



2026
**BURSARY
RECIPIENTS**

President's Message



Welcome to the 2026 National Council of Women of Queensland's Annual Bursary Program E Year Book.

The Bursary Presentation Event is about acknowledgement. This E Year Book features the Bursary Recipients and gives you insights into the Bursaries they have been awarded. Congratulations to all of the recipients.

As a 2026 Bursary Recipient you are awarded funds to assist you to complete your studies and honorary membership of NCWQ for twelve months. I encourage you to utilise the time to network, to become involved, put yourself forward, join Team Bursary or one of our Advocacy Team. Take advantage of the opportunities such as attending the NCWQ Conference 'Amplifying Your Voice' on 19th September.

The National Council of Women of Queensland (NCWQ) celebrated 120 years of advocacy for and empowerment of women and girls last year. Our Patron, her Excellency the Governor of Queensland Dr Jeanette Young AC PSM honoured NCWQ by hosting an event at Government House on 19th June. Her Excellency acknowledged NCWQ's legacy and the impact of the NCWQ Bursary Program which has been managed by Kathy Cavanagh AM since 2013.

Education is the key to financial independence. The NCWQ Bursary Program empowers women by coordinating the program which provides financial assistance to female students to assist them to complete their studies. Thirty-seven Bursaries were offered again this year thanks to the wonderful Sponsors and Team Bursary some of whom are past Bursary Recipients.

We are grateful to Bendigo Community Bank who provided funds to assist us to cover the cost of the Zealous Platform used for the second time to process the applications. With over 460 applications the Zealous Platform enabled applicants to upload their applications and for their applications to be considered and scored efficiently.

In order to allow applicants to sort out which Bursary to apply for it was necessary to rebuild NCWQ website. Special thanks to Kathy Cavanagh AM and Dr Rachael Murray who have spent many hours working problem solving with Web Designer Kley Mc Pherson to fine tune the filter and link Zealous to the website. Dr Murray set the platform up enabling the online applications to be processed and decisions made.

This edition of the E Yearbook will give you insights into the high calibre of the Recipients and details about the Bursaries and their Sponsors. Congratulations once again to all those involved.

Sandy Smith
NCWQ President



2026 Bursary Recipients

<u>Broken to Brilliant Bursary</u>	Marie Dennis
<u>City of Moreton Bay Bursary</u>	Imogen Harris
<u>Claire Moore Bursary</u>	Jaimie-Lee Pomorin
<u>Cr Vicki Howard Bursary</u>	Charlotte Poynton
<u>Hon. David Littleproud MP Bursary</u>	Lilly Kerlin
<u>Elsie Byth Bursary</u>	Georgia Brough
<u>ESA International Bursary</u>	Georgia Adam
<u>Ethel Rowbotham Memorial Bursary</u>	Matilda Miles
<u>Forum Communicators Bursary</u>	Charlotte Lay
<u>Helen Ovens Memorial Bursary</u>	Louise Fitzgerald
<u>Inspirational Connections Adele Rice AM Lifetime Legacy of Learning (ESL) Bursary</u>	Riyan Kadir Musa
<u>National Council of Jewish Women of Australia Queensland Bursary</u>	Rebecca Smith
<u>NCWQ Digital Technology Bursary</u>	Malki Seneviratne
<u>NCWQ - Student from a Refugee Background Bursary</u>	Maryam Albartelly
<u>Office for Women Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Bursary</u>	Madison Jones
<u>Office for Women Forging Forward Bursary</u>	Nicole Jenkins
<u>PhD Student (health and medical) Bursary</u>	Fathima Nooru-Mohamed
<u>PhD Student (women and families) Bursary</u>	Tia Bartlett
<u>Queensland Medical Women's Society Bursary</u>	Bailey Schneider
<u>AMAQ (QMWS) Professor Tess Cramond Memorial Bursary</u>	Manisha Deeiki Kewage Dona
<u>Mater Health (QMWS) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Bursary</u>	Eden Siemsen
<u>QMWS Women in Radiology Bursary sponsored by Queensland X-Ray</u>	Dr Tam Tran
<u>Quota Brisbane NCWQ Bursary to honour the late Dr Laurel Macintosh OBE</u>	Dr Amelia Bai
<u>Rotary E-Club of Nextgen Bursary</u>	Sarah Smith
<u>June McNicol OAM Memorial Science Bursary</u>	Dee Yardley
<u>Senator Susan McDonald Bursary</u>	Olivia Fegan
<u>Soroptimist International Bursary</u>	Florence Mareko
<u>Soroptimist International Moreton North Inc (SIMNI)</u>	Lilly Rose Knott
<u>Audrey Martin Life-Long Learning Bursary</u>	Ditte Sjoegren
<u>Soroptimist International Moreton North Inc (SIMNI) Bursary</u>	Tayla Davis
<u>The Boyce Bursary for Students with Disability</u>	Kelli-jade Martin
<u>The Gown Chick Bursary</u>	Isabella Sedgmen
<u>The Kathleen Langan Sports Management Bursary</u>	Lily Henningsen
<u>Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR)</u>	Zara Heasley
<u>Women in Engineering Bursaries - Regional + SEQ</u>	Erin Chey
<u>Women's College Bursary</u>	Zoe Boot
<u>Women's Network Australia Bursary</u>	

Broken to Brilliant Bursary

Commencing in 2025, this bursary sponsored by Broken to Brilliant, reflects their work as a survivor-led charity, supporting domestic violence survivors in their journey of healing and rebuilding.



My name is Marie Dennis, a proud Yuru Birri Gubba woman. Through my lived experience, professional and community work, I have witnessed first-hand the profound effects that domestic violence and trauma can have on people's wellbeing, relationships, and ability to achieve their full potential.

I would like to sincerely acknowledge and thank Broken to Brilliant for investing in my development. Broken to Brilliant's support will enable me to purchase a laptop that is essential for undertaking the Graduate Certificate in Indigenous Trauma and Recovery Practice. Access to appropriate technology will ensure I can fully participate in my studies and strengthen my knowledge and skills to better support those experiencing the impacts of trauma and violence.

My long-term goal is to establish my own business dedicated to supporting women, children, and communities on their healing journeys. Through education, healing programs, mentoring, and advocacy, I hope to help individuals and families move beyond survival, achieve their goals, and create stronger futures for themselves and future generations.

City of Moreton Bay Bursary

Long-time supporters of the bursary program, this bursary is to assist a female tertiary student from the City of Moreton Bay, with her studies. She will have also contributed to the local community.



My name is Imogen and I am in my final year of a Bachelor in Engineering (Honours) majoring in Computer and Software Systems at QUT.

Specifically, my interests in Software engineering revolve around using emerging technologies to make the world a better place, potentially for improvements across community welfare spaces, health-related preventative care and environmental protection. In the future, I hope to work across these sectors and progress into leadership or project management roles.

Outside of my studies I like to stay connected to my community. Through tutoring roles and my roles in the QUT Burlesque society, I have had the incredible experience of building confidence in young people, both academically and personally. I am also a member of the Gender Equity in Engineering club.

To say I am grateful to the support of the City of Moreton Bay Council is an understatement. Being able to reduce my working hours and relieve myself of some financial pressure across the next semester will allow me to fully immerse myself in my thesis learning and potentially allow myself to do some additional courses to kickstart my career.

Claire Moore Bursary

This bursary for a student studying for a career in special education, reflects the view of former Senator Claire Moore that education provides the best opportunities for us all.



As a proud woman, I am transitioning from a small business background into Education Support, a field where I can actively serve my community. I am deeply honoured to receive the Claire Moore Bursary, which is vital to my journey.

This support eases the financial burden of my Certificate IV in Education Support and upcoming Diploma of Community Services, particularly by covering essential tuition, resources, and costs associated with my mandatory 100-hour work placement.

My long-term ambition is to work as a Disability Support Coordinator or within a school library, focusing on literacy and distance education. I am passionate about creating inclusive learning spaces where students feel empowered and supported.

Above all, I aspire to be a role model for my two young sons, showing them that it is never too late to pursue an education that aligns with your values and cultural identity. Thank you to the NCWQ and the Claire Moore Bursary for making this career pivot possible.

Cr Vicki Howard Bursary

Sponsored by Cr Vicki Howard, this bursary is for a female student living in the Brisbane City Council area, supporting a recipient who identifies with the LGBTIQ+ community.



My name is Charlie, I'm a music journalist & host of a video podcast called "Charlie In The Rain", where I chat with local Australian musicians and creatives, dedicating a platform to promoting artists at all phases of their career. My work has a particular focus on supporting female, LGBTQ+, First Nations, and POC identifying artists, as they tend to face adverse barriers within the Australian and global creative industries.

I would like to thank Cr Vicki Howard for her support and dedication to uplifting the voices of young LGBTQ+ identifying folk. This bursary will help me continue to support local female and LGBTQ+ identifying artists and creatives and attend industry events to advocate for our local scene to a broader audience.

I aspire to continue using my voice to advocate for those who are typically disadvantaged or marginalised from the mainstream music and arts industry, whilst campaigning further for support for diverse folk in male dominated industries and spaces.

Hon. David Littleproud MP Bursary

Recognising the difficulties for country students wishing to pursue their education, this bursary is for a female resident of the Maranoa Federal electorate, who is a first year student in tertiary studies.



My name is Lilly Kerlin and I am currently in my first year of studying a Bachelor of Primary Education at UniSQ in Toowoomba. Being able to begin my studies while staying close to my home community in the Maranoa electorate means a great deal to me.

Growing up in a rural area has shaped my values, my work ethic and my passion for supporting young people and I feel grateful to remain connected to the place that has influenced who I am.

I am sincerely grateful to receive the bursary sponsored by The Hon. David Littleproud MP. This support eases the financial pressures that many regional students face and allows me to focus more fully on my degree and the kind of teacher I aspire to become.

My goal is to return to a rural community like the one that raised me and help create classrooms where students feel supported, confident and inspired. I hope that one day I can give back to the communities that have given so much to me.

Elsie Byth Bursary

Sponsored by Dr Susan Byth, this bursary recognises the work of her grandmother, Elsie Byth OBE, (1890–1988) in the National Council of Women, serving as both Queensland and National President.



I would like to sincerely thank my sponsor, Dr Susan Byth, for her generosity and support, and for continuing to recognise and celebrate the legacy of her grandmother, Elsie Byth OBE.

This bursary will assist me with expenses, including textbooks, technology, and other learning resources, helping me pursue my future studies with greater confidence.

I am currently a Year 12 student at Moreton Bay College. As the 2026 House Worship and Service Captain, I have the privilege of leading and participating in initiatives that support the school and wider community. As Drama Captain, I enjoy creating, performing, and directing dramatic works. Through school musicals, theatre productions, drama programs, curriculum drama and private speech and communication lessons, I have developed a deep love for the performing arts.

Next year, I hope to study a Bachelor of Education (Secondary) and a Bachelor of Creative Arts (Drama) at QUT.

My goal is to become a drama teacher, returning to Moreton Bay College to teach and inspire students as my teachers have inspired me. I am incredibly grateful for the support of the Elsie Byth Bursary as I work towards achieving this dream.

ESA International Bursary

ESA International is a women's service organisation for Education, Service and Association. With a long history of supporting cancer research and care services, the bursary reflects this focus by assisting a female student dealing with her own cancer or that of a family member.



My name is Georgia Adam, and I am currently studying a Bachelor of Property Economics at QUT, with plans to major in Applied Economics and Finance. I have always been passionate about business, leadership, and creating opportunities that make a positive impact on communities.

My journey to university has not been without challenges. I lost my father to cancer when I was two years old, and my mother is currently living with stage 4 metastatic endometrial cancer. Alongside my studies, I work multiple jobs to support myself financially and helping my family. These experiences have taught me resilience, determination, and the importance of making the most of every opportunity.

I am incredibly grateful to ESA Queensland State Council for supporting my education through this bursary. Their generosity will help ease financial pressures, with more time to my studies, professional development, and involvement in university and community activities.

My goal is to build a successful career in property, finance, or development, eventually taking on leadership roles to create meaningful change. I hope to use the opportunities I have been given to support others and make a positive contribution to my community.

Ethel Rowbotham Memorial Bursary

This bursary is sponsored by Beverley and Jill Rowbotham in memory of their mother Ethel Rowbotham RN (nee Matthews), who trained in New Zealand and throughout her long nursing career, worked there, and in the United Kingdom and Australia.



My Name is Matilda Miles, and I am completing Year 12 at a public school in the Darling Downs. I have aspired to pursue a career in nursing, with the goals of working within regional Queensland. This dream comes from my willingness to help those in need and to care for others during tough times and my hope to make a difference in people's lives regardless of how big or small it is.

Throughout my schooling, I have sought out opportunities to gain experience in a healthcare setting. I have completed the first trimester of a Bachelor of Nursing as a headstart at the University of Southern Queensland while maintaining my Year 12 studies. I will continue my Bachelor of Nursing degree at the University of Southern Queensland.

Having seen firsthand how important healthcare professionals are in the admission and recovery of patients and the support to their families I understand the needs of rural locations. I am incredibly grateful to have be awarded this bursary. The financial support will help ease the many costs of university, including uniforms, equipment, textbooks etc. I would like to sincerely thank and express my gratitude to the family of Ethel Rowbotham for supporting aspiring future health professionals, like they have for me.

Forum Communicators Bursary

Initially established to assist women to improve their public-speaking skills, Forum, with open membership, offers advice in conducting meetings and organisational procedures. This bursary reflects Forum's passion for communication.



My name is Charlotte and I am a first-year BA/SocSci student— majoring in Peace and Conflict Studies, English Literature, and Health and Social Policy. Outside of my studies, I coach some truly amazing debating teams, share my passion for learning as a tutor, and engage in social activism through knowledge dissemination and advocacy.

Every day, these pursuits remind me just how valuable communication skills are, especially for young people in this age of media ubiquity and divisive discourse. This is why I am so, immensely grateful to the Forum Communicators Association for enabling my ongoing personal development and teaching by honouring me with this award.

Something I always tell the girls I coach in debating is to take up space. For a long time, we have been told to deepen our voices, to hold our tongues, to repress our emotions, and to be silent in the face of injustice: I firmly believe that it is imperative to disrupt this narrative, because women's voices can and will change the world. Thank you again to the Forum Communicators Association for supporting me as I attempt to make this dream a reality.

Helen Ovens Memorial Bursary

Helen was well-aware of how easy it is for mothers, especially of young children, to lose their sense of identity. This bursary reflects the importance she gave to maintaining those interests which nourished her as an individual.



I have worked in the agricultural industry for over the last ten years in various locations and roles from governess, nanny, jillaroo, rural merchandise support, technical and project officer.

In 2023, I had my beautiful daughter Paisley. In the chaos of rural contracting in Central Queensland and raising a baby on the road, I lost my identity. That is when I decided to start a dual degree in science, majoring in animal and plant agricultural science. The long nights and walking around paddocks for service paid off with high distinctions and I soon began to navigate my new life on the road with a new baby and running a business with my partner.

I want to thank the friends of Helen Ovens who have given me this opportunity. I am grateful and honoured to be awarded this bursary in Helen's memory. The bursary will greatly help with the cost of accommodation and fuel to travel 12 hours to compulsory residential schools in Toowoomba.

I have big dreams of opening a soil lab and rural store in our region. I am currently putting together a product and app to assist landholders in investigating their soil health and management.

Inspirational Connections Adele Rice AM Lifetime Legacy of Learning (ESL) Bursary

Adele Rice AM is a nationally recognised expert in multicultural education. She was the Founding Principal of Milperra State School (1984-2012). Chris Knight and Adele have shared a friendship for over 40 years through SIMNI. This bursary is sponsored by Chris' company, Inspirational Connections.



I am currently a second-year Bachelor of Education (Primary) student at Griffith University. Arriving in Australia from Kenya as a 14-year-old refugee of Ethiopian & Somali ethnicity, I benefited from the support I received from my teachers, who inspired my passion for education and particularly EAL/D teaching.

After initially settling in Townsville, my family moved to Brisbane when I was 16. I attended Sunnybank State High School, whose EAL/D program played a significant role in my learning journey. My family and I have also enjoyed supporting other newly arrived refugee families to access services, attend appointments, and navigate life in Australia.

Both my education in Australia and my involvement in community activities have enabled me to work as a Teacher Aide at my sponsor school, Milpera State High, where I now support refugee students and provide Somali interpreting assistance.

This role has strengthened my commitment to helping young people find confidence.

National Council of Jewish Women of Australia Queensland Bursary

This bursary reflects the sponsor's interest in the education and advancement of women through support for a student studying in the field of education.



I am currently studying a Bachelor of Secondary Education, specialising in English and Legal Studies, while raising four young children in Mitchell, a remote community in Queensland. Previously, I served as a Queensland police officer, primarily working in child protection and domestic violence. These experiences strengthened my commitment to supporting young people and inspired my transition into teaching.

I am incredibly grateful to the National Council of Jewish Woman of Australia QLD, for awarding me this bursary. Their support has eased the financial pressures associated with studying in a remote location and undertaking professional placements, allowing me to focus more fully on my studies and future career.

Education has the power to change lives, and I am passionate about helping young people realise their potential regardless of their circumstances or postcode. My goal is to become a secondary teacher who creates safe, inclusive and engaging learning environments where students feel valued, supported and capable of success.

In the future, I hope to continue working in regional and remote communities, using both my policing and educational experiences to make a positive difference in the lives of young people and their families.

National Council of Women of Queensland Digital Technology Bursary

Sponsored by NCWQ, this bursary aims to encourage more females in the field of digital technology.



I am a postgraduate researcher from Toowoomba and I am honoured to be a recipient of this Bursary. I am sincerely grateful to NCWQ and its supporters for investing in women pursuing careers and studies in STEM.

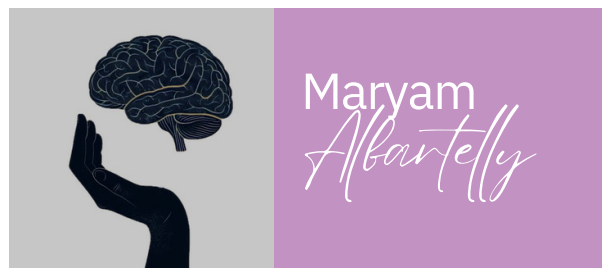
In my first year of my PhD in computer systems engineering at the University of Southern Queensland, my research focuses on identifying risk and protective factors associated with mental health conditions among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and adolescents, particularly those living in rural and regional communities.

This bursary will provide valuable support throughout my PhD journey by helping me access professional development opportunities, strengthen my research skills, and share my findings at national and international conferences. These experiences will enable me to build meaningful collaborations and expand the impact of my research.

My long-term goal is to become a researcher in AI-driven mental health research, contributing to closing the gap in Indigenous health outcomes while mentoring and encouraging more women to pursue opportunities in STEM and research.

National Council of Women of Queensland, Student from a Refugee Background Bursary

An original bursary sponsored from 2009 by NCWQ, this bursary assists a student currently at high school, to further her educational outcomes.



Having moved from Iraq to Australia several years ago, adapting to a different environment has not been an easy transition. Throughout my journey, education became an increasingly important part of my life despite the challenges I faced.

I am grateful to the National Council of Women of Queensland for their bursary sponsorship and support.

The bursary will help me continue focusing on my education and future goals by reducing some of the financial pressures that can come with pursuing opportunities and further study.

My aspiration is to continue learning while making the most of the opportunities available to me. I hope to use my education to contribute positively to society and to show other young women from refugee backgrounds that their goals are worth pursuing, no matter how ambitious they may seem.

Office for Women (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Bursary

The Queensland Government Office of Women, is a long-time supporter of the NCWQ Bursary program. They sponsor two bursaries. This bursary is for an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tertiary student.



My name is Madi, I am a proud Mununjali and Bundjalung Woman studying a Bachelor of Biomedical Sciences at the University of Southern Queensland. I am so grateful to for this bursary. Thank you to my sponsors and to the NCWQ! I intend to use the bursary to fund my accommodation in Toowoomba for the remainder of my Laboratory residential schools this year. This year will be my last of the bachelor and I am so grateful to not have to worry about how I will afford to attend my last few courses' residential schools.

Following my bachelor, I hope to go onto further studies and complete a Doctor of Medicine. I currently work with children at a before and after school care and one day I hope to combine my experience with my learning and become a paediatrician or find a different field of interest along the way. I hope to one day give back and support my community at the Inala Indigenous Health Service, following in my mum's footsteps. Again, thank you to everyone involved. I am very excited to meet everyone and all the other recipients!

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Office for Women (Forging Forward) Bursary

This second bursary sponsored by the Queensland Government Office for Women is for a female 'Forging Forward' in a new career path to give greater financial stability.



My path to a PhD in Astrophysics was not a straight one. After years of insecure work in industries like cleaning, seasonal zoo sales, and freelance motorsport media, combined with raising my daughter alone while experiencing homelessness, I built the resilience that now drives my research. Despite entering university later than most, I earned the University Medal for my Honours thesis, and in January 2026 I began my PhD at UniSQ, investigating star formation in merging galaxies using the SAMI Galaxy Survey.

Women make up less than 30% of the astrophysics workforce in Australia. Entering this field as someone who came through hardship feels both challenging and deeply meaningful. I want my daughter and other young women to see that their future is not limited by circumstance or stereotype.

I am sincerely grateful to the Queensland Government's Office for Women and Economic Security, through the NCWQ for this bursary. For someone who has faced financial instability as a constant companion, this support removes a real barrier and allows me to focus fully on the research and outreach work I love. I hope to spend my career combining astrophysical research with making science accessible to everyone.

PhD Student Bursary (health and medical)

This new, anonymously sponsored bursary, is for a female PhD candidate, whose research focuses on health and medical outcomes.



My name is Fathima Nooru-Mohamed, and I am a PhD student within the Australian Institute of Bioengineering and Nanotechnology investigating mRNA-based cancer immunotherapies and vaccines. My work focuses on engineering new therapeutics for cancers using mRNA technology, the same technology that was pivotal for the rapid development of the COVID-19 vaccines. I work on revitalizing the immune system to recognize and kill cancer cells for a variety of cancer types from leukemia, breast, ovarian, and colorectal cancer.

I absolutely love the research that I am apart of and the translational potential of it makes me feel unbelievably privileged to be doing this work. I aspire to complete my training as a cancer immunologist and pursue a career in academia, helping further the field of cancer immunotherapeutics and the applications of mRNA technology.

I would like to sincerely thank the sponsors of this bursary as I look to invest this money towards the cost of attending the Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer conference held in the United States. Attending this conference will not only provide me with insight into current unpublished high impact research but also allow me access to networks and collaborations that I can build upon throughout my career.

PhD Student Bursary (women and families)

This anonymously sponsored bursary is for a female PhD candidate, whose research focus will be of benefit to women and their families.



My name is Tia and I am a proud Gamilaraay woman and first-year PhD student at the University of Queensland. My path into biomedical research was shaped by both professional and personal experiences in women's health, from witnessing first-hand how chronic disease affects quality of life whilst working in medical reception, to supporting a close friend through her endometriosis diagnosis journey. Together, these experiences deepened my commitment to pursuing a research career focused on understanding and addressing this complex condition.

My current research focuses on how hormones influence inflammation in endometriosis, using lentiviral-induced CRISPR-Cas9 perturbation and single-cell RNA-sequencing in patient-derived cells. Understanding this relationship will advance knowledge of endometriosis development while improving diagnostics and personalised treatment options.

I am incredibly grateful to receive this bursary and sincerely thank my sponsor/s for their generosity and commitment to supporting emerging researchers like myself. These funds will directly contribute to my ability to participate in conferences, workshops, and personal development opportunities that are so valuable at this stage of my career, all of which bring me closer to my dream of one day establishing an endometriosis diagnostic and research centre where patients, clinicians, and researchers work together to improve quality of life.

Queensland Medical Women's Society (QMWS) Bursary

From its strong focus on supporting professional development including participation in international conferences and networking, the sponsorship of a bursary by QMWS assists female medical students or recent graduates to take advantage of these opportunities.



Bailey
Schneider

I am a final year Doctor of Medicine candidate at the University of Queensland, with a research background spanning critical care, surgery, and obstetrics. Over the past year I have had the privilege of working with the Genesis MFM Research Group at Mater Mothers' Hospital under Professor Sailesh Kumar, work that has resulted in an abstract accepted to the Asia and Oceania Federation of Obstetrics and Gynaecology Congress in Sydney this October.

My long-term goal is to specialise in obstetrics and gynaecology and build a career in academic medicine, where clinical practice and research inform each other, with particular interests in maternal-fetal medicine and reproductive medicine.

The QMWS Bursary will fund my travel to Sydney to present my research. The support of QMWS and NCWQ arrives at exactly the right moment, and I am deeply grateful for it. I hope, in time, to offer the same encouragement to the next generation of women in medicine.

AMAQ (QMWS) Professor Tess Cramond Memorial Bursary

Former President of AMAQ, Professor Cramond's career ranged across her role in anaesthetics, CPR for Surf Life Savers, and establishing multidisciplinary pain clinics. The purpose of this bursary is to assist the recipient to attend a medical event or conference.



Manish Deeiki
Kewage Dona

I am Manisha, a second-year medical student at the University of Queensland and a first-generation medical student. Before studying medicine, I worked in research focused on public health and maternal health, experiences that strengthened my commitment to improving outcomes for women and families.

My journey into medicine has also been shaped by my mother's complex health needs. Seeing the difference that compassionate and thoughtful care can make inspired me to pursue a career where I can combine clinical practice with advocacy and meaningful community impact. I am particularly interested in women's health and hope to explore Obstetrics and Gynaecology, reproductive health and maternal mental health as my training progresses.

I am deeply grateful to AMAQ and QMWS for this bursary. It will help me access professional-development opportunities, broaden my exposure to different pathways in medicine and build confidence as I continue my studies.

My aspiration is to contribute to a more equitable healthcare system and to support other women entering medicine.

Mater Health / QMWS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Bursary

As part of their commitment to reconciliation and the broader goal to advance the parity of representation of First Nation Peoples in the Australian medical workforce, and its leadership, this bursary sponsored by Mater Health is for a female Indigenous medical student.



I am a proud Aboriginal woman currently in my first year of the Doctor of Medicine program at the University of Queensland. I have previously worked as a paramedic, which strengthened my passion for medicine and community while highlighting inequities within the healthcare system. As an Aboriginal woman, my passion for medicine is strongly connected to improving health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, particularly in rural and remote communities. My goal is to become a Rural Generalist and provide compassionate, accessible, and community-led care.

I am incredibly grateful to the NCWQ and bursary sponsors for their generosity and support. This bursary will help ease the financial pressures of studying medicine and allow me to continue pursuing opportunities such as rural placements, professional development events, and community engagement activities.

My long-term goal is to combine my paramedic background with my medical training to provide holistic, culturally safe, patient-centred care while advocating for equity and improved health outcomes for mob and rural communities.

QMWS Women in Radiology Bursary sponsored by Queensland X-Ray

This bursary, offered for the first time in 2025, is possible due to the generosity of Queensland X-Ray in their support for Women in Radiology. It is intended to advance the career and/or leadership aspirations for women training in Radiology.



Twelve years ago, I walked into my first job as a medical imaging assistant at Queensland X-ray. It sparked my passion for radiology, and it is thanks to the friends and the lessons I learnt at Queensland X-ray that I went on to complete my Bachelor of Medical Imaging Science, and eventually my Doctor of Medicine.

Those formative years at QXR ground me and remind me that pursuing radiology is a privilege. I am thankful to Queensland X-ray for seeing my potential twelve years ago. It is such a meaningful full-circle moment to have QXR support me now through the NCWQ/QMWS Women in Radiology Bursary.

I will use this bursary to raise awareness and support for women's health issues, with research projects such as "A retrospective audit of incidental breast findings on PET/CT", and "An approach to MRI for Chronic Pelvic Pain", as well as furthering my passion in radiology by attending key conferences and meetings.

Quota Brisbane NCWQ Bursary to honour the late Dr Laurel Macintosh OBE

This bursary, commencing in 2025, is co-sponsored by Quota Brisbane and NCWQ. It honours the late Dr Laurel Macintosh OBE, for a doctor undertaking specialist training in ophthalmology. Laurel, a trailblazer in this field, also worked tirelessly as a member of both Quota and NCWQ.



Thank you to NCWQ and Quota Brisbane for this generous bursary in honour of Dr Laurel Macintosh. As I complete my ophthalmology training, I am inspired by Dr Macintosh's legacy and the path she helped create for women in ophthalmology.

My passion for ophthalmology extends beyond clinical care. Through my research in retinopathy of prematurity, a blinding condition affecting premature infants, I hope to improve access to sight-saving screening for those in regional and remote Australia. This work has connected me with specialists across the country and strengthened my commitment to improving equity of access to eye care.

This bursary will help me share my research at international conferences, learn from leaders in the field, and continue developing as a clinician and researcher. Looking ahead, I hope to complete an overseas fellowship before returning to combine clinical practice, research, teaching and mentorship. My goal is to contribute to advances in ophthalmology while supporting and inspiring future generations of trainees, particularly women entering the specialty.

Outside of medicine, I enjoy painting and have exhibited my work at the South Australian Living Artists Festival. Through my artwork, I have also raised funds for Beyond Blue, a cause close to my heart.

Rotary E-Club of Nextgen Bursary

As part of Rotary International, this E-Club values the opportunities provided by education and strengthen communities through volunteering. This bursary, recognises the difficulties for regional/rural tertiary students to continue their education.



From a young age, I knew I wanted a career in healthcare. Growing up in a small Queensland town, as well as my mother being a nurse, exposed me early to the challenges rural communities face in accessing healthcare. However, it wasn't until my gap year in remote areas of the Northern Territory that I truly understood these barriers.

Living and working on stations in isolated regions often meant travelling up to 15 hours for anything beyond basic care. Access to women's healthcare was even more limited, and communities relied heavily on the Royal Flying Doctor's Service for routine and emergency care.

This led me to pursue a Bachelor of Nursing Science and Bachelor of Midwifery at James Cook University, where I am now in my final year. I am passionate about improving women's health in rural Australia. My long-term goal is to return to these isolated communities and help strengthen maternity services where they are needed most.

Relocating for university has created significant financial pressures, including accommodation, travel, and placement expenses. This bursary will ease these challenges and support my journey to becoming a capable midwife. I sincerely thank the sponsors for investing in my education and supporting the future rural healthcare workforce.

June McNicol OAM Memorial Science Bursary

Sponsored by the late June McNicol OAM, June's experience as a metallurgist, gave her an understanding of the difficulties for women working in the physical sciences field. This bursary reflects her desire to assist female students following in her footsteps. She made a legacy to NCWQ to continue the bursary after her death in 2025.



I am a current 2nd year mature-aged student studying a Bachelor of Science, majoring in Physics and Earth Science at QUT. I am honoured to be the recipient of the 2026 June McNicol OAM Memorial Science Bursary, this money will not only alleviate some of the pressures for the overall cost of living as a student, but I will be putting it towards a much needed new laptop to be able to run more extensive software relevant to my studies and do further research.

I am grateful to have recently completed a CSIRO Student Intern Vacationship in Perth where I studied pisoliths and their uses in inferring landscape evolution in regolith profiles, I hope to take this knowledge gained and connections made to further grow my career in the space exploration, planetary science and astrophysics sectors.

My dream career would be to one day make contributions to the wonderful work done by NASA!

Senator Susan McDonald Bursary

Sponsored by Senator Susan McDonald, this bursary reflects the importance for regional students to be given the opportunity for tertiary study.



My name is Olivia Fegan and I am a third-year Bachelor of Nursing student at James Cook University, Mount Isa Campus. I was born and raised in a small country town in North West Queensland that has shaped my passion for rural healthcare and community service.

I am incredibly grateful to Senator Susan McDonald for supporting my studies through this bursary. As a student living and studying in a rural area, financial assistance makes a significant difference, particularly during extended clinical placements where opportunities for paid work are limited. This support allows me to focus on gaining the knowledge and practical skills required to become a safe and compassionate registered nurse.

I also work at the Julia Creek Multipurpose Health Service as an Assistant in Nursing and Recreational Officer. I am involved in several local community organisations and currently serve as Secretary of the Julia Creek Turf Club. My goal is to commence a graduate nursing position in rural Queensland and continue serving regional and remote communities.

I hope to further my education and pursue advanced practice opportunities, with the long-term aspiration of contributing to improved healthcare access and outcomes for people living in rural Australia.

Soroptimist International Bursary

With the theme “Soroptimists – Lead to Educate, Empower, Enable” this bursary for an Indigenous woman studying in the areas of Medicine, Health or Education, reflects this ideal.



My name is Florence Mareko and I live and study full-time from Thursday Island, Queensland. I am a 2nd year mixed-mode Bachelor of Nursing Science student at James Cook University. I’m passionate about helping others and making a difference through compassionate, person-centred care.

The thought to become a nurse first crossed my mind after being admitted to hospital. The care I received inspired me and made me want to help and support other people during what may be some of their most challenging times.

As a mum of four, working part time I am grateful for the Soroptimist International Bursary. This bursary will help reduce the financial burden of my upcoming placement in Townsville. I am truly blessed to be recognised for my hard work by receiving this bursary.

After completing my degree, I will apply for the graduate program at Thursday Island Hospital. I hope to grow professionally in my role, inspire others and give back to my community.

Soroptimist International Moreton North Inc (SIMNI) Audrey Martin Life-Long Learning Bursary

This bursary is to recognise Audrey’s ongoing contributions to Soroptimist International and changing the lives of young girls to have a better future. Audrey enjoyed a long career as an Adult Education Vocational Teacher.



My name is Lilly, I am 20 years old, born and raised in Northern NSW, and now living at Bribie Island. When I was 14, I watched a performance that included sign language. I was immediately inspired, with something inside saying it was something I had to learn.

I tried learning by myself with video tutorials, but as time went on, I realised that I wanted to take this seriously and become an Auslan interpreter. I attended high school with an Auslan program and commenced the certificate pathway with Deaf Connect.

I also worked with an amazing deaf artist, who created an app called Amplio, becoming apart of a team to teach Auslan to children at child care centres, through music and games.

With certificates 2,3 and 4, I am hoping to begin the diploma soon. To become fully qualified.

I want to thank and acknowledge SIMNI and NCWQ for this amazing opportunity.

The bursary will help with ongoing costs for my studies relieving the financial burden. I am passionate about supporting the deaf community through Auslan.

Soroptimist International Moreton North Inc (SIMNI) Bursary

This bursary is to assist a veterinary science student in her final year of study, especially recognising the costs involved with placements and assessment.



Growing up on a rural property west of Mackay before relocating to Townsville to undertake my Bachelor of Veterinary Science (Honors) at James Cook University, I am in my final year.

I am honoured to be the recipient of the 2026 Soroptimist International Moreton North Inc. Bursary and am sincerely grateful to the National Council of Women of Queensland Inc.

As part of our degree, we are required to complete more than a year of compulsory clinical placements. These placements remain entirely self-funded, often limiting opportunities to access clinics that provide essential experience for our futures. Through the support of the SIMNI Bursary, I can travel for placements at specialist veterinary hospitals, helping to give me the experience and skills needed for my entry into an internship program following graduation.

I am deeply passionate about improving access to veterinary care across diverse communities and promoting greater equity in available services. In the future, I hope to undertake specialist training in emergency and critical care and surgery and hope to overall make a meaningful contribution to both the veterinary profession and my community.

Once again, I am truly grateful for this opportunity and thank the National Council of Women of Queensland Inc. for all they do.

The Boyce Bursary for a student with a disability

As a long-term advocate for those with a disability, Sue Boyce has been an NCWQ bursary sponsor for a number of years. Her bursary supports a student with a disability.



My name is Tayla, and I am currently studying veterinary science at JCU. Sue Boyce and this bursary will allow me to get the most out of this course by allowing me to travel for placement opportunities and reduce my financial stress.

My goal is to work at a wildlife rescue and rehabilitation centre after graduation, to contribute to the conservation of our wildlife and the habitats they rely on. This is an ambitious goal, with few jobs in this sector and most requiring years of experience. This is why the placement opportunities are so important to me. I would eventually like to open my own rescue and rehabilitation centre.

It is not a shortage of people with the knowledge, skills and motivation to work in wildlife conservation; but a shortage of opportunities. Opening my own centre will create jobs, allowing more animals to be reached, and provide a platform to educate the public.

This is a very long-term goal, the first steps are to continue my studies, complete placements and take every opportunity to upskill myself. This bursary increases my ability to do all of this, thank you, Sue Boyce.

The Gown Chick Bursary

The Gown Chick is a proudly Australian-owned and operated small business, supplying top quality graduation academic regalia. They specialise in custom designed graduation stoles for all levels of education. This bursary aims to give a second chance for educational opportunities.



My name is Kelli-Jade Martin and I am currently studying a Bachelor of Paramedicine. My pathway into this profession has been shaped by a diverse career in nursing, mining, safety, and emergency services, where I have always been passionate about helping people and supporting communities.

As a mature-age student balancing study, work, family, and volunteer commitments, this financial assistance will help reduce some of the pressures associated with returning to university.

My goal is to become a paramedic serving rural and regional communities, where access to healthcare services can often be limited. Through my previous experience as a registered nurse and emergency services officer and volunteer, I have developed a strong commitment to community service, helping people during difficult times.. More personally, I am seeking to return to the true joy I have always found in my career. Whether as a nurse, safety professional, or volunteer, the most rewarding aspects of my work have always been helping people, supporting those facing challenges, and advocating for the health, safety, and wellbeing of others.

I am grateful for this opportunity and look forward to using the knowledge and skills gained through my studies to make a positive difference in the lives of others.

The Kathleen Langan Sports Management Bursary

The bursary, sponsored by Ronda Nix OAM, is in honour of the late Kathleen Langan, recognising her contribution to sport and its administration, when those roles were voluntary, and male-dominated. She was a Life member for hockey at the Brisbane, state and national levels and internationally qualified.



Inquisitive Isabella — as my parents would say! Growing up in Adelaide, I carried big dreams and an even bigger work ethic. During my gap year, I juggled six jobs, sacrificed countless late-night Yo-Chi runs, and saved enough to make the move to Brisbane to study a Bachelor of Exercise and Sports Science at the University of Queensland — my dream city and my dream degree.

Sport shaped my entire childhood and has since shaped the motivated, disciplined, and passionate woman I am today. I am sincerely grateful to Ronda Nix for this incredible opportunity. This bursary will directly relieve the financial pressure of affording safe student accommodation, allowing me to focus fully on my studies and goals.

Those goals are anything but small. I seek to inspire young women to pursue careers in a historically male-dominated industry, to write a book centred on women's health, to work at the 2032 Olympic Games, and build my own business and legacy. Beyond that, I am deeply committed to sustainability and to contributing to my community by whatever means.

I am not just investing in a degree — I am investing in the person I intend to become, and the difference I intend to make.

Queensland Government Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) Women in Engineering Bursaries

The TMR Women in Engineering Bursaries form part of the Queensland Government Department of Transport and Main Roads's ongoing commitment to increase the number of women in the traditionally male dominated engineering profession. These two bursaries aim to promote continued female engagement with engineering courses, ensuring a strong pipeline of qualified female engineers for today's contemporary workforce.



I am currently in my final year at UniSQ and I am undertaking a Bachelor of Civil Engineering with Honours. Although I spent most of my life on the Sunshine Coast, I relocated to Townsville and completed the last three years of high school at Southern Cross before starting my tertiary studies online due to financial pressures. This has led me to experience the limitations posed on being able to study and obtain professional opportunities so far from South-East Queensland.

While my initial interest in engineering began with my father and grandfather, it has been the chances of meeting other professional engineers and hearing their experiences which helped me to choose this path. These experiences, and some of my own, have only fueled my passion as I hope to become an engineer that can help create a world which supports and benefits the people of today and of tomorrow.

It is an incredible honour to receive the Women in Engineering Bursary which is thanks to the generosity and support of the Department of Transport and Main Roads. This bursary will help to relieve some of the financial pressures as I come to complete my final year of my degree.



I'm Zara, a second-year Physics and Electrical Engineering student at QUT. Throughout my first year, I sought out environments where I could develop and test mathematical models: interning as Fluids System Lead at a rocket company, contributing as a founding member of QUT's first national rocketry team, and maintaining a 7.0GPA.

Having assumed in high school that the kind of innovation I was interested in didn't happen here in Queensland due to my own limited exposure, I founded and coordinate MechMayhem, a high-school robotics program, reaching more than 100 people and requiring extensive volunteer and sponsorship coordination. I also enjoy running weekly systems-engineering workshops, including mentoring others to build and launch personal rocket projects.

Across these experiences, I have focused on two goals: building reliable technical systems and strengthening pathways for others to contribute. I am incredibly grateful to the Department TMR for providing this bursary. The funding will support my research internship in Japan, where I will further develop my mathematical modelling skills as I work towards postgraduate study. Long-term, I hope to use modelling and physics to better understand and develop complex engineering systems, motivated by an interest in who gets to access, build, and benefit from technology.

The Women's College Bursary

The Women's College, established in 1914, was the first residential college for female University of Queensland students. Women's College and NCWQ have a shared history since its inception. This bursary provides the recipient with associate membership of The Women's College for a first year university student in 2027.



I'm someone who values how community shapes the way I move, while still valuing the clarity that comes from quiet reflection.

I am deeply appreciative of the opportunity of receiving the NCWQ Women's College UQ, Bursary. With this support, it would significantly ease the practical pressures of beginning university, allowing me to participate in the opportunities the College offers and more. Beyond that, what draws me most is the opportunity to engage in an environment where women support one another, enriched by the perspectives from others while contributing my own strengths.

I strive to keep learning, challenge and pursue my potential, surrounding myself with those who inspire, becoming the version of myself who is always emerging for the better.

I value hearing others' experiences, sharing my own, and authentic connection. I'm driven by purpose, whether that's discovering new depths or giving back with meaningful intention.

I aspire to work toward my own success while staying grounded in community, and the Women's College feels like the right place for that to happen.

Women's Network Australia Bursary

Commencing in 2025, the Women in Business Bursary is proudly offered by Women's Network Australia (WNA) to support women pursuing business or entrepreneurial studies. A leading national network for women in business, WNA is dedicated to fostering lifelong learning, financial capacity and supporting the health and wellbeing of women in business.



My name is Zoe Boot, and I am honoured to be a recipient of the NCWQ Women's network Australia Bursary.

During my psychology degree, from which I graduated with First Class Honours in 2025, I discovered my love for entrepreneurship. I am currently studying a Graduate Certificate of Business to further extend my business skills and knowledge before I pursue an entrepreneurial career.

I run a small business called Studio Zo, where I make, sell and teach wheel-thrown ceramics. I sell my pieces at markets, online and in cafes, and have taught at three local pottery studios. In the future, and with the help of this bursary, I would love to open my own pottery studio and storefront, where I can teach regular workshops and courses, and create a retail gallery of my own and other local artists' pieces.

I hope that this space would enrich the local creative community and create a space where people can make art and connect.

In conclusion...

Congratulations to our 36 recipients in the 2026 NCWQ Bursary Program. You have become one of the 461 bursary recipients since the program commenced with two bursaries in 2009.

Our generous and loyal sponsors allow the program to continue. Many have been contributing to the program for more than ten years. Special mention this year to the late June McNicol OAM. After sponsoring for many years, June passed away late last year, aged 98. She was very definitely a trail blazer in her field of metallurgy. But her legacy to continue her involvement will see her beloved science bursary continue to be supported for a number of years.

Thanks to Team Bursary – hard work and our diverse backgrounds ensure that every decision is made with ‘human’ intelligence and consideration. You do not make our work easy, but every year you amaze us with your tenacity, your achievements and dreams.

We take great joy in ‘meeting’ you all, either at the presentation or through this e-Yearbook.

“A woman with a voice is by definition a strong woman. But the search to find that voice can be remarkably difficult.”

–Melinda Gates, Philanthropist



Kathy Cavanagh AM
NCWQ Bursary Program Manager

Thank you to our 2026 Bursary Program Sponsors



Thank you to our 2026 Team Bursary

Bursary Program Manager - Kathy Cavanagh AM

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Ronda Nix OAM
Noela O'Donnell AM
Pat Pepper

Colleen Proudlock
Karin Walduck OAM

And our wonderful selection panel members of Team Bursary who work so hard in making difficult decisions.

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