



The Watervale Award

2025 Guidelines

Version 2 - 14 July 2025

Background and Purpose

The Watervale Award is a competitive grant to support academic staff and postgraduate research students whose research includes the relationship of Indigenous language(s) to at least one of the following topics: public health, Indigenous identity, water and environment, education or development.

Awards are made on a competitive basis, with **up to two awards of up to \$20,000 available for 2025**.

The Watervale Award has been generously supported by Dr Ian Fisher and Dr Laurel Fisher.

Any questions about the Award should be directed to firstnations@anu.edu.au.

Guidelines

1. Eligibility

- 1.1. Current ANU academic staff (including casual) and research students (including Honours) are eligible for the award.
- 1.2. Applications are welcome from individuals or teams but all parties named in the application must meet the criteria specified in 1.1 above, and eligibility must be maintained for the duration of the award.

2. Application

- 2.1. Any individual or team who wishes to submit an application for this award must use the [template available here](#) and submit it by the date specified in Section 6 below.
- 2.2. The application must:
 - a. Include a research proposal that outlines a new or existing research project that explores at least one of the following themes and its relationship to Indigenous language(s):
 - public health

- Indigenous identity
 - water and environment
 - education
 - development.
- b. Specify the expected impact or benefit of the research, particularly for Indigenous communities.
 - c. Detail how Indigenous people will contribute to the research.
 - d. Detail the expected outputs/outcomes at the end of the funded period (12 months) – see Section 5 for the list of outputs.
 - e. Include a statement on how the proposed research aligns with the strategic objectives of the University and its First Nations Portfolio.
 - f. Include a timeline for the project.
 - g. Specify the amount of money being sought and how that money will be used to enable the research. It should include details of any other funding or in-kind support received or being sought from ANU or external sources.
 - h. Outline the applicant's experience or demonstrated capacity to produce and deliver the proposed project.
 - i. Include a brief statement of support from a referee.
- 2.3. All applications require approval from the School Director, School Manager or relevant delegate.

3. Assessment criteria

- 3.1. Applications will be assessed and ranked on the following, weighted as indicated:
- The extent of impact/benefit and engagement of the proposed research for Indigenous communities (40%)
 - The synergy of the proposed research with the strategic objectives of the University and its First Nations Portfolio (30%)
 - Project quality and innovation (20%)
 - Cost effectiveness of the research and its value for money (10%).

4. Process

- 4.1. A Panel will be established by the Vice-President (First Nations) to assess all applications after the application deadline. The Panel will consist of members from the academic and Indigenous community. The Panel will be supported by the First Nations Portfolio.
- 4.2. The Panel will make a recommendation to the Vice-President (First Nations) who will have the final decision. If there is a potential conflict of interest for the Vice-President, the Vice-President will delegate the decision to another member of the University Executive.
- 4.3. The assessment process will be documented and all records kept by the First Nations Portfolio for the required period.

5. Timing and Reporting

- 5.1. The award period will be 12 months, or for casual academic staff until the end of their employment contract but no longer than 12 months, and must commence within one month of the acceptance of the award.
- 5.2. By the completion of the 12-month grant, the recipient must produce at least one of the following outputs:
 - A research paper
 - A 'submitted' academic book chapter to a recognised and reputable academic text
 - An edited academic volume, book or monograph
 - A 'submitted' full grant application to a reputable granting organisation (e.g. ARC, NHMRC, Lowitja, etc.) or full research proposal to state or federal government or other high-level organisation (Cat 2).
 - A symposium or workshop leading to a publication
 - Other document or publication deemed as an 'academic output'.
- 5.3. Any unspent money at the end of the award period must be returned.
- 5.4. Any/all research outputs should be listed as ANU outputs and any publications must have an ANU by-line. Any outputs must acknowledge the support of the Watervale Award.
- 5.5. The recipient must provide a progress report after six months and a full report to the Vice-President (First Nations) at the end of the award period, summarising the research undertaken and the outputs achieved, and the impact the research has had/will have on Indigenous communities. The reporting period will be adjusted for casual staff if the award period is less than 12 months. A template will be made available to the successful applicant. This final report will be shared with the Donors of this award.

6. Timeline

Application round is announced	By 23 June 2025
Application round closes	3 August 2025, 11.59pm
Assessment of applications and outcomes announced	By 22 August 2025
Deadline for acceptance of award	By 31 August 2025, 11.59pm
Award and project start date	1 September 2025 or as negotiated, but latest within one month of acceptance of the award
Project end date	31 August 2026 or 12 months after negotiated project start date

7. Financial Arrangements and Oversight

- 7.1. Financial arrangements will be made through ANU Finance and Business Services as per other internal grants and subject to the University's usual conditions of probity and audit.
- 7.2. The Award will be subject to all ANU policy and procedures including Intellectual Property arrangements.