
THE ELECTORAL COMMISSION SUFFRAGE SCHOLARSHIP

When women gained the right to vote in 1893, they gained the right to take part in New Zealand's democracy.

To celebrate 120 years of votes for women, in 2013 the Electoral Commission established this scholarship to cover fees for postgraduate research into voter participation.

The research outcomes of the scholarship will be part of a much wider national discussion on voter turnout that the Electoral Commission has instigated. The Electoral Commission is committed to encouraging wide-reaching research on voter participation, and these scholarships aim to contribute to this.

Purpose

The Electoral Commission's vision is for New Zealanders to trust, value, and take part in parliamentary elections.

To help New Zealand realise this vision with respect to voter participation, the Electoral Commission has adopted a Voter Participation Strategy. Research on the factors that affect voter turnout is a key stream of the strategy.

The strategy recognises that there is an ongoing need for good information about what affects voter participation in New Zealand and, in particular, what strategies, mechanisms or programmes might be effective in maintaining or increasing engagement and turnout.

The Suffrage Scholarship will encourage research that furthers our understanding of the factors that motivate voters to take part, and the barriers to voter participation. Community specific research in cohorts that experience low turnout are encouraged.

Eligibility

To be eligible to apply for this scholarship applicants must:

- be a New Zealand citizen or permanent resident.
- achieve a B+ average¹ in their university studies.
- for the year of tenure of the scholarship:
 - be enrolled as a full-time student at a New Zealand university in an Honours or Master's programme.
 - be engaged for a substantive part (i.e. at least half) of their enrolment in research which satisfies the purposes of this scholarship.

¹ This is the recommended grade; applications from candidates with a B- or B average will be considered on their merits.

Number and value

Up to three scholarships may be awarded each year.

Each scholarship will fund the New Zealand domestic fees for one year up to the value of 1 EFTS for study at Honours or Master's level.

The scholarship award will not fund any non-tuition fees or levies for which the scholar is liable.

Tenure

The scholarship will be held for one year.

Applications

Candidates must complete an application using the Universities NZ online scholarships application website:

<https://universitiesnz.communityforce.com/Login.aspx>

Applications will be for a scholarship to be held in the same year.

The closing date is 1 February.

Selection Committee and selection process

The Selection Committee will be appointed by the Electoral Commission.

All complete and eligible applications will be assessed by the Committee and the results of their assessments will be available in late February or early March.

The Selection Committee *may* invite shortlisted candidates to take part in a telephone interview.

Universities NZ will advise candidates of the outcome of their application as soon as the results are available.

The Selection Committee's decisions are final and no correspondence will be entered into following the selection process.

Payments

Payment of the scholarship award will be made by Universities NZ.

Research outcomes

Scholars will be asked to provide Universities NZ with a copy of their research outcomes, e.g. dissertation or thesis. This will be forwarded to the Electoral Commission.

To contribute to their Voter Participation Strategy the Electoral Commission may use all or part of the outcomes of the scholar's research.

When any use is made by the Electoral Commission full acknowledgement will be made of the scholar's contribution.

Co tenure

The Suffrage Scholarship may be held concurrently with other scholarships and awards but only with the approval of the Selection Committee.

Successful candidates are required to advise Universities NZ of any further financial support gained after the award of the Suffrage Scholarship.