John Mulvaney Fellowship
2026 Application Guidelines

The Australian Academy of the Humanities is the national voice for cultural, creative and ethical thinking. We promote the study and application of the humanities because recording, explaining and predicting the human story brings distinctive and diverse ideas to decision-making and contributes to a better future for all.

Established in 2019, the John Mulvaney Fellowship honours the outstanding contribution made to humanities scholarship, the Academy, and the cultural life of the nation by one of our longest serving Fellows and former Academy Secretary John Mulvaney AO CMG FBA FSA FRAI FAHA.

PURPOSE

In keeping with Professor Mulvaney's deep commitment to Indigenous people and cultures, the John Mulvaney Fellowship is an award for Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander early career researchers and PhD students working in any area of the humanities. The recipient of the John Mulvaney Fellowship will receive $4000 towards undertaking research or fieldwork in Australia or overseas, including accessing archives and other research materials and connecting with researchers and networks.

ELIGIBILITY

1. Fellows and non-Fellows can nominate, or individuals can self-nominate. The Nominator must obtain the permission of the Nominee before nomination.
2. Nominees/Applicants must be Citizens or Permanent Residents of Australia who are residing in Australia at the time of nomination.
3. Nominees/Applicants must be citizens who are of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent.
4. The Fellowship is open to early career researchers (ECRs) and PhD students currently enrolled in an Australian institution.
5. Nominations/applications will be accepted from independent scholars holding a PhD as well as those working in institutional settings.
6. ECR Nominees must be in the early stages of their careers, which will be determined, *inter alia*, by how recently a PhD was conferred. In normal circumstances it should have been conferred no more than five years prior to the closing date for applications.
7. ECR Nominees who have received their PhD more than five years ago, but who can demonstrate a significant, commensurate period of career interruption (such as maternity or parental leave, carer's responsibility, illness, unemployment, or non-research employment) may be considered eligible. This

includes disruptions caused by COVID-19. A justification for the career interruption must be submitted as part of the proposal.

8. Nominees/Applicants must be working in the humanities, defined as those discipline areas by which the Academy is structured – Archaeology; Asian Studies; Classical Studies; English; European Languages and Cultures; History; Indigenous Studies; Linguistics; Philosophy and the History of Ideas; Religion; Cultural and Communication Studies; and The Arts. Applicants working on projects in Digital Humanities and Environmental Humanities will also be eligible to apply.
9. Interdisciplinary work is encouraged, provided that it includes a substantial proportion of work in the humanities.
10. Previous recipients of the John Mulvaney Fellowship or Humanities Travelling Fellowship offered by this Academy are ineligible.
11. The Awards Committee reserves the right to solicit nominations, which will be subject without favour to the same deadlines and competitive processes as unsolicited nominations.

PLEASE NOTE

This opportunity accords with the 'special measure' provisions in the Federal Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth).

The Fellowship is awarded annually. If no suitable nominations/applications are forthcoming, the Awards Committee reserves the right not to award the Fellowship.

SELECTION CRITERIA

1. Applications will be assessed on the rigour and significance of the research, its likely impact within a specialist field, and its potential to engage and/or benefit the wider community.
2. Nominees/Applicants will need to demonstrate the relevance of the project to the Nominee/Applicant's academic career development and be able to show evidence of this through either traditional or non-traditional research outputs.

USE OF FUNDS

1. Funds may be spent on economy class travel, accommodation, living, and research expenses. Successful applicants may also use the funds for expenses including but not limited to:
    a. Domestic and international research assistance; including hiring an assistant to access the designated archives and research material on behalf of the researcher in cases where they are unable to travel to their intended destination.
    b. Ordering and scanning archival and/or source material; including expenses associated with inter-library loans and other lending schemes (digital and hard copy).
    c. Carer's work; including expenses for childcare (e.g., hiring a carer, nanny, or paying for additional childcare) to enable the parent to conduct the research, and other caring work including care of a dependent child or family member due to illness or disability. If a child or dependent needs to travel with the applicant in order for the research to be undertaken, these expenses can be included in the application.
2. Other expenses deemed necessary by the applicant must be identified in the budget and approved by the Awards Committee. If you are unsure about your eligible expenses, please contact the Fellowship & Awards Coordinator at grants@humanities.org.au before submitting your application.

3. Fellowships are not available to attend conferences or to enrol in any course of study, although conference attendance incidental to research activity will not be penalised.

PLEASE NOTE

Successful candidates will be expected to provide evidence of their expenditure and a concise acquittal report once the research activity is completed.

CONDITIONS OF FELLOWSHIP

1. The Academy requires that recipients will conduct their research according to appropriate ethical, legal and professional frameworks, obligations and standards.
2. Significant variations to the research plan detailed in the application must be approved by the Awards Committee. Where the research project needs to be postponed for reasons beyond the recipient's control, the Academy must be advised promptly of the change of circumstances.
3. Recipients will be required to attest that they accept the conditions of the award and provide bank account details to the Academy to ensure the expedient payment of funds.
4. Funds will normally be made available directly to the recipient on acceptance of the conditions of the award. In the event that a University is the nominated recipient of funds, a Fellowship will be awarded only on the condition that an administration charge will not be levied by the institution.
5. Funds awarded must be expended by the end of the calendar year following the date of the award.
6. The Academy reserves the right to recoup funds if the Rules of the Award have not been met and/or funds have not been expended.
7. The travel period of the project must be of at least two weeks' duration.
8. Recipients will be expected to acquire travel insurance before undertaking their research trip and to be sure to abide by all quarantine and social distancing measures in place in the country they are intending to visit.
9. The Academy requires the recipient provide a concise written report on the research activity undertaken and the significance of the Academy's assistance to the overall research project, to be submitted via email within one month of expenditure of the funds or by the end of the calendar year following the date of the award, whichever comes first. Reports must include a brief acquittal budget showing all relevant expenditures (in Australian dollars).
10. Recipients agree that these reports may be published on the Academy website and may appear in whole or in extract or in other Academy publications.
11. Recipients must make suitable acknowledgement of the Academy's assistance in funding the research in any resulting publication, either through the use of the Academy logo or a statement acknowledging the grant.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

The Nominator/Applicant must provide the Academy with the following material via the online application system:

1. **Nominee/applicant profile** (including current contact details);
2. **Proposer profile** (if applicable);
3. **Educational history** (including recent qualifications and PhD information);

4. **Previous award** details;
5. **Project details** (including institutions/sites to visit, budget details, and publications/research);
6. **Attachments to include:**
    a. **Curriculum Vitae** for the nominee/applicant (max. four A4 pages);
    b. **Research proposal** (max. two A4 pages). Include the aims, significance, outcomes and outputs of the research. Please also include a justification of how the project fulfils the Conditions of Fellowship and Selection Criteria of the John Mulvaney Fellowship scheme.
    c. **Certified copy of Doctoral Transcript** (for PhD students) or **PhD testamur** (for early career researchers).
    d. **Reference letter (x2)** from two eminent scholars (max. two A4 pages each). Letters should be addressed to the John Mulvaney Fellowship Advisory Panel of the Australian Academy of the Humanities. Referees should have knowledge of your recent work.

PLEASE NOTE

The application form and all supporting documentation should be provided in English (or accompanied by a translation into English made by a NAATI-accredited translator).

The Proposer and/or the Nominee/Applicant may be called upon by the Awards Committee to provide evidence of claims made within submitted documentation.

PAST RECIPIENTS

Previously successful recipients of the John Mulvaney Fellowship or Humanities Travelling Fellowship offered by this Academy are ineligible to be nominated for another round of the John Mulvaney Fellowship.

PREVIOUS NOMINEES/APPLICANTS

Previously unsuccessful Nominees/Applicants are eligible with respect to the same work for which their nomination was made previously, provided that the relevant documents have been updated and they still meet all eligibility requirements.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Each Nominee/Applicant and Proposer gives permission for the details listed in the application to be released to the members of the Awards Committee (both those listed in the application form and supporting documentation) for the sole purpose of the selection process. All information, discussions, and recommendations on Nominees/Applicants are confidential.

OBLIGATIONS & DECLARATION

The Proposer/Applicant is responsible for confirming:

- The Nominee/Applicant is willing to be a Nominee/Applicant for the John Mulvaney Fellowship.
- The Nominee/Applicant has not been convicted of a criminal offence under a law of the Commonwealth, or an Australian State or Territory.
- The Nominee/Applicant has not had serious disciplinary action taken against them in response to a substantiated finding of workplace harassment (including sexual harassment), discrimination and/or bullying.

- The Nominee/Applicant is aware that a description of the work being acclaimed, and images of the successful recipient, will be publicised.
- It is expected that the successful recipient will:
    - Attend the annual award ceremony (details to be advised). Assistance towards a domestic economy airfare and accommodation will be provided if necessary.
    - Work with the Academy to promote the importance of the humanities.
    - Assist the Awards Committee in assessing applicants of future rounds (where possible).

APPLICATIONS CLOSE

11.59pm AEDT Sunday 29 March 2026

Only electronic applications and attachments submitted via https://humanities.smartygrants.com.au/ will be accepted. Incomplete applications and any received after the closing time and date will not be considered.

The Awards Committee's decision is final; no correspondence will be entered into. The Academy Secretariat and its staff are not responsible for any Committee decisions and are unable to discuss selection procedures, issue reports or give advice on the progress of nominations.

The successful Nominee (and proposer) /Applicant will be informed of the decision by email.

ADVICE & INFORMATION

Samantha Tutton – Fellowship & Awards Coordinator

02 6189 6982 (9am-3pm AEST/AEDT)

grants@humanities.org.au