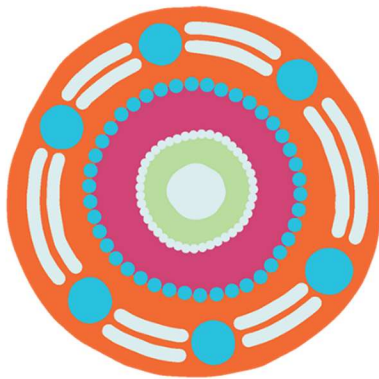
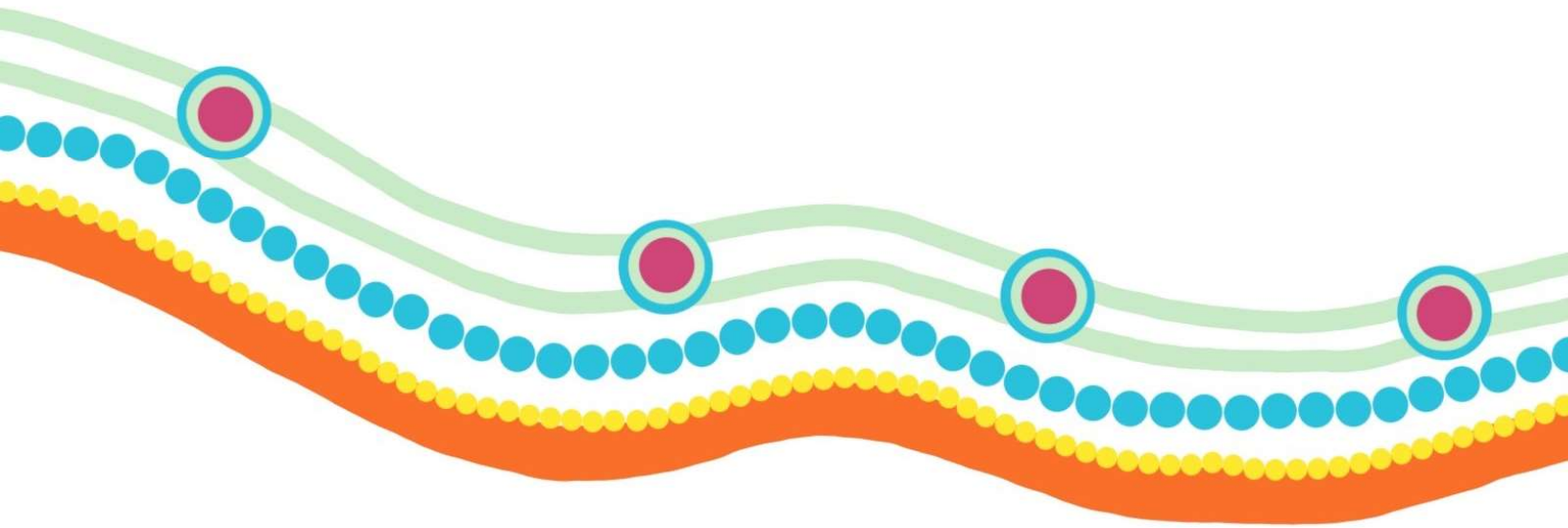


First Nations
Cancer Scholarship



First Nations Cancer Scholarship

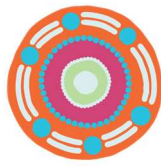
Scholarship Overview and Guidelines





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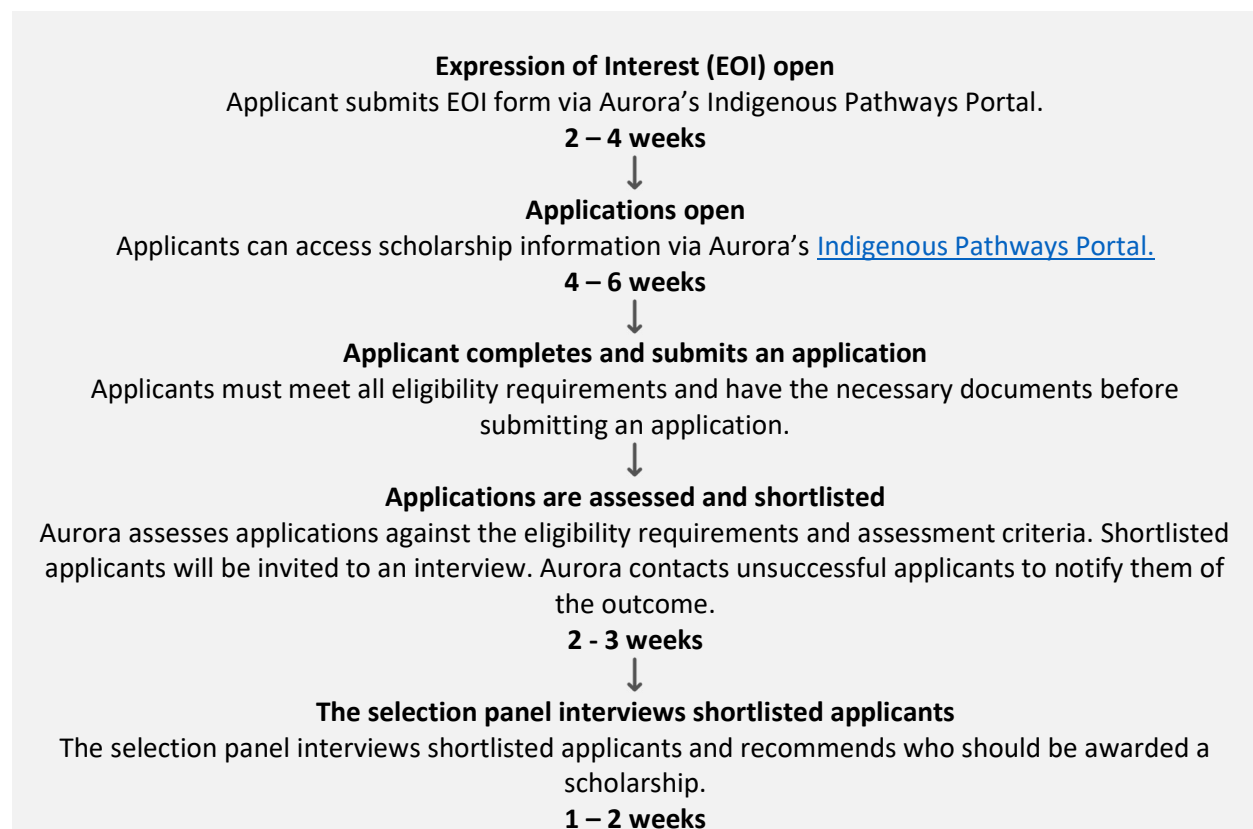
Scholarship Overview

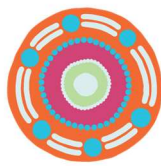
The First Nations Cancer Scholarship Program is funded by the Australian Government through Cancer Australia. Established by the Aurora Education Foundation (Aurora) and Cancer Australia the First Nations Cancer Scholarship (Scholarship) supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander graduate students, health professionals, and early-career researchers to undertake full-time postgraduate study or research in a cancer-related field.

The purpose of the Scholarship is to support Scholars in building the skills and knowledge required to inform strategies to improve cancer outcomes for Indigenous communities and increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders in cancer-related fields.

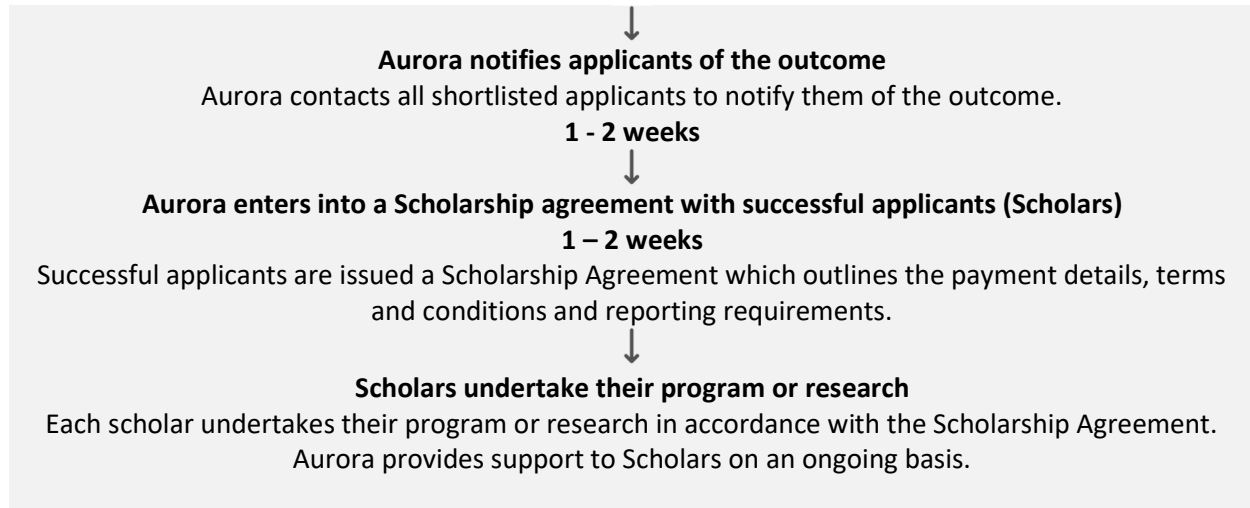
Key stage and timeframes

The flow chart below provides an overview of the scholarship process and outlines indicative timeframes for each stage. The process occurs over three to four months, from opening Expressions of Interest to awarding scholarships. For more accurate scholarship open and close dates refer to Aurora's Indigenous Pathways Portal. The Aurora Pathways Scholarship team is available to support applicants at any stage and can be contacted via email at scholarships@aurorafoundation.com.au.





First Nations Cancer Scholarship



Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the aim of the Scholarship program?

The First Nations Cancer Scholarship supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander graduate students, health professionals, and early-career researchers (ECRs) to undertake full-time postgraduate study (graduate certificate, masters or a PhD) or research in a cancer-related field. The purpose of the Scholarship is to support Scholars in building the skills and knowledge required to inform strategies to improve cancer outcomes for Indigenous communities and increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders in cancer-related fields.

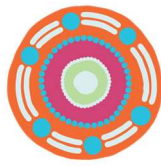
2. What is the value of the Scholarship?

The Scholarship provides Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander graduate students, ECRs and professionals access to funds to support their full-time studies or research for up to three years at recognised universities or institutes in Australia, the US or UK.

Up to four scholarships will be awarded yearly from 2024 to 2026. Recipients will not be required to re-apply for each year. Administered by Aurora, each scholarship is valued at up to \$120,000 AUD per year, for up to three years. Recipients will also have access to up to \$5,000 AUD per year in tailored academic and wellbeing support. In addition, Aurora will facilitate community and network-building opportunities for individuals and the scholarship cohort.

3. What non-financial support might I receive?

Scholars will have access to scaffolded personal, social, academic and wellbeing support, facilitated by Aurora. This support may include:



- **Individual support:** Aurora's Pathways Scholarship team provides scholarship administration and will support Scholars to access external services tailored to individual needs;
- **Academic and wellbeing support:** An Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander individual(s) with postgraduate study and/or research experience will provide cultural and professional guidance to Scholars to identify individual academic, research and wellbeing supports;
- **Community support:** Aurora's Pathways Scholarship team will connect Scholars with one another and Aurora's Alumni network to build a sense of belonging, connection and community. Aurora may facilitate gatherings, networking events and retreats.

4. What is this Scholarship awarded for?

The Scholarship is awarded to individuals as a contribution towards the cost of undertaking full-time postgraduate study or research at recognised universities or institutes in Australia, the US or UK. The Scholarship may be used for a range of purposes including (but not limited to):

- University fees/payment of HECS
- Research, fieldwork or laboratory equipment
- Accommodation and/or travel expenses related to research, fieldwork or conferences
- Textbooks and other essential study-related equipment
- Computer hardware, software, and internet
- Living expenses (for example, accommodation, transportation, food and other dietary requirements)
- Access to academic, health and wellbeing services
- Other academic and study-related resources.

The Scholarship funds cannot be used for study or research-related expenses that should be covered by the university or institute.

5. How do I apply?

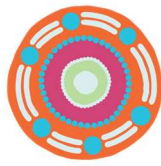
Before applying, applicants should read the Guidelines to ensure they meet the eligibility criteria and can provide the required documents. Applications are available via Aurora's [Indigenous Pathways Portal](#). Applicants are encouraged to contact the Aurora Pathways Scholarship team at scholarships@aurorafoundation.com.au to discuss their application.

6. What is the definition of an early-career researcher?

Early-career researchers are emerging researchers within their first eight years of academic or research-related employment, following the completion of postgraduate research. Researchers whose doctorate was awarded more than eight years ago, but whose opportunity for research has been interrupted, are still eligible to apply.

7. What are the Scholarship eligibility criteria?

Aurora will only consider applications that satisfy all eligibility requirements. To be eligible to receive the scholarship, an applicant must complete an application via Aurora's [Indigenous Pathways Portal](#).



To be eligible for the scholarship, an applicant must:

- Be of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent;
- Identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and be accepted as such by the community in which they live or have lived;
- Provide written confirmation of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander identity from an incorporated Indigenous organisation or Land Council;
- Provide written confirmation of enrolment in a postgraduate course (graduate certificate, masters or PhD) at a recognised university in Australia, the US or UK OR provide written confirmation from a recognised research institute;
- Must be undertaking full-time graduate study or research in a cancer-related field in health, research and policy. A list of applicable fields is provided in Appendix A.
- Provide a budget outlining how the scholarship funds will be used. The budget must also outline all additional funding and income¹;
- Be able to demonstrate how the graduate study or research will impact Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in improving cancer-related outcomes;
- Be able to demonstrate an aspiration towards employment or continued employment in a cancer-related field.

8. Establishing Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander status

To be eligible for the Scholarship it is necessary to confirm an individual's status as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person. Details relating to acceptable evidence are outlined below.

A person may confirm their Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander identity through:

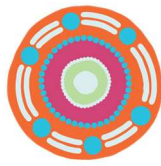
- A letter stamped with the common seal and signed by the chairperson of an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Land Council, in whose area the person lives or has previously lived; or
- A letter stamped and signed by an authorised delegate of an incorporated Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander organisation;
- The individual is responsible for confirming their own Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander identity. If an individual is unable to obtain either of the above materials, applicants are encouraged to contact Aurora's Pathways Leader, Scholarships via email at scholarships@aurorafoundation.com.au.

9. What documents do I need to submit with the application?

Applications submitted on Aurora's [Indigenous Pathways Portal](#) must include:

1. A personal statement of no more than two pages, outlining:
 - a. How you identify with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community(ies) in which you live, have lived or have ancestral connection to, and the contributions you have made within the community;
 - b. A description of the graduate course or research including key focus areas;

¹ A budget template is available for download on Aurora's Indigenous Pathways Portal.



First Nations Cancer Scholarship

- c. How undertaking the study or research will impact Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities in improving cancer-related outcomes;
 - d. The skills and/or knowledge you will develop by completing the study or research;
 - e. Your aspiration to pursue and/or continue a career in a cancer-related field.
2. Written confirmation of full-time enrolment from the relevant university and/or institution. Alternatively, written confirmation of application and/or research proposal submitted to the relevant university and/or institution;
3. Current Curriculum Vitae (CV);
4. A high-resolution corporate headshot in jpeg format;
5. A copy of your most up-to-date official academic transcript;
6. Confirmation of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander identity through a signed statement from an incorporated Indigenous organisation or Land Council
7. One written reference from an Elder or a senior member of your community to highlight your connection to the community.
8. If undertaking graduate study or research either:
 - a. Two written academic references highlighting your capabilities and the benefits of completing the study or research; OR
 - b. One academic and one professional written reference highlighting your capabilities and the benefits of completing the study or research;

10. Can I apply for the Scholarship if I am already receiving other financial support or income?

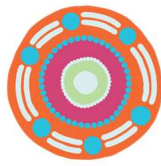
Receipt of funding or income from another organisation, scholarship provider or sponsor to complete graduate study or research does not prevent a person from applying for the Scholarship, however:

- Applicants who are already receiving, or will receive, funding for their current or proposed graduate study or research must declare that funding as part of their scholarship application;
- Applicants who are receiving or will receive, an income from part-time or full-time employment must declare that income as part of their scholarship application; and
- The nature and amount of any funding or income will be taken into consideration in assessing your scholarship application.
- Applicants should carefully consider the requirements and/or obligations for all income sources (for example, scholarships) to ensure no restrictions prevent them from applying or receiving the First Nations Cancer Scholarship.

11. What university or institute must I attend?

Graduate study or research must be undertaken at a recognised university or institute in Australia, the US or the UK². Contact the Aurora Pathway Leader, Scholarship at scholarships@aurorafoundation.com.au if the university or institute is not located in one of the identified countries.

² If you intend to study in a country outside those listed contact the Aurora Pathways Scholarship team to discuss



First Nations Cancer Scholarship

12. How will my application be assessed?

Aurora will only accept and consider applications submitted by the closing date and time set out on Aurora's Indigenous Pathways Portal. Aurora assesses applications as follows.

Stage 1: Eligibility screening

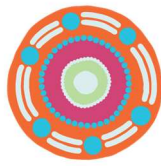
Only applications that meet all eligibility requirements with the required documents will be assessed in Stage 2.

Stage 2: Assessment of written applications against assessment criteria

Aurora assesses eligible applications through a competitive process. Each eligible application is assessed against the assessment criteria. The merits of each application are considered based on:

- a) how well it addresses the assessment criteria; and
- b) how it compares to other applications.

References will be considered by Aurora in the assessment process. Aurora determines which applications are shortlisted for interview based on the order of merit. No more than 12 applications will be shortlisted for interview.



Stage 3: Interviews

Aurora invites shortlisted applicants to participate in an interview with the selection panel. The majority of panellists will be an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person. All scholarship interviewees will be assessed on the merits of their interview, written application and references.

The selection panel will be composed of up to five representatives from:

- Aurora Education Foundation;
- Cancer Australia; and
- Research, allied health and medical fields

The selection panel will include experience and knowledge of the following areas:

- Post-graduate higher education;
- Conducting research;
- Knowledge of the Cancer Australia Plan; and
- Supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander scholars and professionals.

The selection panel will not assess applicants on:

- Ethical standards of proposed study or research; or
- Validity of the methodology or technical approach.

Shortlisted applicants are provided an opportunity to meet with Aurora's Pathways Scholarship team to prepare for the interview.

Stage 4: Scholarship Awarded

The selection panel will provide its recommendations to Aurora following the interviews. Aurora will confirm the successful applicants and this decision will be final.

Successful applicants will be notified of the outcome via phone and issued a Scholarship Agreement. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified via email and provided an opportunity to discuss feedback with Aurora.

13. What are the assessment criteria?

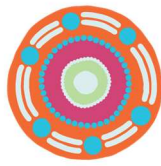
In addition to meeting eligibility requirements, shortlisted applicants will be assessed by the selection panel against the following assessment criteria (for the written application, references and interview):

Criterion 1: Connection to community (20% weighting)

Assessment of this criterion relates to what extent the applicant can demonstrate positionality, relationality, and a connection to their community and/or the communities that they live, have lived or have an ancestral connection with.

Criterion 2: Impact for community (20% weighting)

Assessment of this criterion relates to how the applicant's study or research will contribute to improving cancer outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.



Criterion 3: Capacity to complete the study or research (20% weighting)

Assessment of this criterion relates to the applicant's ability to complete the proposed study or research and their current academic, social or community support structures.

Criterion 4: Study or research suitability (20% weighting)

Assessment of this criterion relates to how the study or research at the university or institution aligns with the applicant's identified professional and/or academic goals and the Australia Cancer Plan.

Criterion 5: Timeliness of study to meet career goals (20% weighting)

This criterion evaluates how well the timing of undertaking the study or research aligns with and contributes to the applicant achieving their professional and/or academic goals.

14. When will I know the outcome of my application?

The selection panel will complete shortlisted interviews over 1 to 2 weeks and applicants will be notified of the outcome no more than 2 weeks after all interviews are completed.

15. What documents am I required to submit during or after the completion of the scholarship?

The Scholarship Agreement outlines the terms and conditions. Scholars may be required to submit the following documentation to Aurora during and at the end of the scholarship period:

- The Scholar must submit at regular intervals an Update Report and a Satisfactory Progress Report;
- Complete an annual scholar survey;
- Proof of continuing enrolment;
- Within one calendar month of the date on which the Scholar received confirmation from the university or institute that they have completed the study or research a Final Report is due.

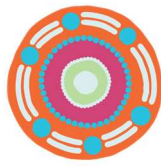
16. What if I want to withdraw from my study or research?

If a Scholar is thinking about withdrawing from their study or research for any reason, they must contact Aurora's Pathway Leader Scholarships via email at scholarships@aurorafoundation.com.au as soon as possible and before any action to withdraw is taken.

Aurora will meet with the Scholar to understand the circumstances surrounding the potential withdrawal and if there are other support or options available to allow the Scholar to continue. Based on the information provided by the Scholar, Aurora will determine if it supports a withdrawal and how scholarship payments are to be treated.

Any final decision to withdraw from study or research requires Aurora's written support. If a Scholar withdraws without Aurora prior written support:

- The Scholar may be required to fully refund any scholarship payment made by Aurora; and
- The Scholar's scholarship will be automatically terminated.



17. What if I want to change my study or research focus or vary my enrolment?

The Scholar cannot change their study (or major), research focus or vary their enrolment in any way (e.g. defer or move from a full-time to part-time study load or vice versa) unless they have the prior written permission from Aurora. If a Scholar varies their study or research focus without Aurora's prior written support, the Scholar may be required to fully refund any scholarship payment made by Aurora.

18. What if I don't pass a subject or meet research milestones?

Acceptable progress in a course is defined as the achievement of a minimum "Pass" result in each subject with no failures as defined by the university or institution. If there is a subject failure, this must be reported to Aurora's Pathways Leader Scholarships, at the time of the result being released by the university.

Acceptable progress in research includes meeting all milestones in the program and/or scheduled program reviews. A Scholar must report to Aurora's Pathways Leader Scholarships, at the time of the assessment being released by the institution.

19. Can I transfer my scholarship to another person?

The Scholarship cannot be transferred to another person by the Scholar.

20. Are there any tax implications from receiving scholarship payments?

Scholarship payments may contribute to a Scholar's taxable income and may also impact entitlement to Commonwealth benefits such as ABSTUDY.

Scholarship applicants and/or recipients are encouraged to contact Centrelink, the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) and/or their tax agent to obtain advice about the implications of the scholarship payments on their current earnings and benefits. More information about taxation on scholarships is also available from the ATO website at:

<https://www.ato.gov.au/Calculators-and-tools/Is-my-scholarship-taxable/>

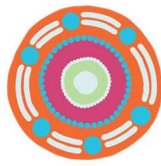
21. What might I be asked to do to promote the Scholarship?

Scholars may be asked by Aurora for the following help to promote the Scholarship:

- Participation in media and marketing activity to assist with sharing their story; and
- Being open to attending or speaking at an event or function.

22. How can I find out more about the Scholarship?

For more information visit Aurora's [Indigenous Pathways Portal](#) or contact Aurora's Pathways Leader Scholarships via email at scholarships@aurorafoundation.com.au.



Appendix A: Eligible cancer-related fields

Individuals are eligible to apply for the Scholarship if they are engaged in clinical and allied health, public health policy or research in one or more of the following fields with a focus of their study relevant to cancer, including but not limited to:

Clinical and Allied Health

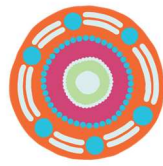
- Oncology
- Radiology
- Pediatric cancer
- General surgery
- Immunotherapy
- Pain management
- Reconstruction
- Haematology
- Pathology
- Nursing
- Palliative care
- Life after treatment
- Cultural care and support
- Health services research
- Music and art therapy
- Prosthetics and orthotics
- Nutrition and dietetics
- Occupational therapy
- Social work (individual and family)
- Physiotherapy and exercise physiology
- Rehabilitation
- Speech pathology
- Psychology
- Psychiatry
- Care coordination
- Cancer survivorship
- Gynecology
- Neurology
- Endocrinology
- Lymphoedema
- Audiology

Policy

- Public health
- Policy design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation
- Regulation
- Education
- Economic
- Health promotion
- Health leadership and management

Research

- Social and cultural determinants of cancer
- Social and emotional wellbeing
- Laboratory research
- Clinical research studies
- Program design, administration, monitoring and evaluation
- Environmental
- Biology
- Genomics
- Genetics
- Causes of cancer
- Prevention
- Screening and early detection
- Diagnosis
- Cancer treatment
- Health disparities
- Epidemiology



First Nations Cancer Scholarship

If an applicant is undertaking or intends to undertake cancer-related study or research in a field not listed, please contact Aurora's Pathways Scholarship team via scholarships@aurorafoundation.com.au to discuss.