



ACT Health

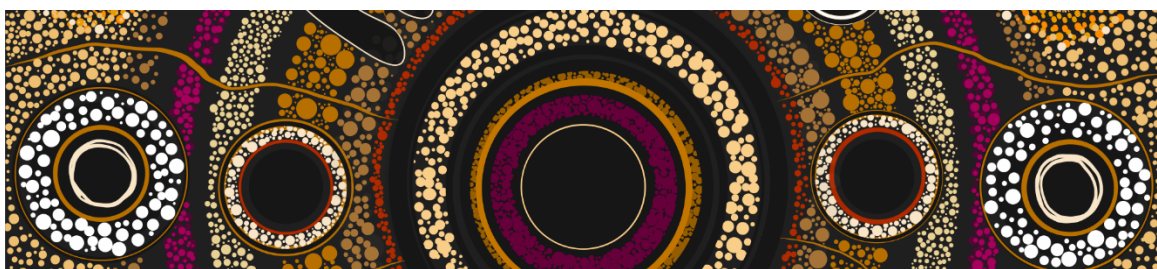
Mental Health Peer Work Scholarships



Scholarship Application Guidelines

Applications open:
15 May 2023

Applications close:
23 June 2023



Acknowledgment of Country

We wish to acknowledge the Ngunnawal people as traditional custodians of the land we are meeting on and recognise any other people or families with connection to the lands of the ACT and region. We wish to acknowledge and respect their continuing culture and the contribution they make to the life of this city and this region. We would also like to acknowledge and welcome other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who may be attending today's event.

The ACT Government is committed to making its information, services, events and venues, accessible to as many people as possible.

If you have difficulty reading a standard printed document and would like an alternative format, please phone 13 22 81.



If English is not your first language and you require the translating and interpreting services – please telephone 13 14 50.

If you are Deaf, or have a speech or hearing impairment and need the **Text telephone service (TTY)** – please telephone the **National Relay Service Help Desk** on 1800 555 660. For more information on these services visit <http://www.relayservice.com.au>

For further accessibility information, visit: www.health.act.gov.au/accessibility.

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If you would like to talk to someone about the Mental Health Peer Work Scholarships, please call 6207 7809 during business hours or email MHPWS@act.gov.au.

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Introduction

The ACT Government is pleased to announce the opening of the Mental Health Peer Work Scholarship Program (MHPWSP). This is part of its commitment to support positive outcomes in the mental health and wellbeing of the ACT mental health workforce which will enable them to deliver outcomes for the community through their delivery of services.

The MHPWSP scholarships support people with lived mental distress/ill-health experience to undertake nationally recognised vocational training, a Certificate IV in Mental Health Peer Work and promote a career pathway for people with a lived experience of mental distress/ill-health, including family member, carer, or support people.

The MHPWSP is an initiative of the Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care, administered in the ACT by the ACT Health Directorate. A total of \$30,000 is available for up to six Scholarships in the ACT. The Scholarship will consist of up to \$4,000 for course fees and a \$1,000 stipend per successful scholarship recipient.

Important information about this course

Consider the following before applying for this scholarship:

The Certificate IV Mental Health Peer Work course requires you to explore and reflect on your experiences of mental distress/ill-health and navigating mental health systems, either as a consumer, family member, carer, or support person. Scholarship recipients will not only commit to course learning but also to challenging personal growth and development.

It is important to recognise this will have an impact on you. The course topics and class discussions will be emotionally and mentally demanding.

Please consider the course units covered and be aware that the content and assessments are for a high-level qualification.

It is integral for the successful completion of this course, for your wellbeing and future employment and/or engagement as a Peer Worker, that you draw upon appropriate self-care strategies and support networks and resources, including an environment conducive to studying while undertaking this course.

If you are still determining your readiness to undertake the course, we recommend contacting the course coordinator before applying for a scholarship.

Aim and purpose

Why is the ACT Health Directorate offering the Mental Health Peer Work Scholarship Program

The MHPWSP scholarships support positive outcomes in the mental health and wellbeing of the ACT mental health workforce.

An experienced, skilled and engaged workforce is critical in ensuring the delivery of high-quality services and support for people experiencing mental distress/ill-health, their families, carers and support people.

The ACT Government recognises the peer workforce as an integral component within this system of service delivery, outlining its commitment to developing the peer workforce through the *ACT Mental Health Workforce Strategy*, the *Office for Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategic Approach to Mental Health in the ACT*, and the *ACT Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan*.

Am I eligible for a Scholarship

To be eligible for a scholarship you must:

- Be 17 years or older and/or a school leaver;
- Be an Australian or New Zealand citizen, a holder of a permanent residence visa, or a migrant, refugee or asylum seeker holding a temporary or bridging visa providing work and/or study rights;
- Have lived experience of mental distress/ill-health and/or suicide as a consumer, carer, family member
- Meet the attendance and study requirements to complete your chosen course.
- Be seeking to enter the Peer Workforce or are currently working in the Peer Mental Health Workforce;
- Have access to the internet and somewhere suitable to study;
- Have well developed self-care strategies and access to support networks you will use to complete the course; and
- Be willing to participate in the evaluation of the scholarship program.

How do I Apply for a Scholarship

All Applicants will need to complete and submit a Mental Health Peer Work Scholarship Application via the online SmartyGrants Grant Management System at:

<https://acthealth.smartygrants.com.au/PeerWorkScholarships2023>

Applications will close 23 June 2023

What Happens Once I Submit My Application?

The Peer Worker Scholarships Assessment Panel, including an experienced Peer Worker, assess all applications. The Panel will consider applications based on the applicant's attributes, readiness for Peer Work and readiness to undertake formal studies. The ACT Health Directorate will advise all applicants in writing after the applications are assessed and the process is finalised.

How will we assess your application?

Panel members will use the information provided in your application to assess all applications submitted.

Applications will be scored, with higher scores being awarded if applicants demonstrate excellent claims that exceed expectations. As there is limited funding per Grant round, a merit list will be created if successful applicants do not accept their Letter of Offer to ensure all funding is expended.

To help you complete a quality application, below are questions panel members will consider when assessing your application:

1) Readiness for peer work

- Whether you are currently working in a paid or unpaid peer work role, and have you discussed participation in the Cert IV with your employer/organisation
- Potential barriers peers can face in the workplace, and your approach to overcoming these barriers if they arise.
- What you think you would bring to a peer work role?

2) Readiness for formal studies

- What makes you ready for this course now?
- Past study experiences.
- Consideration given to the challenges people may face undertaking this course of study, and steps/strategies you would use to manage the challenges/demands of study.
- What self-care strategies and/or supports do you currently have in place and how would you know it was time to use them?

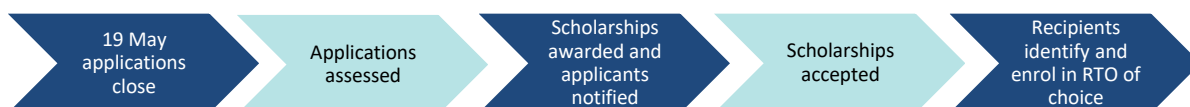
3) Contributing to the community

- How you would like to contribute to others as a result of study/work
- Inclusivity and diversity are important for peer work and the community - how does your background and knowledge contribute to these.

What happens if we approve your application?

- 1) If successful, the ACT Health Directorate will send you a Letter of Offer outlining your successful application and the conditions you must agree to receive the funding.
- 2) If you accept the Letter of Offer, you agree to enroll in a Certificate IV in Mental Health Peer Work with a Registered Training Organisation (RTO).
- 3) Applicants must commence study with the RTO of their choice by 31 December 2023.
- 4) If you do not provide acceptance of your Letter of Offer in the outlined timeframe, ACT Health will consider reallocating the funding.
- 5) If you receive a Letter of Offer and do not agree to the terms and conditions stated or decide not to proceed for other reasons, please advise the ACT Health Directorate on (02) 6207 7809 during business hours or email MHPWS@act.gov.au.
- 6) The ACT Health Directorate will provide you with funding for course fees, and the stipend on provision of evidence of enrolment, or evidence of invoice for course fees. However, the scholarship may not cover the full course costs for all RTOs, and if this is the case, applicants will need to cover any gap between the scholarship and course fee.

PLEASE NOTE: An offer of Scholarship funding does not assure recipients of course entry. Eligibility requirements may vary between RTOs.



Where can I study?

Currently, there are no options to study for the qualification face to face in the ACT. However, there are a number of RTOs throughout Australia providing the course online. These include:

Mental Health Coordinating Council

[Certificate IV in Mental Health Peer Work - Mental Health Coordinating Council \(mhcc.org.au\)](https://mhcc.org.au)

Phone: 02 9060 9630

Email: training@mhcc.org.au

Hammond Institute

[Certificate IV in Mental Health Peer Work course in Melbourne – Government Funding Available \(hammond.edu.au\)](https://hammond.edu.au)

Phone: 1800 788 399

Email: info@hammond.edu.au

AMA Training Services

[CHC43515 Certificate IV in Mental Health Peer Work \(Consumer Peer Work\) | AMA Training Services AMA Training Services](https://amatraining.edu.au)

Phone: 1800 248 292

Email: training@amatraining.edu.au

Spectrum Training

[Certificate IV in Mental Health Peer Work – CHC43515 – Spectrum Training](https://spectrum.org.au)

Phone: 07 3881 3310

Email: Training@spectrum.org.au

breakthru college

[Certificate IV in Mental Health Peer Work \(CHC43515\) | breakthru \(breakthrucollege.edu.au\)](#)

Phone: 1800 767 212

Email: training@breakthru.org.au

Choosing an RTO

It is your responsibility to enrol with the RTO of your choice. Courses may vary in areas such as:

- Cost
- Course duration
- Hours of work experience/placement required
- Intake options – scheduled or rolling
- Set schedule or self-paced
- Delivery mode – online and virtual tutorials
- Technological platforms – such as Moodle, Teams etc.
- Peer worker facilitated

Importantly, student support and assistance will vary between RTOs. You need to be confident the RTO of your choice understands the unique challenges peer work students face and can provide the support that best meets your study needs.

We strongly encourage scholarship recipients to contact RTOs to discuss your questions about course delivery and student support.

To succeed in your studies, it's important to recognise your support needs and requirements. While it's your responsibility to seek out the support you need, we understand that balancing study, work, and life can be stressful. As a scholarship recipient, we want to ensure you have the necessary support to succeed. If you feel your support needs are not being met during your studies, we are happy to provide information on services supporting people with mental distress /ill health in the community.

What happens if your application is assessed as unsuccessful?

We will write to you to advise you of the outcomes of your application. We can provide you with feedback on your application upon request and we encourage you to apply again in future rounds.

What are the opening and closing dates?

You have 5 weeks to complete and submit an online application.

Applications open on **15 May 2023**

Applications close on **23 June 2023**

How to submit your application

All applications must be submitted via the online SmartyGrants Grant Management System at: <https://acthealth.smartygrants.com.au/>.

Hardcopy or email applications will **not** be accepted.

If you are having difficulty in accessing the application form please contact the Grants Officer on (02) 6207 7809 during business hours or email MHPWS@act.gov.au.

Steps to complete your application

You will need to create a login to begin your application and you may begin anywhere in the application form.

Please ensure you save as you go.

Navigating (moving through) the Mental Health Peer Work Scholarship application form

On the right-hand side of every screen, there is a box which links directly to every page of the application. Click on any page to jump directly to that page. You can also click 'next page' or 'previous page' on the top or bottom of each page to move forward or backward through the application.

Saving your draft application and returning

You can press 'save' at any point and log out. When you log back in, your draft application will be saved and you can start where you left off. You must remember your login details.

Submitting your application

The submit button is on the final page. You will not be able to submit your application until all the questions are completed.

SmartyGrants help guide

SmartyGrants provides an online help guide for applicants. This guide will explain the essential steps you need to take to complete and submit your form. The help guide is accessible at: <http://help.smartygrants.com.au/display/help/Help+Guide+for+Applicants>

Addendum

Any additional information provided by the ACT Health Directorate as part of this grant program will be posted online at www.health.act.gov.au/mentalhealth

In addition, all applicants who have started or submitted an online application form will be notified by email to the address which was registered with SmartyGrants.

Frequently asked questions

Q1. What is Peer Work?

Mental Health Peer Work is a specialist area in which a person must have lived experience of mental distress/ill-health and recovery to perform their role and utilise this experience in their work. Peer Workers use their lived experience and learnt skills to support others to achieve recovery and wellbeing. They may do this through peer support (directly supporting others through individual or group support), education, advocacy or advisory roles. Peer Work requires a range of skills and abilities, and knowledge of the mental health sector. A Peer Worker who supports family members or significant others may also have a lived experience of being a carer or family member of an individual who experiences mental distress/ill-health.

Q2. What do you mean by 'lived experience'?

People with lived experience can identify either:

- as someone with personal experience of mental distress/ill-health and recovery
- as a family member and/or carer who have experience in supporting a person living with mental distress/ill-health and recovery (a carer might be from a person's chosen family, rather than their family of origin).

People with lived experience are sometimes referred to as 'consumers' or 'carers'.

Lived experience is knowledge and understanding gained through:

- the personal experience of mental distress/ill-health, service use, periods of healing/personal recovery; and/or
- the experience of supporting someone through mental distress/ill-health, service use, periods of healing/personal recovery.

Q3. What can I achieve from this qualification?

The qualification is a nationally recognised qualification for paid Peer Work and equips people to work in paid roles using their lived experience of mental distress/ill-health to support others. Examples of paid roles include Peer Support Workers, Peer Educators, Consumer and Carer Consultants, Representatives and Advisors. The course provides graduates with an equivalent employable skill level to other Cert IV qualifications and has some units in common with the Cert IV Mental Health.

Q4. What is the cost of the course?

The Scholarship should cover a large proportion, if not all, of student study costs. The Scholarship will cover course fees up to \$4000, covering the course fees of most RTOs providing the qualification. Scholarship holders will receive a stipend of \$1000 to cover the costs of study related material. Scholarship recipients must pay all expenses outside of this funding.