NATIONAL LEADERSHIP

A stronger future for graduate research

Australian Council of Graduate Research



Collaboration.

Evidence. Advocacy.

President: Professor Louise Sharpe
Pro Vice-Chancellor (Researcher Training
University of Sydney

WHAT ACGR DOES

One national voice. Four core functions.

ADVOCACY

Influence policy and champion sustainable research training

BEST PRACTICE

Develop guidance and principles for quality HDR education

EVIDENCE

Benchmark sector trends and inform institutional decisions

COLLABORATION

Connect leaders, share ideas and recognise excellence

SECTOR SNAPSHOT

PhD stipends: turning evidence into advocacy

2024 RTP Stipend Base Rates Snapshot • 42 institutions surveyed

$34,244

Average annual RTP stipend

across surveyed institutions (2024)

The challenge

Stipends below minimum-wage benchmarks

Financial pressure limits access and participation

Evidence strengthens the case for reform


UNIVERSITIES AUSTRALIA
ACGR
Investing in PhD candidates in Australia
How PhD candidates are crucial to Australia's research and innovation landscape.
December 2024

Industry-connected PhDs: many pathways

2026 ACGR Industry Engagement Survey Report

01

Industry exposure

02

Co-designed projects

03

Co-funded supervision

04

Embedded research

05

Integrated partnerships

Key message: engagement extends beyond internships and commercial industry to government, community and not-for-profit partnerships.

The PhD develops more than a thesis

ACGR National HDR Researcher Development Framework • co-designed with 17 universities

Ethical practice & inclusivity

Integrity, diversity and respectful engagement

Innovation & intellectual rigour

Critical thinking, creativity and evidence

Engagement & impact

Partnerships, communication and real-world value

Personal resilience & leadership

Reflection, wellbeing and purposeful leadership

Culturally informed research excellence

Revised Good Practice Guidelines for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research • 2026

Respect

Relationships

Responsibility

Indigenous knowledges

Recognise diverse knowledge systems and research approaches

Cultural responsibilities

Support respectful relationships and appropriate practices

Institutional practice

Strengthen culturally informed research and supervision

THE TAKEAWAY

Why ACGR matters

Better conditions • Better connections • Better development • Better practice

What no single university can achieve alone, we can advance together.

A collective voice for the quality, sustainability and future of graduate research.