



PROPEL

Program Guidelines

Key details

Scholarship opening date	Applications for the Propel program open on 6 October 2025.
Closing date and time	<p>Applications for the Propel program must be submitted by 11:59am (AEDT) on 10 November 2025.</p> <p>ATSE will not respond to enquiries submitted after 5:00pm (AEDT) on 6 November 2025. We recommend anyone seeking guidance or advice for their application submit their questions well in advance of the deadline. You can also sign up to the mailing list to be notified when applications open for future rounds.</p>
Administering entity	Australian Academy of Technological Sciences & Engineering (ATSE)
Enquiries	applications@atse.org.au
Guideline version	2025 Version 1.0



Australian Academy of
Technological Sciences
& Engineering

atse.org.au/propel

Propel is delivered by the Australian Academy of Technological Sciences & Engineering (ATSE) in partnership with the Australian Submarine Agency and supported by the Department of Industry, Science and Resources (DISR).



Scholarship Guidelines

Introduction

These guidelines contain information related to:

- (a) the process of selecting scholars for the 2026 round of Propel: Australian Submarine Scholarship Program ('Propel')
- (b) the conditions of the award for the Propel program.

It is recommended that applicants read these guidelines before filling out an application.

The Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering (ATSE) will ensure the application process is fair and transparent in accordance with these published guidelines.

ATSE will update these Guidelines as required. When this happens, the revised Guidelines will be published at: atse.org.au/propel.

This document sets out:

- (a) the Propel program and scholarship opportunities
- (b) the eligibility requirements and selection criteria
- (c) the process of and timeline for application consideration
- (d) the expectations of scholars engaging in the program

The Propel program and scholarship opportunity

ATSE's Propel: Australian Submarine Scholarship Program ('Propel') will award up to 3,000 undergraduate scholarships to students studying degrees relevant to the AUKUS Nuclear-Powered Submarine (NPS) enterprise. The Propel program provides a scholarship and engagement opportunities with ATSE and key stakeholders relevant to the AUKUS NPS enterprise.

Program aims

The aims of the Propel program are to:

- support students undertaking undergraduate tertiary studies in priority Science, Technology Engineering and Maths (STEM) subjects to progress and succeed in their studies,
- build engagement and connections between students, the Australian Submarine Agency (ASA) and the broader NPS enterprise,
- support greater awareness of and applications to ASA and Defence entry-level workforce programs, and
- promote the Australian Government investment in the NPS enterprise workforce and STEM studies more broadly.

Values of the program

Implementation of the Propel program incorporates ATSE's values, including:

- Integrity and transparency
- Inclusion
- Collaboration
- Excellence and independence
- Sustainability
- Professional pride

Number of Scholarships

The number of scholarships awarded each year may vary and is at the discretion of ATSE, in consultation with the Australian Submarine Agency and the Department of Industry, Science and Resources (DISR). There will be up to 3,000 scholarships awarded during the life of the program through to 2029.



Eligibility requirements

To be considered for a Propel scholarship, applicants must meet these **three** eligibility criteria:

1. Be enrolled as a domestic student at an Australian university

- Applicants must be studying at an *Australian university*.
- *Domestic students* are either an Australian citizen, a New Zealand citizen, or a person entitled to enter and stay in Australia without any limitation of time (such as Australian permanent residents, or Australian permanent humanitarian visa holders).
- To be eligible for the Propel program, all applicants must be enrolled as a domestic student at their university.
- International students are not eligible to apply for the Propel program.

2. Be studying one or more of the STEM Bachelor (undergraduate) degrees listed here

- Bachelor of Engineering
- Bachelor of Science
- Other aligned STEM bachelor degrees

3. Have at least two years of Full-Time (or equivalent) study remaining in their degree

- All applicants must have a minimum of two years remaining (FT equivalent) of their eligible undergraduate degree
- Part time students are eligible provided they have at least two years of full-time equivalent study remaining

All applicants who meet the above criteria are eligible for a scholarship. Suitability for a scholarship will consider a range of dimensions, including priority degrees and location of the university in which the degree will be undertaken, and demographic data to ensure a diverse pool of scholars.



Scholarship allocation

When allocating scholarships, the expert selection panel will consider a range of criteria to ensure that priority degrees and locations are considered with demographic information.

Preference will be given to the following degrees/disciplines:

- Mechanical engineering
- Electrical engineering
- Chemical engineering
- Software engineering
- Mechatronic engineering
- Maritime engineering
- Nuclear engineering/science
- Materials science
- Physics

Applications from students studying the following degrees/disciplines are also encouraged:

- Chemistry
- Mathematics
- AI and robotics
- Environmental science
- Marine science
- Environmental engineering
- Computer science
- Civil engineering
- Cybersecurity
- Data science
- Aerospace engineering

Other aligned STEM degrees/disciplines may also be considered.

Allocation across other dimensions

The expert selection panel will also consider:

- location of study, with priority given to students in South Australia and Western Australia
- other data to ensure a diverse scholar pool

Applicants from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and people with diverse genders, attributes and backgrounds, are strongly encouraged.

Ineligible individuals

- Staff of ATSE or ASA, and their immediate family members, are not eligible to apply for a Propel Scholarship.
- International students are ineligible for a scholarship.
- Post-graduate students and students who are not studying a STEM degree are ineligible for a scholarship.



University of choice

Scholars can study at any Australian university campus based in Australia, provided they are studying an eligible degree. To align with the future workforce demand, priority will be given to students at universities in South Australia or Western Australia, the central hubs of Australia's nuclear powered submarine pathway. Scholarships will be awarded directly to the successful applicant: an individual. No scholarship will be awarded to an organisation.

A list of Australian universities can be found on the studyaustralia.gov.au website.

Year level of study

Students who have at least two years remaining in their degree will be eligible for a scholarship, however, preference will be given for students who have completed at least one year of their degree or will have completed their first year by 31 December 2025.

Degree structure

Applicants studying double degrees and vertical double degrees are eligible for the program given at least one of their undergraduate degrees meets all eligibility criteria.

Process and timeline for application consideration

The deadline for the Propel program applications in 2026 is 11:59am (AEDT) 10 November 2025. Any applications received after this deadline will not be considered for assessment.

ATSE strongly encourages applicants to start the application process early. The portal saves the progress of the application and applicants can return to their application at any time.

ATSE will not respond to enquiries submitted after 5:00pm (AEDT) on 6 November 2025. We recommend anyone seeking guidance or advice for their applications to submit their questions in advance of the deadline.

Key dates

Applications open	6 October 2025
Deadline for guidance or questions	5:00pm AEDT, 6 November 2025
Applications close	11:59am AEDT, 10 November 2025
Scholarships announced	Late November 2025



Diversity and inclusion

Diversity and inclusion will be considered throughout the selection process to ensure the pool of scholars is diverse. However, all applicants will be considered for scholarships even if they do not disclose their personal identity details.

Applicants will be asked if they identify with the following:

- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
- From a regional, rural or remote area
- Belonging to the LGBTQIA+ community
- Gender or gender identity
- First in their family to attend university
- From a culturally and/or linguistically diverse background
- From a culturally and/or racially marginalised background
- From a low-socioeconomic background
- Have caring responsibilities (e.g. children, special needs, disability, medical, aged care)
- Recent or first-generation migrants to Australia, including refugees (noting they must be enrolled as a domestic student)
- Living with disability
- Neurodiverse
- Person of colour

Assessment and Selection Process

All applications will be assessed for eligibility, and then a range of factors will be considered by an expert selection panel for the allocation of scholarships.

These factors will be considered across the final cohort to ensure a diverse and appropriate cohort:

- Scholars studying a range of degrees relevant to the AUKUS NPS enterprise
- Demographics and identities to ensure diversity amongst the cohort
- Geographical location prioritising WA and SA

Applications from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants are strongly encouraged.

Awarding of Scholarships and Payments

Successful applicants will be notified from November 2025. Scholars will participate in the program for a maximum of two years.

Scholars will receive two payments:

- \$3,000 in May 2026
- \$2,000 in May 2027



Scholarships cannot be deferred to a future year. Scholars who choose to not take up their scholarship can apply for a Propel scholarship in a future year, however, a scholarship offer one year does not guarantee a scholar will be found suitable in a subsequent year.

If an applicant is unsuccessful, they are welcome to apply in a subsequent year, provided they continue to meet the eligibility criteria. Applicants reapplying will be able to access and refer to their previous applications via the application system, but they will not be automatically considered for subsequent years as unsuccessful applications will be archived following the outcome notification.

Due to the high volume of applications, individual written feedback for unsuccessful applicants will not be provided and decisions are final.

Permission will be sought to contact all applicants within 12 months of the application closing date, to participate in an evaluation and for ATSE to advise when the next round of applications will open.

Expectations of Scholars

- Be enrolled in an eligible STEM degree at an Australian university.
- Provide proof of enrolment from your university by 31 March 2026.
- Remain in good standing in terms of your academic record for the duration of your scholarship.
- Provide evidence of enrolment in an eligible degree annually or upon request.
- Permit ATSE to make inquiries directly to universities pertaining to eligibility for this scholarship.
- Complete all compulsory annual check-ins and contribute to monitoring and evaluation activities (e.g. surveys) as requested.
- Promptly inform ATSE if you wish to change or defer your enrolment.
- Acknowledge your Propel scholarship when presenting or publishing your work (if applicable).
- Commit to engage in offerings made available to you as part of the Propel Program.
- Attest there has been no serious disciplinary action taken against you in response to a substantiated finding of workplace harassment (including sexual harassment), discrimination or bullying.
- Read and adhere to the [ATSE Code of Conduct](#).
- Where applicable, you will be responsible for your own travel and accommodation arrangements.

Enquiries and Feedback

For further information or clarification, or to provide feedback on the process, you can contact ATSE on 02 6185 3240 or applications@atse.org.au.

Due to the volume of applications we receive, we will be unable to provide individual feedback to applicants. The decision of the expert selection panel is final.



Further information

Study load

All students offered a scholarship are eligible to receive a Propel scholarship regardless of their study load.

Change of degree

If the scholar changes course of study without notice to ATSE, or if a scholar changes to a course that is not eligible, the scholar will become ineligible for their scholarship and will not receive any further payments.

If a scholar changes their course of study but still meets the scholarship eligibility criteria, they will be required to provide written evidence of continuing eligibility to continue to receive scholarship payments.

Termination of scholarship

Scholars may terminate their scholarship with written notice to ATSE. Scholars who become ineligible during their scholarship by withdrawing from their degree or transferring into an ineligible degree will have their scholarship terminated. Scholars who withdraw from their studies may be required to repay part or all of their scholarship, at the discretion of ATSE. Upon withdrawal, scholars will be issued with a Termination of Agreement acknowledging the withdrawal of their scholarship.

Leave of absence

If the scholar is not enrolled in an eligible degree and does not resume their studies after a period of leave, the scholarship payment will be forfeited.

Program engagement

In addition to accepting financial support available through the scholarship, scholars are encouraged to engage with additional aspects of the program, such as mentoring, networking and workshops. The Propel Program will include opportunities for networking with other scholars, events delivered by the Program's partner organisations, internal training opportunities and ad hoc engagements for relevant groups of scholars.

Media permissions

Scholars will be asked if they consent to share their photograph, biography and social media handles as part of their participation in the program, to assist with the promotion of the scholarships and to raise their profile. Providing this information is not compulsory, and prior experience is not a criterion for selection. Scholars will also be asked to commit to being a champion of the program and be available for contact for two years after the conclusion of their scholarship. This information and commitments will be requested of the successful applicants on award of their scholarship. Scholars may be asked from time to time to share information about their scholarship on social media, or offered speaking opportunities at events associated with their scholarship. This is voluntary, but encouraged.

Reporting

Scholars are required to complete compulsory annual check-in surveys as a condition of their participation



in the Propel Program to support reporting and to ensure continued eligibility. In addition to the compulsory check-ins, program surveys and reflections are provided from time to time. These surveys will include questions on scholars' study progress, well-being and sense of belonging, and the wins and goals of scholars. While these surveys are not compulsory, they enable ATSE to understand the needs of scholars, and to support program improvements.

Interaction with other scholarships

Scholars may hold more than one scholarship in addition to the Propel scholarship. However, it is the responsibility of the Propel scholar to ensure that they are eligible for any other scholarship they hold concurrently, and that the Propel scholarship will not impact on or contradict eligibility for another scholarship. Applicants with existing scholarships are strongly encouraged to contact their university's scholarships office to understand the implications of holding another scholarship in addition to the Propel scholarship.

Tax implications

It is the scholar's sole responsibility to self-assess their own tax position and seek tax advice in relation to the scholarship agreement. The Propel Program team and ATSE are unable to provide tax advice for scholars and cannot withhold tax from scholarships. ATSE strongly recommends that scholars seek professional advice as to whether they should declare their scholarship as taxable income. It is recommended scholars visit the [Australian Taxation Office website](#) to find out whether their scholarship is taxable. Some universities offer free tax advice through the [National Tax Clinic program](#).



Probity, privacy, confidential information

ATSE Ltd is committed to protecting the privacy of applicants' personal information.

ATSE is required by the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) (Privacy Act) to comply with the Australian Privacy Principles (APP) (subject to other provisions of the Privacy Act). The APP regulate the way personal information is handled throughout its life cycle, from collection to use and disclosure, storage, accessibility and disposal. ATSE's [Privacy Policy](#) is available on its website and can also provide a hard copy version upon request. If applicants would like more information or a hard copy of the privacy policy, please contact ATSE's Privacy Officer on 02 6285 3240 or info@atse.org.au.

Or write to us: Privacy Officer, Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering Level 2, 28 National Circuit Forrester ACT 2603.

ATSE Code of Conduct

ATSE's [Code of Conduct](#) is foundational to our commitment to leading a positive and ethical culture in which all persons treat each other with respect. ATSE's Fellows, employees, workers and participants agree to conduct themselves with respect, integrity, transparency, inclusion, collaboration, excellence and independence. We agree to treat each other respectfully, responsibly and ethically, and are guided in all our activities by the highest standards of honesty and integrity. When acting in relation to ATSE, Fellows, employees, workers and participants are expected to behave as exemplars for the applied science, engineering and technology sectors.

Questions during the application process

Please direct any questions during the application period to ATSE. We will endeavour to respond within three working days. ATSE will not respond to enquiries submitted after 5:00pm (AEDT) on 6 November 2025. We recommend anyone seeking guidance or advice for their applications submit their questions in advance of the deadline.

applications@atse.org.au





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Propel is administered by the Australian Academy of Technological Sciences & Engineering in partnership with the Australian Submarine Agency and on behalf of the Australian Government.



Australian Government
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ASA

Propel is an initiative of the Australian Academy of
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