Scholarship regulations as detailed in the agreement template. This scholarship agreement will sit under the QuakeCoRE Collaboration Agreement between the University of Canterbury as the Host and the collaborating organisations as the Partners.

Regulations A1-19 below are specifically for the so-called '3 year PhD Scholarship' (i.e. 3.0EFTS). "QuakeCoRE-Plus scholarship"¹ are subject to regulations A1-19
At the end, differences in our regulations for the '1 year PhD Extension Scholarship' are detailed below (B1-9).

- A1. The QuakeCoRE PhD Scholarship is an annual student stipend of \$27,000 for a period of 36 months (or until PhD thesis submission, whichever is lesser), plus the payment of university PhD fees at the domestic rate for the corresponding time period. It does not include other compulsory university fees (e.g. student services levy, medical insurance) or accommodation costs.
- A2. The QuakeCoRE PhD Scholarship offer is conditional on the student gaining admission to a New Zealand university that is a Partner of QuakeCoRE. The student will need to apply for admission in the normal way; QuakeCoRE will not directly provide assistance with admission.
- A3. Students which accept a QuakeCoRE PhD Scholarship must meet the criteria for enrolment and commence their PhD study within 6 months of the QuakeCoRE PhD Scholarship letter acceptance date. If unforeseen circumstances arise which delay the start date, communication with QuakeCoRE should be made immediately. Any extension to the deadline to commence their PhD enrolment is at the sole discretion of QuakeCoRE. Under no circumstances can a scholarship continue beyond 31 December 2020.
- A4. Students who have already commenced a PhD are eligible to apply for a QuakeCoRE PhD Scholarship as long as their PhD enrolment duration is less than 6 months at the time the scholarship round closes. For existing students, the maximum stipend tenure will be reduced by the period of enrolment already completed.
- A5. QuakeCoRE Scholarships are initially offered to the student via a QuakeCoRE PhD scholarship offer letter from QuakeCoRE. Successful applicants must indicate their intention to accept the scholarship by signing the letter and returning it to QuakeCoRE within 10 working days of their PhD scholarship offer being made or the offer will lapse. After this letter has been received, the Host will initiate the formal agreement that will cover the scholarship. The formal agreement will be in the form of a Statement of Work for student enrolling with a QuakeCORE Partner or an internal student agreement for student enrolling with the Host.
- A6. Consistent with QuakeCoRE's vision and mission related to a national collaboratory, all QuakeCoRE PhD scholars must have at least two supervisors from two or more different New Zealand research institutions. Where a New Zealand-based external secondary supervisor from a different institution than the primary supervisor is not pragmatic, international co-supervision is required. Both of these supervisors are expected to be actively engaged in the research programme.

¹ Refer to A12 for a definition of a "QuakeCoRE-Plus" PhD Scholarship.

- A7. The scholarship can only commence once QuakeCoRE has received an official letter from the relevant QuakeCoRE Partner University confirming that the student has begun their research and after the formal agreement has been signed.
- A8. Stipend costs will be paid in equal monthly instalments into the student's nominated bank account.
- A9. QuakeCoRE PhD Scholarships can be suspended for up to one year on request for legitimate reasons associated with the health and wellbeing of the researcher or unforeseen delays associated with research that prevent the PhD scholar from being effective. Any suspension must be communicated in writing to QuakeCoRE within 10 days of the suspension application being accepted.
- A10. QuakeCoRE PhD Scholarships cannot be extended beyond 36 months of financial support. However, supervisors of QuakeCoRE PhD scholars can submit proposals in a QuakeCoRE contestable funding round that incorporates a request for financial support for a PhD student or the scholar may apply for a 1yr PhD Extension Scholarship.
- A11. Successful QuakeCoRE PhD scholars must apply to their university's PhD scholarship scheme as soon as is practical. At least two attempts at university PhD scholarships must be made by the QuakeCoRE PhD scholar. Evidence of such applications, and their outcomes, must be provided in the relevant Annual Report provided by the PhD student to QuakeCoRE. If evidence is not provided in the Annual Report, the QuakeCoRE PhD Scholarship will be reduced by 50% for the following year.
- A12. PhD scholars successful in securing a university or other "prestige"³ PhD scholarship will transition to a "QuakeCoRE-Plus" PhD Scholarship, which will provide an additional supplement to the university PhD scholarship for the remainder of their 36 month term². The amount of the additional supplement will be such that the total stipend from the university PhD and QuakeCoRE-Plus Scholarships equals \$30,000/yr. In addition, they will be eligible for a maximum of \$1,000/year in reimbursements (to be filed with the Annual Report) for attendance at the QuakeCoRE Annual Meeting and research-related costs. The regulations for the "QuakeCoRE-Plus" PhD Scholarship are the same as those for the 'standard' QuakeCoRE PhD Scholarship.
- A13. It is the responsibility of the PhD scholar to notify QuakeCoRE when supplementary funding in excess of \$5,000 is received from a partner institution (including, but not limited to, a university PhD scholarship). Dual scholarships in excess of \$5,000 total cannot normally be held. An additionally non-prestige scholarship can be held with approval of QuakeCoRE with a corresponding reduction in the QuakeCoRE support to the equivalent of the QuakeCoRE Scholarship support level. Dual prestige³ scholarships would be managed via the QuakeCoRE Plus regulations. Students are responsible to refund any excess payments made in cases where dual scholarships are held which are not declared to QuakeCoRE in relation to regulations A11-A12.

² To remove ambiguity: (1) The QuakeCoRE PhD Scholarship will be terminated (incl. both stipend and payment of university fees); (2) future PhD fees will come from the scholars university scholarship; (3) the student will commence a QuakeCoRE-Plus PhD Scholarship with the noted stipend and research-related costs. The date of transfer between these two scholarships will be the same as the start date of the scholar's university PhD scholarship.

³ "Prestige" scholarships are defined as those which are awarded based on merit of the applicant with qualifications of applicant approximately equivalent to that of University Doctoral scholarships at NZ Universities. Determination if a specific scholarship constitutes a "prestige" scholarship is at the judgment of the QuakeCoRE Director.

- A14. QuakeCoRE PhD scholars are expected to present their findings at the QuakeCoRE Annual Meeting and other QuakeCoRE events; provide relevant research data and results in a timely manner to the QuakeCoRE Technology Platforms; and are required to acknowledge the funding support provided by QuakeCoRE when presenting or publishing their research findings.
- A15. QuakeCoRE scholars are expected to act as advocates for QuakeCoRE and the development of a national collaboratory.
- A16. Continuation of the scholarship is conditional on satisfactory academic progress and adherence to the University's statutes and regulations.
- A17. In the event of a recipient's withdrawal from a PhD, the scholarship will be withdrawn, and any funds paid following the withdrawal period may be recovered.
- A18. A QuakeCoRE Scholarship cannot be held simultaneously with fulltime time employment.
- A19. QuakeCoRE PhD students are required to submit an Annual Report, which summarises the satisfactory research progress made; contributions to QuakeCoRE regarding presentations at the QuakeCoRE Annual Meeting and participation in other QuakeCoRE events and workshops; and evidence of university PhD scholarship applications (see regulation A11).
- A20. By accepting a QuakeCoRE PhD Scholarship, the student provides permission to QuakeCoRE (and the relevant university) to advertise their scholarship success publicly.

Regulations B1-B9 below indicate the differences of the '1yr PhD Extension Scholarship' (1.0EFTS) relative to the above regulations

- B1. Regulation A1 is replaced by: The QuakeCoRE PhD Scholarship is an annual student stipend of \$27,000 for a period of 12 months (or until PhD thesis submission, whichever is lesser), plus the payment of university PhD fees at the domestic rate for the corresponding time period. It does not include other compulsory university fees (e.g. student Services Levy, medical insurance) or accommodation costs.
- B2. Regulation A2 is replaced by: The QuakeCoRE PhD Scholarship is conditional on the student remaining enrolled at a New Zealand university that is a Partner of QuakeCoRE.
- B3. Regulation A3 is replaced by: Students must commence their 1yr PhD extension Scholarship within 18 months of the QuakeCoRE PhD Scholarship letter acceptance date. If unforeseen circumstances arise which delay the start date, communication with QuakeCoRE should be made immediately. Any extension to the deadline is at the sole discretion of QuakeCoRE.
- B4. Regulation A4 is not applicable.
- B5. Regulation A5 is replaced by: Successful applicants must indicate their intention to accept the scholarship within 10 working days of their PhD scholarship offer being made or the offer will lapse. The scholarship can only commence once QuakeCoRE has received an official letter from the relevant QuakeCoRE Partner University confirming that the student has completed 3.0EFTS of PhD study, and is not currently receiving other scholarship or fees support and after a collaboration agreement has been signed by QuakeCoRE, student, and supervisors.
- B6. Regulations A6-9 are unchanged
- B7. Regulation A10 is replaced by: QuakeCoRE PhD Scholarships cannot be extended beyond 12 months of financial support.
- B8. Regulations A11 and A12 are not applicable.
- B9. Regulations A13-19 are unchanged.

In addition to the regulations the agreement requires:

- Reporting to be submitted on reporting templates that will be supplied to the Collaborating Organisation by the Host as required.
- All students must sign up to the QuakeCoRE Portal
- At the commencement of the scholarship, all students must inform QuakeCoRE of their initial enrolment date and student ID number
- Upon completion on the PhD, the student must inform QuakeCoRE of the submission date of their thesis and undertake a short exit questionnaire.
- Before publication of outputs, a publication number for inclusion in the publication acknowledgement must be requested via the QuakeCoRE Portal.
- Acknowledgment of collaboration and funding sources, including the use of the Centre logo and website is required where appropriate. The wording of this acknowledgement shall be as follows “This project was (partially) supported by QuakeCoRE, a New Zealand Tertiary Education Commission-funded Centre. This is QuakeCoRE publication number xxxxxx”.
- An electronic copy of any publication is to be emailed to Research@quakecore.nz within 30 (thirty) days of its acceptance to any publisher.
- It is expected that all Collaborating Organisation Science Leader³ will name the Centre as one of their affiliations in all published works, presentations and media releases during the tenure of their appointment to this role.
- The Collaborating Organisation acknowledges it is imperative to adhere to the deliverables and reporting schedules in order for the University to meet its obligations to the TEC. Should the Collaborating Organisation experience any difficulties in meeting these requirements, the Collaborating Organisation is to advise the Centre Leader immediately to avoid breach of the Funding Agreement with the TEC.
- The Collaborating Organisation Science Leader will take an active part in the Centre activities including, but not limited to, attendance at the Centre’s Annual Meetings and in consultation with the Centre’s Leadership, actively participate (via video link where necessary) in aligned research meetings, seminars and workshops, as is reasonably required.
- The Collaborating Organisation Science Leader will proactively share success stories or research updates for the website, newsletters and any other media releases, as is reasonably required.

³ Collaborating Organisation Science Leader is the primary supervisor.

Appendix 2: QuakeCoRE PhD Scholarship Application: Coversheet and Required Application Documentation

(This appendix is available as a separate word file from the QuakeCoRE website or upon request from applications@quakecore.nz)

QuakeCoRE PhD Scholarship Coversheet Form September 2017

- All applications must be received by Noon New Zealand Standard Time (UTC+12) on 20 October 2017.
- Applications must be submitted via email to applications@quakecore.nz
- LATE APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED

Student personal details

Family Name		
First Name(s)		
Street Address		
Suburb		
Town/City		
Country		
Gender	<input type="checkbox"/>	Male
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Female
Date of Birth		
Do you identify as Māori or Pasifika?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes
	<input type="checkbox"/>	No
	If you identify as Māori, what are your iwi affiliations?	
What is your nationality?		
Do you require a visa to study in New Zealand?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes
	<input type="checkbox"/>	No
	If you answered yes to the question above, what is your current visa status (select one)?	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Visa has been issued
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Visa application has been submitted
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Visa not yet applied for
Email Address		
Is this the student's first application for a QuakeCoRE Scholarship?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes
	<input type="checkbox"/>	No

Institutional details for proposed study

Name of University				
What is your current enrolment status (select one)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Currently enrolled	<input type="checkbox"/>	Application Pending
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Application Approved	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not Yet Applied
Department/School				
Primary Supervisor				
Secondary External Supervisor (must be at separate institution)				
Proposed Research Title				
Proposed Start Date	1 January 2018 (please contact QuakeCoRE prior to submission of this application if you wish to change this)			
Student Number				

Application type and flagship research area

Application Type (select only one)	<input type="checkbox"/>	3 Year Scholarship (3.0EFTS)
	<input type="checkbox"/>	1 Year Extension Scholarship (1.0EFTS)
QuakeCoRE Research Area	Please select from FP1, FP2, FP3, FP4, FP5, FP6, TP1, TP2, TP3, TP4 or other	

DECLARATION (Proposed primary supervisor)

I have discussed this project with the proposed secondary external supervisor and they have confirmed their commitment to be actively involved the proposed PhD project. I understand that documentation submitted for this application, cannot be returned. I have read and understand the Regulations for this Scholarship and in completing my details below I am accepting the Regulations.

Supervisors' Full Name:	Date:
Supervisors' Email:	

In addition to the previous coversheet, the following information must be provided in order and submitted as a single PDF file. It is the responsibility of the submitter to ensure that applications are complete. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

1. Letter of support (max 2pgs) from the proposed primary supervisor, which should include: (i) the relation the student's proposed research has to other QuakeCoRE activities and its vision and mission (including how any necessary research-related costs will be met); (ii) a statement of intention of the student and the supervisors to sign the collaboration agreement if the application is successful; and (iii) the expected enrolment date of the student (which should be realistic given visa timelines). A letter of support from a second supervisor (max 2pgs) is also encouraged, but not required. In the case of an application for the 1 year PhD Extension Scholarship, the requirement for item (iii) is not required.
2. A CV (max 2pgs) of the student applicant. The CV should summarize: (i) academic grades in pre-requisite degrees; (ii) relevant research experience including papers published and presentations delivered; (iii) relevant leadership activities; (iv) extra-curricular activities.
3. A summary (max 1pg) written by the student detailing their ambitions and future career aspirations. Student's aspiration letters need to explicitly comment on why engagement with QuakeCoRE is of value to them.
4. A summary (max 1pg) of the research the student proposes to undertake (including progress on the research in the case of the 1 year PhD Extension Scholarship option). This may be developed in collaboration with the supervisor but must be written by the student. Research summary must explain how their proposed research explicitly fits with the QuakeCoRE research programme (refer to the Annual QuakeCoRE Collaboration Research Plan information on the webpage). This summary will form the basis of the research scope for the Post Graduate Student agreement contract if the student is awarded a scholarship.
5. Official transcripts from all universities attended by the student, with translation to English if necessary. Academic transcripts must include, or be accompanied by, an explanation of the grading scale used. Copies (rather than originals) of transcripts should be included in your application.
6. A list of all student financial support which is: (i) secured; (ii) under consideration (in which case the expected outcome date should be noted). Details of the nature, extent, and duration of support should also be provided. This is particularly critical for applications for a 1 year PhD Extension Scholarship in which a formal letter from the current or past financial support provider also needs to indicate the end date for the existing funding.
7. Two reference letters, from 'external referees', such as master's thesis supervisor, or undergraduate project supervisor, who can comment on the student's academic background and research potential. **These reference letters must be blind to the student and submitted directly by the referees to the proposed PhD supervisor.**
8. If listed on CV, pdf copies of up to 3 journal and/or conference papers the student has published.

9. Either: (a) an offer of enrolment from the proposed host university; (b) a brief statement from the proposed primary supervisor that such an offer is expected to be obtained without problems (if the PhD applicant is from a non-English speaking country the statement should indicate that the student meets the necessary English language requirements; does the student's undergraduate degree meet the necessary requirements for entry into the University's PhD programme); or (c) in the case of the 1 year PhD Extension Scholarship applications, the official enrolment date and if any part-time or suspensions of study have been taken.

Checklist for inclusion in the final PDF of application for submission:

- Cover sheet (max 2pgs – delete the information after the declaration)
- Letter of Support from Primary Supervisor (max 2pgs) (Optional – Letter of Support from Secondary Supervisor)
- Student CV (max 2pgs)
- Student ambitions and future career aspirations (max 1pg)
- Summary of the research (max 1pg)
- Official Student transcripts (with English translation if required) and any explanatory information
- List of student financial support
- 2 Reference letters from external referees
- ≤3 journal and/or conference papers the student has published (if listed on CV)
- Copy of enrolment offer or statement about any expected problems with enrolment or details of enrolment.