

Indigenous Grant Program

Learning and Development Grant Guideline GDL-4946

Review February 2026

Governing Policy: POL-4914 Learning and Development Grant Policy

The Indigenous Grant Program was established by the Indigenous Health Committee to increase the participation of Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and Māori doctors in a surgical career by providing education, training and/or research opportunities for pre-vocational recipients.

RACS and the Indigenous Health Committee are committed to prioritising Indigenous Health, building the surgical workforce and increasing services to better meet the health needs of Māori, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people. We are also focused on collaborating effectively with our partners and supporting the communities we serve.

Opportunities listed in this guideline are open exclusively to Māori, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people who meet the eligibility requirements.

The guideline provides details regarding the purpose, eligibility and requirements that are additional to, or exceptions from, the Learning and Development Fellowship and Grant Policy. Information drawn from the policy and guideline is available to applicants on the RACS website.

Applications are open to eligible Fellows and Trainees; and doctors and medical students who are interested in pursuing a career in surgery. Where possible, and unless otherwise stated in the grant conditions below, grants are offered in equal numbers to Māori, and Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people.

Indigenous program grants

Johnson & Johnson MedTech Scholarship

Applicant Eligibility	Eligible activities (see <i>Conditions for an outline of general activities</i>)	Funding
<p>Supports activities undertaken by Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and Māori SET Trainees as they pursue their surgical training, or by Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and Māori junior doctors to support activities to strengthen their surgical career pathway</p> <p>Must be enrolled in the SET Trainee program, or must be a junior doctor registered in Australia or Aotearoa New Zealand. Where two applications are of equal merit, preference will be given to SET Trainees.</p> <p>For the 2025 program 2 scholarships will be for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants and 4 Scholarships will be for Māori applicants.</p> <p>Recipient obligations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upon acceptance, the recipient is required to submit a short video describing their intended activity. • 12 months post-grant activity, the recipient is encouraged to attend a speaking engagement with J & J (either virtually or in-person, as agreed by the recipient and J & J) to provide insight into how the grant has impacted their career. • The recipient has the option to act in an advisory role to the J&J Reconciliation Action Plan Committee. • Recipients are encouraged to submit an abstract, and if successful, to present their findings and/or learnings at the annual meeting of the Surgical Research Society of Australasia and elsewhere. 	<p>General</p>	<p>J&J sponsorship</p>

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Career Enhancement Grant – Medical Students

Applicant Eligibility	Eligible activities (see <i>Conditions for an outline of general activities</i>)	Funding
Supports final year Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and Māori medical students to acquire knowledge and skills to strengthen their surgical career pathway.		
Must be enrolled in the final year at an Australian or Aotearoa New Zealand medical school.	General	IHC corpus CC93-9314

Career Enhancement Grant – Junior Doctors

Applicant Eligibility	Eligible activities (see <i>Conditions for an outline of general activities</i>)	Funding
Supports Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and Māori junior doctors to strengthen their career pathway by acquiring knowledge and skills.		
Must be registered as a doctor in Australia or Aotearoa New Zealand.		Must be registered as a doctor in Australia or Aotearoa New Zealand.

ASC Award*

Applicant Eligibility	Eligible activities (see <i>Conditions for an outline of general activities</i>)	Funding
Provides opportunities for Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and Māori final year medical students and junior doctors with an interest in surgery to attend the upcoming RACS ASC.		
Must possess a medical degree from, or be enrolled in, the final year at an Australian or Aotearoa New Zealand medical school.	Attending the ASC	IHC cost centre CC93-9314

ASC Peer Support Award*

Applicant Eligibility	Eligible activities (see <i>Conditions for an outline of general activities</i>)	Funding
Provides opportunities for Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and Māori final year medical students and junior doctors who have previously attended a RACS ASC, to attend the upcoming ASC.		
Must possess a medical degree from, or be enrolled in, the final year at an Australian or Aotearoa New Zealand medical school and have attended a previous ASC.	Attending the ASC <i>See below</i>	Apply to Foundation of Surgery annually with request for funding.

*ASC Award and ASC Peer Support Award

Value: \$5,000

The recipient is to use the grant funding to attend the ASC, including travel to the ASC; accommodation for x5 nights at a RACS nominated conference hotel; ASC 4-day registration, ticket to the ASC dinner; ticket to the Indigenous Doctors Roundtable Breakfast and any other ASC-related events RACS invites the recipients to attend.

Eligible activities:

General eligible activities do not apply. The grant is provided specifically for recipients to participate in the educational program of the RACS Annual Scientific Congress (ASC). The grant enables opportunities to network, gain an understanding of RACS activities and discuss career path issues with RACS leadership.

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Davison Family Grant** (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples only)

Applicant Eligibility	Eligible activities (see <i>Conditions for an outline of general activities</i>)	Funding
Supports Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander junior doctors who wish to undertake postgraduate surgical training and who have the potential to inspire and attract similar young people to the field of surgery.		
Must be a junior doctor registered in Australia.	General <i>See grant guideline</i>	Davison Family corpus under the Foundation for Surgery.

Williams Grant**(Preference given to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples)

Applicant Eligibility	Eligible activities (see <i>Conditions for an outline of general activities</i>)	Funding
Supports educational opportunities or research which focuses on health outcomes of particular relevance to Aboriginal and/or Torres Islander peoples.		
Must be a SET Trainee or Fellow. Preference will be given to those that identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. Must have demonstrable links to Aboriginal or Torres Strait communities and have the intention to work in or regularly visit a rural indigenous community.	General	SET Trainees and Fellows. Must have demonstrable links to an Indigenous? community.

Ngarra Grant**(Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples only)

Applicant Eligibility	Eligible activities (see <i>Conditions for an outline of general activities</i>)	Funding
Aims to contribute to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and increase the number of female Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander surgeons.		
Must be a female final year medical student, junior doctor, SET Trainee or RACS Fellow. Preference is determined by the Indigenous Health Committee annually.	Education	Ngarra Grant corpus under the Foundation for Surgery.

**Davison Grant, Williams Grant and Ngarra Grant

Please also refer to the respective guidelines for each of these donor-established grants.

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Conditions

In addition to conditions outlined in the Learning and Development policy, and unless otherwise specified in the above grants table, the following conditions apply to all Indigenous program grants.

Applicant eligibility

- provide confirmation of eligibility for membership to Te Ohu Rata o Aotearoa The Māori Medical Practitioners Association (Te ORA) OR
- provide confirmation of eligibility for membership to the Australian Indigenous Doctors' Association (AIDA)

Note: membership is not required – only eligibility to be a member

General eligible activities

Course fees; SET registration, course and examination fees; travel and accommodation to attend surgical skills training workshops; attendance or presentation of a paper and/or poster at a medical, surgical or Indigenous Health conference (preference will be given to research project results and outcomes); surgical-related research projects; professional development opportunities as deemed beneficial by the Indigenous Health Committee (IHC) and/or selection panel.

Application and Selection

Applications are to include:

- a submission describing the applicant's aspirations, interest in pursuing a surgical career, relevance to current stage of training or medical career, a breakdown of the proposed use of the grant funding, details of travel, professional development, study and/or research to be undertaken (as applicable), envisaged benefits of the activity and current and future commitment to Māori or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.
- Contribution to advancing Māori or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and contributing to the elimination of health inequities between these populations and non-Indigenous populations.
- Contribution to Māori or Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities.

Selection panel

The selection panel must include the Chair (or nominee) of the Indigenous Health Committee and include at least three of any of the following (or their nominees) as is most relevant to the grant:

- Members of the Indigenous Health Committee
- Chair, Committee of Surgical Education
- Training Chair, Prevocational and Skills Education Committee
- Chair, Fellowships Services Committee
- Censor in Chief
- President, Australian Indigenous Doctors Association (AIDA)
- President, Te ORA

The selection panel will endeavour to achieve a gender balance in awarding all grants.

Partner committee

Indigenous Health Committee

Funding

As per the table on page 2 of this guideline.