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| <b>Division</b>   | <b>Fellowship Engagement</b>                 | <b>Ref. No.</b> | <b>POL-3174</b> |
| <b>Department</b> | <b>Global Health Scholarships</b>            |                 |                 |
| <b>Title</b>      | <b>Rowan Nicks International Scholarship</b> |                 |                 |

## 1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy governs the awarding of the Rowan Nicks International Scholarship. It covers the application and selection criteria as well as the duration, value, frequency and conditions of the Scholarship.

## 2. KEYWORDS

Rowan Nicks, International Scholarships, International Development Program, International English Language Testing System (IELTS)

## 3. BODY OF POLICY

The Rowan Nicks Scholarships are the most prestigious of RACS international awards. The Scholarships are made possible through the generosity of the late Mr Rowan Nicks A.O., O.B.E., FRACS and are directed at surgeons from developing countries who have the potential to be leaders in their home countries.

### 3.1. Goals and Objectives

The Scholarship provides opportunities for surgeons who demonstrate the potential to become leaders in their country of origin, and/or to surgeons who will return to supply a much-needed service in a particular surgical discipline. The intention is to develop their skills to enable them to:

- manage a department
- become competent in the teaching of others
- gain experience in clinical research and the applications of modern surgical technology and
- obtain further advanced exposure in general or specialist surgery.

Selection is primarily based on merit, however, applicants without opportunities for institutional support or educational facilities, who will return to provide a valuable service in a remote area, will be given special consideration.

### 3.2. Principles and Values

RACS recognises that there is a shortage of trained and skilled local specialists in many developing countries in the Asia-Pacific region. This shortage severely reduces the countries' capacity to deliver surgical care to their populations. The overarching goal of the Global Health Scholarship Program is to improve the health outcomes for disadvantaged communities in the region, by providing training opportunities to promising individuals who will contribute to the development of the long-term surgical capacity in their country.

The Rowan Nicks Scholarships are not just personal awards; the orientation is to “teach the teacher to teach others” and the recipient must come with a sense of responsibility to the needs of his/her country. The intention is that the scholar will share the skills and expertise with their colleagues upon return to their home country, thereby increasing the local capacity to deliver improved surgical and medical care to the local community. Applicants should demonstrate:

- a high calibre in surgical ability, ethical integrity, and qualities of leadership
- a commitment to teach and promulgate high standards in the development of surgery in their country.

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### 3.3. Administering Committee

The RACS Global Health team administers the Scholarship program. The Global Health Scholarships Panel (GHSP) selects and reports its recommendations through to the International Engagement Committee, which approves the recommendations as appropriate.

### 3.4. Eligibility

The Rowan Nicks International Scholarship is open to qualified surgeons from targeted developing countries in the area of interest of RACS's International Development Program. The GHSP uses discretion to target particular countries each year and gives special consideration to applicants from these countries. Target countries are identified by the lack of existing training opportunities available to applicants from these countries, the existing relationship (if any) between RACS and these countries, and the potential to establish a relationship and for continued interaction between RACS and these countries. Applicants must be a citizen of the country from which the application is made.

### 3.5. Application Criteria

This scholarship is most suited for a mid-career professional.. Applicants must hold his/her country's post-graduate qualification in surgery or its equivalent. The Scholarship is not available to candidates in training. However, consideration will be given to applicants who have completed local general post-graduate surgical training, where their home country requires the services of a particular surgical discipline. Ideal candidates should be able to demonstrate long term leadership prospects in their country's surgical community.

Applications for the Scholarship will be through an annual Expression of Interest (EoI) and must be submitted directly to RACS. Applicants must provide the names and contact details of referees as outlined in the application form. No referee can be listed more than once in an application. Failure to include referee details will adversely affect the consideration of the application.

### 3.6. Selection Criteria

Applicants will be judged on their application and references. The GHSP will consider the potential of the applicant to become a surgical leader in the country of origin, and/or to supply a much-needed service in a particular surgical discipline. The GHSP must be convinced that the applicant is of high calibre in surgical ability, ethical integrity and qualities of leadership. The references collected by RACS from the referees must support the applicant as one who will teach and promulgate high standards in the development of surgical experience in that country. Selection will primarily be based on merit, with applicants providing an essential service in remote areas, without opportunities for institutional support or educational facilities, being given earnest consideration.

Applicants must provide evidence that they meet the English language requirements for registration with the Medical Board of Australia or Medical Council of New Zealand, or the appropriate rules in any other country to which they are assigned, by the time selection takes place.

The Scholarship is not available for the purpose of extending a candidate's position in Australia or New Zealand, either in their existing position or in another position.

### 3.7. Value of the Scholarship

The Scholarship is intended to support individuals who may not otherwise be able to obtain this experience. Where a candidate will receive a salary or funding from

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another source, the value of the Scholarship offered may be varied to take this into account.

The Scholarship will provide funds for return economy class traveling expenses including ground transport between the scholar's home and host countries, for the Scholar only.

A living allowance will be provided to the scholar in instalments, at intervals during the Scholarship period. Prospective applicants should refer to the RACS website at [www.surgeons.org](http://www.surgeons.org) for information on the current value of the living allowance. The value of the living allowance will be pro-rated to the length of the Scholarship. The living allowance total should be reviewed every three years, aligning to the policy review, and be revised to reflect current cost of living expenses and take into account CPI (consumer price index) increases.

The Scholarship will also cover reasonable costs incurred by the scholar including visa and medical registration fees and travel and health insurance.

The Scholarship does not cover any costs associated with the Scholar's family members. Scholars are welcome to be accompanied by immediate family members at their own cost.

Additional in-country expenditures will be up to and no more than AU\$10,000 per scholar. These include the AU\$1,000 'settling in' allowance and up to AU\$9,000 for professional development opportunities, including attendance to the RACS Annual Scientific Congress (ASC). All funding approvals are at the discretion of the RACS Global Health scholarship team.

Professional development may be any short course (up to two weeks), conference, or seminar in Australia or New Zealand, that is relevant to the scholar's ongoing training program.

If it is appropriate for the scholar to attend the RACS ASC, the Scholarship will also cover the cost of the scholar's registration, travel and accommodation to attend the conference. The scholar may also choose between the ASC and a similar cost conference, if both conferences' expenses exceed AU\$9,000.

Any professional development opportunities require prior approval by the host supervisor to take leave from the scholarship training program.

### **3.8. Duration of the Scholarship**

The Rowan Nicks International and Pacific Islands Scholarships are generally tenable for up to twelve months. However, the GHSP has the discretion to award a Scholarship for shorter or longer duration and will exercise this discretion as and when this is appropriate.

### **3.9. Deferral of a Scholarship**

Scholarships awarded by the GHSP cannot be held indefinitely if the recipient is not able to take up their Scholarship in the year it is offered. An awarded Scholarship may be deferred for up to two years, subject to the recipient providing a legitimate reason in writing to the Chair of the GHSP, which is accepted by the GHSP.

### **3.10. Extension of a Scholarship**

Requests for an extension of a Scholarship may be considered by the GHSP, where there are compelling grounds that additional training time is required, and provided sufficient funds are available. Scholars wishing to extend their Scholarship tenure must apply to the GHSP in writing. Applications must be accompanied by a written

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statement of support from the Scholar's primary supervisor, outlining the anticipated benefit of extending his/her training period.

### 3.11. Frequency of the Scholarship

The Scholarships will be awarded each year provided sufficient funds are available and there are suitable applicants. The GHSP has the discretion to award more than one Scholarship in each category in a calendar year provided adequate funds are available.

### 3.12. Conditions of the Scholarship

Scholars are expected to use the Scholarship responsibly and with dedication. The GHSP reserves the right to terminate the Scholarship if this condition is not fulfilled.

The Scholarships are awarded on the understanding that the scholar will return to his/her home country upon the completion of the Scholarship; unless there are extenuating circumstances accepted by the GHSP. Failure to do this will result in a demand for repayment of the Scholarship monies.

Scholars are also expected to comply with reporting requirements as set out in 3.13.

### 3.13. Monitoring and Evaluation

#### 3.13.1 Reporting

Scholars and their supervisors are required to provide progress reports to the GHSP every six months throughout their Scholarship. This translates into two reports during a one year scholarship and one in a scholarship of six months or less. The final report by the scholar must be comprehensive and not less than 1000 words. For guidance an example of a final report will be provided.

#### 3.13.2 Monitoring

The Rowan Nicks Convenor (or a mentor designated by the GHSP should the convenor not be available) will check-in with the Scholar at regular intervals, to ensure the Scholar is receiving sufficient exposure and appropriate supervision while undertaking his/her Scholarship. The Convenor will establish a schedule of face-to-face meetings with the Scholar, meeting at the three-month and six-month marks of a 12-month attachment. Any concerns the Convenor has will be reported to the Chair or Secretariat of the GHSP.

#### 3.13.3 Evaluation

Scholars are expected to fulfil all evaluation requirements, including a pre-attachment evaluation, and incremental follow-up surveys post attachment. Feedback from scholars will be used to evaluate outcomes of the Scholarship program, as well as to identify any areas for improvement.

### 3.14. Code of Conduct

The successful grantees are recommended to review and sign the RACS Workforce Conduct and Child Safeguarding policies prior to arrival.

### 3.15. Certificates

Subject to satisfactory reports being supplied by the scholar and the supervisor(s), RACS will present to the scholar a formal certificate of completion of the Scholarship over the seal of the College.

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### 3.16. Follow-up visits by the scholar

Between twelve and thirty-six months after returning to his or her country of origin, a scholar may be funded to make a return, short term visit (up to, for example, two months) to the Department in Australia or New Zealand in which he or she worked. A visit to another Department if appropriate could also be considered.

## 4. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

Rowan Nicks Scholarship Procedure (internal use only)

Rowan Nicks Scholarship Selection Process Guidelines (internal use only)

Global Health Scholarships Panel Terms of Reference

Rowan Nicks Scholarships Application Form (internal use only)

Rowan Nicks Scholarship Evaluation Form (internal use only)

**Approver** International Engagement Committee  
**Authoriser** Council