

Commonwealth Bank Teaching Awards presented by Schools Plus

2024 Award Guidelines

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1. Introduction

The Commonwealth Bank Teaching Awards (Awards) are prestigious national teaching awards open to registered teachers and school leaders presented by national non-profit Australian Schools Plus Ltd (ABN 65 164 622 459) (Schools Plus) and supported by Commonwealth Bank of Australia (ABN 48 123 123 124) (Commonwealth Bank).

Twelve (12) teachers or school leaders are awarded a Teaching Fellowship valued at \$40,000 and ten (10) early career teachers (with 5 years or less in the teaching profession) are selected to receive an Early Career Teaching (ECT) Scholarship valued at \$10,000. The ECT Scholarship is supported by Salesforce (ABN 91 109 182 989). The majority of award recipients will be educators working in schools in communities facing disadvantage.

The Awards are supported by a key initiative of Schools Plus - the 'Pioneers in Philanthropy'. The Pioneers in Philanthropy include David Gonski AC and Orli Wargon OAM, Angus James and Sarah James, John B Fairfax AO and Nick Fairfax, John Grill AO and Rosie Williams, Roger Massy-Greene AM, Kerry Stokes AC and Christine Simpson Stokes AO, and the Commonwealth Bank.

2. Am I Eligible?

- The Awards are open to registered teachers and school leaders in Australian primary and secondary schools (hereinafter referred to as 'teachers') in any Government, Catholic or Independent school with students from Year K or Prep to Year 12.
- A registered teacher is a person who is registered or accredited to perform the duties of a teacher as defined by the relevant legislation in their Australian State or Territory.
- The ECT Scholarships are open to teachers and school leaders who have been in the teaching profession for a total of five (5) years or less.
- Teachers should be currently practising in a school and to the best of their knowledge should intend to continue teaching in the same school for the next 12 months.
- Teachers working in schools in disadvantaged communities are particularly encouraged to apply.
- The application form (Form) is to be completed by the teacher or school leader who is applying for, or who has been nominated for the Awards. Forms not completed by the teacher or school leader will be considered ineligible.
- A maximum of one (1) Form per applicant will be accepted.

- Applicants should apply for one category only – either a Teaching Fellowship or an ECT Scholarship. An early career teacher is eligible to apply for a Teaching Fellowship, if they wish to be considered for this Award.
- The Form must be submitted between 9:00am (AEDT) on Monday 4 March 2024 and 12:00 midnight (AEST) on Monday 8 April 2024.

3. The Awards

Teaching Fellowship - Twelve (12) teachers or school leaders will be selected to receive a 12-month Teaching Fellowship, with the majority being teachers and school leaders who are working in schools in disadvantaged communities.

The Teaching Fellowships are valued at \$40,000 each and include:

- \$25,000 for the teacher's school for a strategic project. The project may include extending an existing initiative that is having proven impact, or a new evidenced-based, strategic project designed to improve student outcomes with long-term measurable benefits.
- Participation in a 12-month Fellowship program which includes coaching, a group domestic study tour (dates and destination to be confirmed), and opportunities to engage with leading education experts. Participants will develop networks and capabilities and share their knowledge through the experiences that form part of the Fellowship year. The 2024 Fellows will also be invited to join the ongoing Fellowship Alumni group that grows every year, as each new cohort of Fellows is selected for the Awards.

Early Career Teaching Scholarship (supported by Salesforce) - Ten (10) early career teachers (teachers with a total of 5 years or less in the teaching profession) will be selected to receive a 12-month scholarship, with the majority being teachers who are working in schools in disadvantaged communities.

The Early Career Teaching Scholarships are valued at \$10,000 each and include:

- \$5,000 for individual professional development
- Participation in a 12-month professional learning program which includes coaching, a group domestic study tour (dates and destination to be confirmed) and opportunities to develop networks and capabilities throughout the Scholarship year.
- The ECT teachers will also connect with the Fellowship Alumni – a group of leading educators around Australia.

4. Selection Criteria (with guiding questions)

Please refer to Criteria for the **Teaching Fellowship** or the **Early Career Teaching Scholarship** (whichever is relevant to your application). Applications will be assessed on the demonstration of excellence and achievement across the four (4) Selection Criteria outlined below.

Teaching Fellowship

1. Transforming Learning Outcomes

You have initiated or significantly contributed to measurable improvements in student learning, achieved through identifying students' needs and applying high impact, effective and evidence-based teaching or leadership practices. Please outline the transformation you have achieved in improving learning outcomes or

experiences for your students and include evidence or measures demonstrating this achievement. (Maximum 400 words)

Guiding questions to consider in your response:

What are the specific needs of your students and/or school community? What have YOU done to improve student learning outcomes or experiences? What has been the scale and reach of your work? What are students and/or teachers doing differently now as a result of your work? What evidence and measures demonstrate the changes you have achieved? What improvements have been ongoing or will be sustained?

2. Collaborating and Sharing Knowledge

You have led or significantly contributed to a culture of knowledge sharing and collaboration within and/or beyond your school. Please outline how you have shared your thinking or practice and collaborated to develop the skills of others or for collective impact. Include evidence of outcomes resulting from your sharing and collaboration. (Maximum 400 words)

Guiding questions to consider in your response:

What have YOU done to lead or contribute to a culture of collaboration for students, teachers, families and/or other groups that has resulted in improvements to teaching or learning at or beyond your school? How have you shared the learning and evidence gained through your thinking, knowledge and practice with colleagues at your school, or with others in the education profession? What have been the outcomes of your collaboration or knowledge sharing? What evidence or measures demonstrate these outcomes?

3. Engaging with the Community

You have fostered positive engagement with families and/or the community as a purposeful strategy to support student learning or experiences. Please outline why and how you have built meaningful connections and increased engagement with families and/or the community. Include evidence of changes which have occurred for students or your school community as a result of this engagement. (Maximum 400 words)

Guiding questions to consider in your response:

Why and how have YOU engaged families and/or the community as a strategy to improve learning outcomes or experiences for your students? Describe what has changed for students as a result of your initiatives. What are the overall benefits for students, your school and community which have occurred through these changes?

4. Impacting Education

You demonstrate leadership in education, teaching and learning that stimulates the thinking of others and leads to significant educational improvements in classrooms and schools. Please tell us your story – how you have applied your personal attributes such as creativity, resilience, inclusiveness, resourcefulness and drive; your capacity to inspire and influence others; your commitment to the teaching profession; equity in education; and your potential to help shape the future of education practice in Australia. (Maximum 400 words)

Guiding questions to consider in your response:

Tell us more about YOU – your understanding and demonstration of leadership in education; your personal attributes which help you deliver on your passion and purpose in education; your greatest achievements to date in the profession; and your potential to contribute to the Fellowship group of leading education change-makers, and to make a difference to education practice in Australia

Early Career Teaching Scholarship

(Open to teachers and school leaders in the profession for a total of five years or less)

1. Transforming Learning Outcomes

You demonstrate excellence in teaching practice that has made a significant and measurable contribution to improved student outcomes in learning, engagement, inclusion and/or wellbeing for your students. Please outline how you have achieved positive learning outcomes or experiences for your students within the past 12 months or more. Include evidence and measures that demonstrate this achievement. **(Maximum 400 words)**

Guiding questions to consider in your response:

What has been your impact on improving student outcomes? Provide at least one example of positive change in achievement, engagement, inclusion, wellbeing, or overall student experiences over the past 12 months or more. What are your students' needs? What effective or innovative initiatives, teaching strategies or classroom programs or practices have you implemented? What evidence can you provide of positive changes, and what measures did you use to evaluate improvement?

2. Collaborating and Sharing Knowledge

You are actively involved in collaborating and sharing knowledge with your colleagues and have a strong commitment to learning from others to evaluate and develop your own skills, teaching strategies and practice. Please include evidence of your involvement in collaboration, and in your own professional learning within or beyond the school. **(Maximum 400 words)**

Guiding questions to consider in your response:

In what ways is collaboration, sharing knowledge and learning from your colleagues a feature of your practice? Provide at least one example of how you have collaborated and shared your learning or evidence gained through your own practice within or beyond your school. What has been your contribution and/or impact on any shared practices? In what ways have you actively sought to further your professional learning and develop your own teaching practice?

3. Engaging with the Community

You have developed positive and purposeful engagement with families or the broader school community as an approach to support student experiences and/or learning. Please provide at least one example of why and how you have built meaningful connections and/or improved engagement with families or the school community to support students and their learning. **(Maximum 400 words)**

Guiding questions to consider in your response:

Describe how and why you have engaged families and/or the community as a strategic approach to your work. What has changed for students as a result of your initiatives? What ways have you contributed to the school or school community outside of the classroom to support or enrich students' learning experiences?

4. Impacting Education

You have personal and professional attributes to make a significant difference as a teacher, a passionate commitment to the profession, and the potential to become a future leader in education. Please tell us your story. What is your purpose in education; what specific attributes contribute to your impact as a teacher; describe your goals in the profession and your potential to make a difference in education. **(Maximum 400 words)**

Guiding questions to consider in your response:

Tell us more about YOU - why did you choose to become a teacher and what has been the highlight of your teaching career to date? Using at least one example, describe how you have applied attributes such as creativity, resourcefulness, inclusiveness, resilience, or drive (or another attribute) to your impact as a teacher. What are your goals in the profession and how would the Early Career Teaching Scholarship contribute to those goals?

5. Key Dates

Nominations open: Monday, 4 March (9:00am AEDT)

Nominations close: Monday 8 April (12:00 midnight AEST)

Top 50 applicants notified: Friday, 3 May

Finalists notified: Friday, 17 May

Finalist interviews (online) and referee checks: Monday, 20 May to Friday, 14 June

Award recipients notified: Wednesday, 17 July

Awards Event: Monday, 9 September 2024 – Parliament House, Canberra

6. Selection Process

Eligibility check and assessment of applications

- After applications are checked for eligibility, independent assessment panels with relevant education and leadership expertise will assess and score applications against each of the Selection Criteria.

Finalist interviews, referee and due diligence checks

- Finalists will be invited to attend an online interview.
- Finalists' referees (principals for teachers and supervisors for principals) will also be contacted for reference checks.
- Working With Children Checks, due diligence and background checks will be undertaken for all finalists.

Award recipients selected by expert Panel

- A Selection Panel of senior education and business leaders will select 12 Teaching Fellows and ten (10) early career teachers from a shortlist of finalists.

Announcement of Award recipients

- Award recipients will be notified immediately following the Selection Panel meeting and will be announced publicly at the Awards Event on 9 September 2024.

7. How do I Apply?

- Applications are to be completed online via the Schools Plus Application Management Portal - accessed through the Schools Plus website schools.plus.org.au/awards.
- Before starting your application, you will need to register and login to the Portal. All eligible schools have been pre-loaded on the site for your assistance.
- Your application can be saved and modified during completion. (Hint: you might want to create a Word document to have a saved copy offline.)
- On submission, you will receive an email confirming receipt of your application.
- You can access your application again through 'My Applications' on the Portal, however no further changes can be made after submission.
- The Application Form must be completed by the teacher or school leader applying for, or who has been nominated for the Awards. Forms completed by the nominator will be ineligible.

8. Frequently Asked Questions

Who is Australian Schools Plus?

Schools Plus aims to provide all Australian children with the educational opportunities they need to become confident lifelong learners and to thrive through school and beyond. As a registered non-profit organisation with DGR (Deductible Gift Recipient) 1 status, we take a place-based approach working with teachers and schools on bespoke programs to support children where they specifically need it – because it is the community - the families, teachers, and health practitioners - who know their children best.

Schools Plus was established as a result of a recommendation in the 2011 Review of Funding for Schooling (the 'Gonski Review'). More than 4,600 disadvantaged schools (Government, Catholic and Independent) across Australia are eligible for support through Schools Plus. For more information, visit www.schoolsplus.org.au.

Who can nominate or apply?

Anyone can nominate a teacher or school leader for the Awards. Teachers or school leaders who are nominated will receive an email informing them of their nomination and will be invited to apply. A teacher or school leader can also apply themselves. Nominated teachers or school leaders who wish to apply will need to complete the online Form themselves to be eligible for the Awards.

Who is eligible for the Awards?

The Awards are open to all registered teachers and school leaders currently working in Australian primary and secondary schools - Government, Catholic or Independent schools with students from Year K or Prep to Year 12.

Please note early childhood teachers working in kindergartens, early childhood centres or pre-schools are ineligible to apply.

To be eligible for an ECT Scholarship, applicants will have been in the teaching profession for a total of five (5) years or less.

How do I nominate or apply?

You can nominate a teacher or school leader or apply yourself via this link on the Schools Plus website schoolsplus.org.au/awards.

If you are applying, you will be directed to the Schools Plus Application Management Portal to access the online Application Form.

If you are nominating a teacher or school leader, you will need to enter their personal or school email address and your nominee will receive an email (anonymously if you prefer) congratulating them on their nomination and directing them to the website to complete an application. If a school email is entered, please ensure you include both the first name and surname of your nominee, so your nomination can be forwarded to the correct teacher.

Can more than one teacher from the same school be nominated or apply?

Yes, an unlimited number of teachers can be nominated or can apply from each school.

Can I apply for both the Teaching Fellowship and the Early Career Teaching Scholarship?

No, you can only apply for ONE of the categories. However, if you are an early career teacher, you are eligible and can apply for the Fellowship Award, if you want to be considered in this category.

Do I need my school Principal or supervisor's permission to apply?

It is recommended you advise your school principal (or your supervisor if you are a principal) that you are applying for the Awards. Your principal or your supervisor should be listed as your referee on your Form, but they will only be contacted if you are shortlisted as a finalist.

What will I receive if I am selected for a Teaching Fellowship?

Award recipients will receive a prestigious Teaching Fellowship valued at \$40,000, including the following:

- \$25,000 for your school for a strategic project
- Participation in a 12-month Teaching Fellowship program which includes attendance at the Awards event, coaching, a group study tour to a high performing education system or schools, and opportunities to engage with leading education experts. Participants will develop networks and capabilities and share their knowledge through the experiences that form part of the Fellowship year
- An invitation to join the ongoing Fellowship Alumni group

What will I receive if I am selected for an Early Career Teaching Scholarship?

Award recipients will receive an Early Career Teaching Scholarship supported by Salesforce and valued at \$10,000, including the following components:

- \$5,000 for your individual choice of professional development
- Participation in a 12-month professional learning program which includes attendance at the Awards event, coaching, a group domestic study tour and opportunities to develop networks and capabilities throughout the Scholarship year
- Connection to the 2024 Teaching Fellows and the Fellowship Alumni group

How can I use the Fellowship \$25,000 prize for my school?

Your school will receive \$25,000 for a strategic project designed to improve student outcomes at the school. The funds can be used to extend an existing initiative that is having proven impact or a new evidence-based project with long-term measurable benefits. Schools Plus will liaise with you and your school to assist in developing and measuring the impact of this project.

How can I use the ECT Scholarship \$5,000 professional development funds?

Award recipients can use the ECT Scholarship \$5,000 professional development funds for their own choice of professional development and learning. This may include course fees, conference attendance, leadership coaching, a research project or further study as examples. Schools Plus will liaise with you to assist in identifying your choice of professional development.

What is the Fellowship and ECT Scholarship group study tour?

Each group of Award recipients will participate in a separate, fully funded study tour organised by Schools Plus. Destination and dates to be confirmed.

What do the assessment panels look for in an application?

The written information provided in your Form is the main factor in assessing applications and selecting finalists. Each Selection Criteria includes guiding questions to assist with providing your responses which should be supported by clear and specific examples of evidence.

What is evidence ('please include evidence') in the Selection Criteria?

You should give clear examples of what data, research or measures you have used to inform your approach or to determine your activities or strategy, as well as measures that demonstrate the changes that have occurred in learning outcomes or experiences for your students and/or school. Note, the Form does not allow for documents to be uploaded or attached.

Who are the Award Selectors?

A Selection Panel comprised of prominent education and business leaders will select the Award recipients from a shortlist of finalists.

When will I be notified?

All applicants will be notified on the status of their application as unsuccessful or shortlisted by 3 May 2024. Shortlisted applicants will progress for further assessment and will be notified if they have been selected as a finalist by 17 May 2024. The successful Award recipients will be notified following the Selection Panel meeting in mid-July 2024 and will be officially announced at the Awards Event on 9 September 2024. A full list of all 2024 Award recipients will be published on schoolsplus.org.au/awards.

Can I submit a late application?

Applications will close at 12:00 midnight (AEST) on Monday 8 April 2024. No late applications will be accepted via any means after this time.

9. Terms and Conditions of the Awards

9.1. By applying for the Awards and submitting a Form, the Applicant accepts and agrees to be bound by these Award Guidelines, including these Terms and Conditions.

9.2. The Applicant acknowledges and agrees that all material submitted by the Applicant in their Form must not, and the Applicant warrants that such material does not, infringe the copyright or other intellectual property rights of any person or organisation. The Applicant indemnifies the Commonwealth Bank and Schools Plus against any claim made against the Commonwealth Bank or Schools Plus that any use of the material submitted by the Applicant in their Form infringes the intellectual property rights of any person or organisation.

9.3. The Applicant grants Schools Plus and the Commonwealth Bank a perpetual, royalty-free, non-exclusive, irrevocable and transferable licence to reproduce, use, or modify any material contained in the Form at Commonwealth Bank’s or Schools Plus’ (as relevant) discretion.

9.4. The Applicant must declare on their Form that they have advised their principal or supervisor that they have applied for the Awards.

9.5. By submitting their Form, the Applicant agrees that they have never been charged with a criminal offence, subject to misconduct proceedings by their relevant State or Territory education body or subject to any process that may bring disrepute to the Commonwealth Bank or Schools Plus or the Awards.

9.6. By submitting their Form, the Applicant agrees to the Commonwealth Bank and/or Schools Plus (as relevant) conducting appropriate due diligence and background checks on the Applicant including, but not limited to:

- 9.6.1. Working with Children Checks;
- 9.6.2 Reference check with Applicant’s principal or supervisor;
- 9.6.3 National Police and Financial Crimes Checks (identifying specific or general involvement with money laundering, terrorism financing, politically exposed persons, terrorists and wanted criminals) by an independent third party;
- 9.6.4 social media and internet search checks; and
- 9.6.5 such other due diligence and background checks as considered necessary by the Commonwealth Bank and/or Schools Plus from time to time.

9.7. The Applicant acknowledges and agrees that all considerations, deliberations and decisions made by the Selection Panel in relation to the Awards, including but not limited to the award of the Teaching Fellowship and the Early Career Scholarship, are final and the Selection Panel is under no obligation to disclose or communicate to or otherwise discuss with the Applicant the nature of such considerations, deliberations and decisions.

9.8. Before distribution of the Teaching Fellowship, the Fellow and the Fellow's school will sign an acceptance letter from Schools Plus that sets out the further terms and conditions for the award of the Teaching Fellowship.

9.9. Before distribution of the Early Career Teaching Scholarship, the teacher will sign an acceptance letter from Schools Plus that sets out further terms and conditions for the Early Career Teaching Scholarship.

9.10. All Award recipients and their schools acknowledge and agree The Commonwealth Bank and Schools Plus may use, disclose and promote information about the Award recipient and their school, and share the stories and any other information provided by the Award recipient. They may do so on various Commonwealth Bank and Schools Plus related promotional material, general media, online, social media, communication and marketing mediums (Materials).

9.11. The Award recipients acknowledge and agree that all copyright in the Materials rests with the Commonwealth Bank and Schools Plus and the Award recipients and their schools are not entitled to remuneration, royalties, or any other payments in respect to the use of the Materials by the Commonwealth Bank or Schools Plus for any purpose.

9.12. The Award recipients may be required to attend a presentation of the Award to which persons including, but not limited to, media, public personalities, and members of the Commonwealth Bank and Schools Plus will be invited to attend. At the discretion of the Commonwealth Bank and Schools Plus, the Award recipients may be required to do press interviews and photography to help promote the Awards.

9.13. All personal information (as defined in the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)) (Personal Information) included in the Form and collected by the Commonwealth Bank or Schools Plus in connection with the Awards is collected for the purposes of administration and promotion of the Awards. The Commonwealth Bank and Schools Plus may disclose any Personal Information they collect in connection with the Awards to each of its related bodies corporate and to external service providers, entities and organisations undertaking any of the Commonwealth Bank's and/or Schools Plus' functions and obligations in respect of the Awards. All Personal Information collected by the Commonwealth Bank and Schools Plus in connection with the Awards will be collected, used, and disclosed in accordance with the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) and the privacy policies of Schools Plus and the Commonwealth Bank which can be found, respectively, at; <https://www.schoolsplus.org.au/privacy-policy/> and https://www.commbank.com.au/security-privacy/general-security/privacy.html?ei=footer_privacy (Privacy Policies). The Privacy Policies contain further details about Commonwealth Bank's and Schools Plus' information collection and handling processes including information about how to seek access to and correction of the Personal Information and how to make a complaint and complaint handling procedures. For privacy related queries, Applicants can contact the Commonwealth Bank and Schools Plus using the methods set out in the respective Privacy Policies.

9.14. Any waiving of the requirements contained in these Award Guidelines and these Terms and Conditions (including the Selection Criteria) is at the discretion of the Commonwealth Bank and Schools Plus.

9.15. By applying for the Awards, Applicants discharge and release the Commonwealth Bank and Schools Plus from all liabilities or claims of any kind arising from or in connection with the Awards, the Fellowship and the Scholarship. Applicants also indemnify the Commonwealth Bank from any claims arising from third parties in relation to the Applicant's participation in any stage or aspect of the Awards, the Fellowship and the Scholarship.

9.16. To the extent permitted by law, the Commonwealth Bank, Schools Plus and their related bodies corporate and their respective directors, officers, employees and agents, exclude any and all liability for any loss or damage, whatsoever which is suffered or sustained, in connection with:

9.16.1. the Applicant's participation in the Awards; or

9.16.2. the receipt or use of the Teaching Fellowship or Early Career Teaching Scholarship by the recipient or anyone participating in the use of the Teaching Fellowship or Early Career Teaching Scholarship with the recipient.

9.17. These Award Guidelines and these Terms and Conditions are subject to modification by the Commonwealth Bank and Schools Plus at their sole discretion.

9.18. These Award Guidelines, these Terms and Conditions shall be governed by the laws of New South Wales, Australia and the Commonwealth Bank, Schools Plus, and each Applicant submits to the non-exclusive jurisdiction of the courts of New South Wales, Australia.