



Regional Journalism Scholarships

As part of the landmark reforms being made to Australia's media laws, the Turnbull Government will provide much needed support to regional and small publishers through the \$60 million Regional and Small Publishers Jobs and Innovation Package. This Package includes:

- the \$50 million Regional and Small Publishers Innovation Fund
- the Regional and Small Publishers Cadetship Program, which will support 200 cadetships, and
- 60 regional journalism scholarships.

Why do we need these programs?

The Government recognises that the media industry is in significant transition and that this poses great challenges for small publishers and small regional newspapers in particular. The business models that have traditionally supported journalism—particularly those funded by advertising revenue—are being challenged, and the need to adapt successful subscriber and revenue models is proving especially demanding for smaller publications. The provision of quality journalism is under pressure.

- Quality journalism is an important underpinning of our democracy, and access to locally relevant factual journalism is important to developing and maintaining strong regional communities.
- Effective journalism also plays a vital role in holding our institutions to account and creates a framework in which complex issues can be understood, offering the public reliable information to support decisions in political, economic and social life.

The Regional and Small Publishers Jobs and Innovation Package will assist small publishers to adapt to the challenges of the contemporary media environment, create employment opportunities for cadet journalists, and support regional students to study journalism.

What are the Regional Journalism Scholarships?

The Regional Journalism Scholarships will support students and graduates from regional areas of Australia to take up opportunities to study journalism. In regional Australia, media employment numbers are under pressure as traditional media outlets are challenged by the evolving media landscape. In total, 60 scholarships will be made available over a two year period (commencing 2018–2019), with each scholarship valued at \$40,000. The funds will be able to be used by recipients to pay for course related expenses, including tuition fees, accommodation and living costs.

How will the Scholarships work?

Scholarships will be allocated to institutions across the country so that students in every state and territory have an opportunity to apply. In early 2018, the Department of Communications and the Arts (the Department) will seek Expressions of Interest (EOI) from journalism schools at universities and media training institutions to participate in the program and be allocated funding for scholarships. Specific eligibility criteria in relation to the EOI are currently being developed, but it is anticipated that the program will be oriented to those universities and institutions with a focus on partnering with industry, driving innovation in the media sector, and fostering regional journalism. Particular emphasis will be placed on journalism courses that are capable of providing students with the skills and knowledge necessary to operate effectively in a multi-platform media environment with competence in data analytics.

Universities and institutions selected for the program will be responsible for administering their allocated scholarships under the guidance of the Department and in cooperation with regional publishers. Students will be expected to be either located in regional areas or to have (and be able to demonstrate) a strong connection to a regional area. Overall, it is expected that the scholarship program and associated funding arrangements will be consistent with other such arrangements administered by the Department of Education and other Government departments.

When will the scholarships be available?

It is expected that the first thirty scholarships will be available in 2018–19.

How can I find out more?

The scholarship program will be further designed over the coming months, and more information on how universities and institutions can register their interest will be made available through the Department's website in early 2018.

Once program participants are selected by the Department, information relating to scholarships will be available on each of these university and institutions' websites.