

School of Engineering and Computer Science

ECS Postgraduate Research Top-Up Grant Criteria and Guidelines

Effective: Jan 2026

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1. Background

From mid-2025, the Postgraduate Research Fund in the School of Engineering and Computer Science has been allocated to supervisors based on the number of Postgraduate students they supervise.

The School is allocating a *small* amount of ***additional funding*** as ***PG Top-up Grant*** to provide further support for Postgraduate Research, which aims to support the essential research needs and academic development of postgraduate (PhD and thesis-based Masters) students in the school to complete their degree in due time.

The overall goal of the support is to enhance research quality, quantity, and impact of the University. In alignment with Mai i te Iho ki te Pae, University's Māori Strategic Outcomes Framework, the School is particularly committed to supporting research that engages constructively with Mātauranga Māori.

2. Eligibility

You need to be fully registered (not under provisional registration) to be eligible for the PG Top-up grant. This can be on either a full-time or part-time basis.

Please note that this PG Top-up grant is contestable and there is no guarantee that any application submitted will be awarded. Approval decisions will be made by the school selection committees based on their ranking and selection criteria to align with the goals and priorities of the grant. Students whose research requires resources (including travel resources) beyond those specified in the [Resource Agreement for Thesis Students \(RAfTS\)](#) should consult their supervisor to ensure that a contingency plan is in place to cover any anticipated costs if the grant application is not successful.

For this PG Top-up grant, each student can only be awarded ONCE during their entire study period.

- Each PhD student can apply up to **\$3,000** NZD during their entire PhD period.
- Each thesis-based Master student can apply up to **\$1,000** NZD during their entire Master period.

Note: If a PhD or Master student has previously been awarded a Postgraduate Research Grant (PGRG), this student is no longer eligible for this PG Top-up grant.

The application must consider the Postgraduate Research Fund that has been allocated to supervisors. Postgraduate students must discuss any application with their supervisor(s).

3. Supported Activities

- **Conference attending**

- Students should be fully enrolled (not provisional registration) and have not submitted their thesis to library by the conference date. Otherwise, the award will be cancelled.
- This includes the conference registration fee and related travel costs (e.g., flight ticket, accommodation, visa application, transport, and food).
- If the total cost exceeds the maximal supported amount, you may find sources to cover the shortage, such as the Postgraduate Research Fund that has been allocated to supervisors, your supervisors' research grants, external research sources such as the PGSA grant, conference travel grants, or self-funded.
- **Field trips**
 - We support the cost of *essential* field trips for students to complete their degree.
 - The maximal supported amount is **\$1,000** NZD.
- **Data collection cost**
 - We support the cost of *essential* data collections for students to complete their degree.
- **Equipment/consumables purchase**
 - We support the cost of *essential* equipment/consumables purchase for students to complete their degree.
 - Capital expenditure (e.g., laptop) cost is excluded.
 - Applicants planning to purchase software or cloud computing credits should discuss their needs with their supervisor first and then with the School Technical Manager (Mark Davies) by sending an email to jobs@ecs.vuw.ac.nz, before submitting their application. Specialised software purchased with the PGRG will be the property of the University and should be forwarded to the school/faculty manager at the completion of the project.
 - Any items purchased with the PG Top-up Grant remain the property of the University. The applicant's School will be responsible for any ongoing costs (maintenance, software upgrades, etc).
- **Other *essential* research costs that enable students to successfully complete their degree.**

4. Excluded Activities

The following activities are excluded from the support of the PGRG.

- Scholarship stipend, including Submission Scholarship.
- Fees.
- Student levies.
- Capital expenditure cost, such as laptops.
- Research assistant costs.
- Retrospective reimbursement of costs that were incurred prior to the approval of this grant.

5. Application

Postgraduate students must discuss any application with their supervisor(s). It is expected that you will prepare the application in collaboration with your supervisor(s), who will in most cases be highly experienced in preparing grant applications. **The application must include a support letter from the supervisor.**

You can find the application forms from
<https://ecs.wgtn.ac.nz/Main/PostgraduateStudentSupport>.

- Application Deadline: 23 Feb 2026. Late submissions will not be considered.
- Period Covered: 1 March 2026 – 30 September 2026

For any questions, please contact *Bing Xue* <bing.xue@vuw.ac.nz> and *Aloisa Cranston* <aloisa.cranston@vuw.ac.nz>