

Te Hiranga Rū QuakeCoRE PhD Scholarship Policy

September 2021

Overview:

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

The intent of all QuakeCoRE scholarships is to attract outstanding candidates to support PhD research that contributes to the QuakeCoRE mission, and increase diversity amongst QuakeCoRE PhD students. QuakeCoRE scholars are expected to act as advocates for QuakeCoRE and the development of a national collaboratory.

The proposed research must be undertaken through enrolment at a New Zealand university. The primary supervisor is likely to be either a QuakeCoRE Principal Investigator (PI) or Associate Investigator (AI). Consideration will also be given for researchers who are newly engaged with the 2021 – 2028 Te Hiranga Rū QuakeCoRE Research Programme.

The application for a QuakeCoRE PhD scholarship does not require a detailed research plan, but must articulate the primary characteristics of the research in a manner that demonstrates alignment with the QuakeCoRE mission and research programme. Information on the research programme is available in the 2021 RfP Guidelines, which is available [here](#). Successful applicants and their 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. Scholarship funding may be terminated if the research does not maintain alignment with the QuakeCoRE mission or 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 Research Programme meetings, and are required to acknowledge the funding support provided by QuakeCoRE when presenting or publishing their research findings.

The following type(s) of scholarship support are available:

- 1) A 3 year PhD Scholarship for the commencement of a PhD. Students must not have completed more than six (6) 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 within six months from the date of their Award Letter.

Note that funding for Research Masters student scholarships and existing PhD Students (enrolled beyond 6 months) is available through the RfP; details are available [here](#).

Only one application can be submitted by any one academic staff member as the primary supervisor in any QuakeCoRE Scholarship round.

QuakeCoRE may choose to direct scholarships towards key groups to ensure equitable opportunities. These scholarships will be clearly identified in the call for applications. For this call, a minimum of 30 % of scholarships will be awarded to qualified applicants from the following groups: Māori as tangata whenua, Pasifika people, engineers who identify as women and those who are gender diverse.

It is recognised that due to the ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic there remains uncertainty around the ability of students from overseas to commence studies in Aotearoa New Zealand. Supervisors are asked to consider the ability of candidates to successfully undertake their PhD studies in this current environment. Where a student is currently overseas and intends to commence their PhD under the offshore enrolment option, supervisors will be required to outline how they plan to support the student while they are working remotely and how uncertainty in border restrictions may impact the student's research. Note that no stipend payments can be made until the student has arrived in Aotearoa New Zealand. Support provided under this scholarship does not include any assistance with mandatory government Managed Isolation and Quarantine (MIQ) or visas.

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 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 proposed research topic, and letter of support from the primary supervisor.
2. Increasing opportunities for New Zealand citizens and permanent residents, Māori and Pasifika, under-represented groups, early-career researcher supervisors and gender diversity in all QuakeCoRE disciplines.
3. Ensuring diversity of QuakeCoRE PhD Scholarships across the spectrum of QuakeCoRE disciplinary research areas.
4. 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).
5. Academic performance of applicant in past qualifications.
6. Quality of the institution(s) attended for past qualifications.

7. The 'fit' of the proposed research within QuakeCoRE research activities (refer to 2021 RfP Guidelines – available [here](#)). The application form must indicate the relevant research area that the proposed PhD topic aligns to. The relevant Programme Area 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.
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.

Submission requirements:

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

Where inconsistent information is provided as part of the application process, the coversheet information will be taken as correct.

All applications are submitted by the 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 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:

Applicants will generally be notified within 2 months of the closing date of applications (a specific outcome date will be announced for each round). 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 or for non-Partners as a separate contract. 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. 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.

- A1. The QuakeCoRE PhD Scholarship is an annual fulltime student stipend of \$27,500 per annum for a period of 36 months (or until PhD thesis submission, whichever is lesser), plus \$8,000 per annum to cover the payment of university PhD fees and contribute to other related 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 Award Letter 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. 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.
- A4. 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.
- A5. 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.
- A6. It is the responsibility of the PhD scholar to notify QuakeCoRE when any supplementary funding is received. In order to ensure equity and the appropriate use of CoRE funds, in general, supplementary funding may only be held up to a maximum value of 25% of the total funding awarded under this scholarship, amounts over this threshold will be considered on a case-by-case basis by QuakeCoRE.
- A7. QuakeCoRE PhD Scholarships can be suspended for up to one year on request for legitimate reasons associated with parental leave, 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.
- A8. QuakeCoRE PhD scholars are expected to present their findings at the QuakeCoRE Annual Meeting and other QuakeCoRE events; and are required to acknowledge the funding support provided by QuakeCoRE when presenting or publishing their research findings. Up to \$1,000 travel support will be provided to allow for attendance at the QuakeCoRE Annual Meeting.

- A9. QuakeCoRE scholars are expected to act as advocates for QuakeCoRE and the development of a national collaboratory.
- A10. Continuation of the scholarship is conditional on satisfactory academic progress and adherence to the student's host University's statutes and regulations.
- A11. 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.
- A12. A QuakeCoRE Scholarship cannot be held simultaneously with full time employment.
- A13. 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. A template for this report will be provided by QuakeCoRE.
- A14. By accepting a QuakeCoRE PhD Scholarship, the student provides permission to QuakeCoRE (and the relevant university) to advertise their scholarship success publicly.

In addition to the regulations the agreement requires:

- Reporting to be submitted on reporting templates that will be supplied as required.
- 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
- Acknowledgment of collaboration and funding sources, including the use of the QuakeCoRE 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 quakecore@canterbury.ac.nz within 30 (thirty) days of its acceptance by any publisher.
- It is expected that the primary supervisor will name QuakeCoRE as one of their affiliations in all published works, presentations and media releases during the tenure of their appointment to this role.
- The primary supervisor 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 primary supervisor experience any difficulties in meeting these requirements, the Primary Supervisor is to advise QuakeCoRE immediately to avoid breach of the Funding Agreement with the TEC.
- The primary supervisor will take an active part in QuakeCoRE activities including, but not limited to, attendance at QuakeCoRE Annual Meetings, participate in relevant QuakeCoRE Research Programme meetings, participate in QuakeCoRE seminars and workshops, as is reasonably expected.
- The primary supervisor will proactively share success stories or research updates for the website, newsletters and any other media releases, as is reasonably required.

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 quakecore@canterbury.ac.nz)

QuakeCoRE PhD Scholarship Coversheet Form September 2021

- All applications must be received by Noon on Friday 15 October 2021.
- Applications must be submitted via email to quakecore@canterbury.ac.nz
- LATE APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED

Student personal details

Family Name		
First Name(s)		
Student Number		
Street Address		
Suburb		
Town/City		
Country		
Date of Birth		
Do you require a visa to study in New Zealand?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes
	<input type="checkbox"/>	No
Email Address		
Has the student previously made an unsuccessful application to QuakeCoRE?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes
	<input type="checkbox"/>	No

Do you identify as any of the following ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Māori What are your iwi affiliations (if known)?
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pasifika
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Engineers that identify as women
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Gender Diverse

Institutional Details

Name of University	
Department/School	
Primary Supervisor	
Other Supervisors	
Early Career Supervisors	[Please indicate if any of the Supervisors listed above are early-career researchers. Note that here Early-career Researchers are considered to be researchers that completed their PhD no more than 7 years ago, as at 30 September, 2021, extensions to this timeframe will be considered for parental leave or similar career breaks.]
PhD Research Title	
Proposed Start Date of Scholarship	[Note: Students must commence their PhD study within 6 months of the QuakeCoRE PhD Scholarship Award Letter date]
Is the student currently in New Zealand?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Overseas Students	[If the student is currently overseas, please provide a brief outline of how the student's wellbeing will be addressed whilst they are overseas. Please indicate how long you believe they will be able to reasonably undertake their PHD studies whilst overseas.]

Application type and research area

Application Type	<input type="checkbox"/> 3 Year Full Time Scholarship (1.0EFTS)
QuakeCoRE Research Area	Please select from DT1, DT2, DT3, DT4, DT5, IP1, IP2, IP3, IP4 or other
How many months of PHD study has the student completed?	[As of 1st September 2021]
Primary supervisor engagement with QuakeCoRE	[Please outline the primary supervisor's previous engagement with QuakeCoRE (eg: Annual Meeting attendance, Annual Meeting poster presentation, Research Programme activities, Outreach, etc.)]

DECLARATION (Proposed primary supervisor)

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. In the event of an inconsistency between the information provided and the coversheet, the coversheet will be taken as correct.

1. Letter of support (max 2pgs) from the proposed primary supervisor, which should include: (i) the relation the student's 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 supervisor to sign the collaboration agreement if the application is successful; and (iii) the expected date the student will commence the QuakeCoRE Scholarship.
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 statement needs to explicitly comment on why they wish to engage with QuakeCoRE and any existing involvement with QuakeCoRE (if any). Indicate also how they intend to contribute to the broader QuakeCoRE community, including engagement with CEE (Communication, Education & Engagement), DEWI (Diversity, Equity, Wellbeing & Inclusion) or QERC (QuakeCoRE Emerging Researcher Chapters).
4. A summary (max 1pg) of the research the student proposes to undertake, including progress on the research. This could be based on the PhD research plan. It can be developed in collaboration with the supervisor but must be written by the student. Research summary must explain how their research explicitly fits with the QuakeCoRE research programme. 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.
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. 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 PhD supervisor.**
8. If listed on CV, DOI for up to 3 journal and/or conference papers the student has published. If DOIs are unavailable PDF copies should be provided as separate PDFs.

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)
- Student CV (max 2pgs)
- Student ambitions and future career aspirations (max 1pg)
- Summary of the proposed 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
- DOIs of ≤ 3 journal and/or conference papers the student has published (if listed on CV)