



Research Grants



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Nature Foundation's work on our nature reserves throughout South Australia and beyond aims to halt and reverse the unprecedented rate of species loss and conserve biodiversity. We aim to make significant contributions to conservation management locally and internationally.

Our commitment to ecological science to ensure we accumulate vital knowledge about our ecosystems is fundamental to Nature Foundation. Scientific research and collaborative partnerships underpin every aspect of our work. We partner with universities, visiting researchers, and research grant recipients who undertake research that aligns with our science strategy.

Nature Foundation undertakes a regular grants program funded by donations from our generous supporters. This program proudly funds research contributing to the conservation of Australia's biodiversity and habitats and supports university students and researchers in their work and careers.

Since 2000, Nature Foundation has awarded 459 grants in nature science to university students, universities and other research institutions, with a total value of more than \$1.9 million.

Nature Foundation offers grants in several categories, from Honours and PhD work to early career research and other specific projects.

Our 2025 research grants round has recently opened, and we invite applications from students undertaking research in the environmental and nature science fields, along with early career nature scientists.

Nature Foundation's grants program provides funding in the following categories:

Student Research Grants

Grand Start Grants / Honours

These grants provide up to \$2000 for one year to assist an Honours student undertaking research. Projects may be field-based or involve non-field-based research such as geographic information systems, remote sensing-related projects, or data analysis.

Nature Foundation Scientific Expedition Foundation RL & GK Willing Grant

This annual grant provides up to \$2000 for one year to support an Honours student. The student's research must focus on:

1. Trends in the abundance and distribution of native populations of South Australian fauna and flora; or
2. Soil, water, geology or climate where it will affect abundance and distribution of native populations of South Australian fauna and flora.

This is a partnership between Nature Foundation and Scientific Expedition Foundation.

Grand Starts Grants / PhD

PhD/Masters Grand Start Scholarships provide grants of up to \$3000 per annum for a maximum of three years to assist a PhD/Masters student undertaking research.

Lynette Aplin 'Knowledge in Science' Research Grant

This new grant provides \$5000 to a PhD student to support their next year's research.

Roy and Marjory Edwards Scholarship

This scholarship provides up to \$12,000 per annum for up to three years to support a student at an Australian university. This scholarship was initiated in 2002 by a generous donation from Mrs Marjory Edwards to establish a perpetual scholarship in conservation biology.

Early Career Nature Scientists

Mike Bull Award for Early Career Nature Scientists

This award supports the emerging career of a nature scientist. Applications are encouraged from across Australia (or more broadly) where the recipient's research focus benefits nature science in Australia. Only Australian research institutions are eligible as hosting organisations.

The award includes a medal for academic excellence and a \$3000 grant to support the career of the recipient. The grant is to be used to:

1. Support a research program, including purchase of equipment for field expenses,
2. Attend a conference or important seminar (including registration fees, flights), and/or
3. Visit another lab or potential future collaborator.

The selection committee will favour research projects that are based in field work, or which utilise robust field data, aligning with the successful career of Professor Mike Bull.

Nature Foundation's Research Grant applications open in March. For full details, to subscribe for updates and apply, visit: naturefoundation.org.au/research-grants



Above: Circa 2007 Sir David Attenborough visited what is now our Tiliqua Nature Reserve and met with Professor Mike Bull to learn about the endangered Pygmy Bluetongue lizard (*Tiliqua adelaidensis*) for the Life in Cold Blood series.

Opposite top: Dymna Cullen releasing a Crest-tailed Mulgara (*Dasymercus cristicauda*). Photo by Jack Dickson.



Jack Bilby

PhD, University of New South Wales, UNSW Sydney

Jack successfully received the Nature Foundation Grand Start Grant supporting his PhD in both 2023 and 2025, assisting him to continue his multi-year research project, which explores the impacts of heat increases due to climate change on Australian arid zone.

Jack is investigating how native and invasive terrestrial mammals cope with extreme temperatures and how physiology, phylogeny, behaviour, and land management will impact their ability to survive.

"The Nature Foundation PhD Grand Start Grant allowed me to cover costs associated with fieldwork travel, encouraging a longer field season and to boost my sample sizes significantly. This extra time and samples allowed for an even more in-depth look into how threatened native mammals and invasive herbivores will be impacted by climate change."



Rebecca Greening

PhD, The University of Adelaide

Rebecca is a repeat recipient, having received the Nature Foundation Scientific Expedition Foundation RL & GK Willing Grant in 2023, and is now undertaking her PhD which will build on her previous research, investigating livestock-associated soil microbial communities and native plant recruitment in arid rangelands.

Rebecca will use DNA sequencing to identify microbes and metabolomics to elucidate their function, uncover the microbial taxa influencing plant growth in both grazed and ungrazed areas, and discern their beneficial or inhibitory effects.

As the 2025 recipient of the Roy and Marjory Edwards Scholarship, Rebecca will receive funding across three years, supporting her PhD research.

"Nature Foundation's student research grant allowed me to conduct an additional field trip to collect a large volume of soil samples I otherwise wouldn't have had the funds to undertake. These extra samples elevated the findings of my project and revealed some very interesting temporal changes in soil microbial communities that, without the extra field trip, would have gone undetected."

Cover image: Chi-Yun Liu
researching the rock-holes
at Hiltaba Nature Reserve.

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