

Melbourne Medical School

2026 Publication Prize Guidelines



1. Background and Prize Categories

- 1.1 The Publication Prizes aim to recognise and reward high-quality research produced by Graduate Researchers and Early Career Academics (ECAs), and their ability to effectively communicate the significance and impact of their work to a diverse audience.
- 1.2 There are two categories of award: one for Graduate Researchers and one for ECAs.
- 1.3 Within each application category, there are two streams: Clinician Researcher and Discovery Researcher.
- 1.4 One award of \$1,500 is available for each category and stream (i.e., up to four awards total per round).

2. Key Dates

- 2.1 *Application period:* Applications open Monday, 20 July 2026 and close **11.59pm on Sunday, 16 August 2026.**
- 2.2 *Outcomes:* It is anticipated that applicants will be notified of outcomes by mid-October 2026
- 2.3 *Conditions of Award:* Recipients must confirm their acceptance of the Prize in writing within one week of the offer. The Prize will be awarded once the recipient has delivered a short presentation on their published work in person at the Melbourne Medical School's Research Symposium anticipated to be held in early to mid-November 2026.

3. Applicant Eligibility Criteria

- 3.1 **Applicants can only submit one application per round. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure they fulfill the eligibility criteria for the selected category (ECA or Graduate Researcher) and stream (clinician or discovery researcher).**
- 3.2 For the purposes of this Prize, an Early Career Academic (ECA) is defined as someone who has, on the date the relevant work was accepted for publication:
 - been awarded a PhD or equivalent research higher degree (RHD) not more than five years ago (from the date of conferral), *or*
 - since conferral of PhD or equivalent RHD, experienced periods of career disruption that, when accounted for, equate to being no more than five years post-PhD / equivalent RHD. Further information on career disruptions is included in the ECA publication prize application form.
- 3.3 ECA applicants must have a current salaried or honorary appointment in the Melbourne Medical School at the time of application.
- 3.4 Graduate Researcher applicants must be currently enrolled, or previously enrolled at the time of publication acceptance, in one of the following courses within the Melbourne Medical School:
 - Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)
 - Master of Philosophy (MPhil)
 - Master of Medicine (MMed)
 - Master of Surgery (MSurg)
 - Doctor of Medical Science (DMedSc)

Graduate Researchers currently enrolled in a Bachelor or Honours degree, or a Masters by coursework degree, are ineligible to apply for this prize.

- 3.5 Graduate Researchers who have submitted their thesis in a course listed in section 3.4 that is currently under examination at the time of application are eligible to apply as a Graduate Researcher.
- 3.6 Applicants who were Publication Prize winners or finalists in previous rounds of the initiative are ineligible to apply again in the same prize category.
- 3.7 Applicants must be available to present on their published research at the Melbourne Medical School's Research Symposium anticipated to be held in early to mid-November 2026.

4. Publication Eligibility Criteria

- 4.1 Applications must be based upon a published journal article that fulfils each of the following criteria:
 - The article must be peer reviewed. The publication cannot be an editorial, letter or short report
 - The applicant must be a lead author of the article (first author, equal first author, senior last author, equal last author)
 - The applicant must have been an ECA, or Graduate Researcher, as defined in Section 3 on the date the article was accepted for publication.
- 4.2 The article must have been published in a peer-reviewed journal, or accepted for publication and *in press* for a peer-reviewed journal, where:
 - The article is not in a draft or proof form, but rather is in the final formatted version for publication. Preprints are not eligible for consideration
 - The full article can be provided as part of the prize application.
- 4.3 The article must have been published (or accepted for publication, if *in press*) in the current or previous calendar year. i.e., not before 1 January 2025.
- 4.4 The applicant's affiliation on the article must include the Melbourne Medical School and/or one of the departments of the Melbourne Medical School (listed in the application form).
- 4.5 A publication submitted for any category of this prize in a previous round is ineligible for this and any future rounds.

5. Prize Assessment Criteria

- 5.1 Prizes will be awarded based upon the applicant's ability to demonstrate the quality, significance, and impact of the published work, as described by the applicant in the application.
- 5.2 A School assessment panel will score and rank applications according to the following criteria based upon NHMRC guidelines:
 - Research quality, innovation, and creativity (50%)
 - Significance and impact (50%)
- 5.3 ECA and Graduate Researcher prize categories will be assessed and ranked separately by different panels.

6. Award Conditions

- 6.1 Prize winners will be awarded monetary prizes valued at \$1,500.

Prize funds will be allocated to recipients as a one-off payment in early 2027, with the expectation that the funding will be expended during the 2027 calendar year:

- where the recipient holds a UoM salaried appointment, to a university research account nominated by the recipient
 - where the recipient holds a UoM honorary appointment, they may request funds via invoice from their primary institution
 - where the recipient is enrolled as a UoM graduate researcher, as a bursary.
- 6.2 As a condition of award, prize winners are expected to present their award-winning published work at the Melbourne Medical School's Research Symposium anticipated to be held in early to mid-November 2026.
- 6.3 Winners will be presented with a certificate following their presentation.
- 6.4 The School reserves the right to refrain from awarding a Prize if the School assessment panel deems that there is a lack of applications of suitable quality to warrant such awards.