

John Cripps horticulture scholarship

Frequently asked questions (FAQs)

The John Cripps horticulture scholarship scheme guidelines contains information for applicants. The guidelines, along with these FAQs, should be read prior to completing an application.

What is the scholarship for?

The John Cripps horticulture scholarship will fund a student to complete a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) at a Western Australian university, focusing on one of the provided research projects designed to directly benefit the Western Australian horticultural industry.

The scholarship is an investment by the State Government to increase research undertaken in horticulture in Western Australia on issues impacting the productivity, profitability and sustainability of the industry. Research supports the success of WA horticulture businesses to meet the challenges that are impacting now and into the future. The challenges currently impacting the industry include productivity, climate variability, pest and disease management, consumer trends and economic pressures.

What are the projects?

Projects have been chosen to address current issues, increase knowledge, and respond to specific commodity or horticultural industry challenges relevant to Western Australia.

PhD projects are:

- Investigating long term storage of avocados
- Avocado gas exchanges and dynamics during ripening
- Chilli and western flower thrips monitoring and management strategies
- Longtail mealybug management
- IPM strategy for cluster caterpillar *Spodoptera litura*

Individual project outlines are available on the SmartyGrants portal. For further enquiries, please contact the email address provided at the bottom of each outline.

As part of the application process, students must demonstrate how they plan to approach the selected research topic, including methodology, the university where the study will be undertaken, and details of their proposed supervisors.

Please note that only the projects listed above are eligible for funding under this scholarship. Applicants proposing alternative research topics will not be considered.

Can I apply for more than one project?

Yes. If you are interested in more than one project, you must submit a separate application for each project. Each application will be assessed independently.

Who can apply?

We are looking for high achieving students interested in undertaking post graduate study.

Potential applicants must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- Have a Bachelor degree with first-class honours (some universities may consider students with upper second-class honours), or a Master's degree with a research component or equivalent from a recognised Australian or international university
- A record of excellent academic performance
- Evidence of strong written and spoken English
- Education history and academic achievement - transcripts and degree certificates
- Resume & CV
- Be an Australian citizen or have permanent residency status in Australia. Documentary evidence of your entitlement to live and work in Australia for the period of the scholarship.
- Be available to take up the scholarship if offered, for commencement by 31 July 2026. Special approval may be granted on written application, for a later commencement date for those candidates with unavoidable commitments. However, any award or scholarship offered will lapse, if not taken up before the commencement date.
- Be supported to participate by a Western Australian university.

What is the value of the scholarship?

The full-time postgraduate scholarship will fund a stipend for \$50,000 per annum (tax exempt) for set periods as outlined below.

The total value and duration of the scholarship is:

- PhD - \$150,000 over 3 years

An extension of time may be granted by the university in extenuating circumstances, subject to satisfactory progress.

How do I apply for the scholarship?

To apply for this scholarship, applicants need to complete and submit an application via the DPIRD [SmartyGrants platform](https://dpiird.smartygrants.com.au/JohnCrippsScholarship-R2) before closing date and time.

Accessible through: <https://dpiird.smartygrants.com.au/JohnCrippsScholarship-R2>

When do applications close?

Applications must be submitted on the SmartyGrants platform before **Midnight Friday 13 February**. Applications will not be accepted after this date and time.

How will the scholarship be paid?

The scholarship will be paid as a stipend directly by the university to the student. The student and university will determine the regularity of the payment (i.e. weekly, fortnightly etc).

Can the study be undertaken at any university?

Study must be undertaken at a Western Australian university. The scholarship is focused on building research undertaken within the state.

How will applications be assessed?

All applications are assessed by a panel of industry and research representatives. In assessing the applications, the panel will consider:

- Selected project approach and methodology
- Applicant's academic track record and
- A personal statement.

What documents are required to support my scholarship application?

You will be required to attach documents to your scholarship application. This is your opportunity to demonstrate how you meet the eligibility criteria, so make sure everything you provide is clear, concise, and relevant. Failing to include the required documentation will result in your scholarship application not being assessed.

Documents required include:

- A personal statement explaining why you want to undertake this research
- Education history and academic achievement - transcripts and degree certificates
- resume
- Supervisors' statement commitment
- Certified electronic translated versions of any documents that are in languages other than English.

What are the key dates for submitting an application and receiving feedback?

Activities	Dates
Round announcement	22 October 2025
Applications open	10:00am Wednesday 22 October 2025 (AWST)
Applications close	Midnight Friday 13 February 2026 (AWST)
Applications assessed by	10 March 2026
Applicants informed of outcome	20 March 2026
Public announcement of scholarship	March/ April 2026

Where do I get assistance with my application?

Some applicants might be applying for a grant for the first time and/or have difficulty with the forms or [SmartyGrants system](#). If applicants need support to complete their application, they are encouraged to email Jennifer Birkhead on Jennifer.birkhead@dpird.wa.gov.au

Who is John Cripps?

This scholarship is established to recognise the importance of research to the WA horticulture industry and is in memory of one of our leading apple breeder and industry legends John Cripps.

In 1973, John was working for the Department of Agriculture WA and given permission to begin the first apple breeding programme in Western Australia. His aim was to combine Golden Delicious, and the firm, storable Lady Williams (a local variety). This required both patience and determination from John and his team of technicians: Crosses are made by hand pollinating, waiting until an apple develops, and then planting its pips to grow new seedlings. And because of an apple's large genome, the chance of propagating fruit with the perfect combination was slim, so a total of 108,000 crossed seedlings were planted. By 1983, the trees were fruiting, and all had to be tasted, though many were inedible. However, the following spring John found one of the crosses had kept well over winter, retaining good appearance, taste, crispness and juiciness. This apple became the Cripps Pink variety.

In 1984, John Cripps selected what was to be named the Pink Lady® apple from an extensive breeding programme in Western Australia.

Launched in 1991, Pink Lady® was the world's first apple 'brand' and is grown across the world. It was John Cripps himself who came up with the name Pink Lady®. It is the pink gin cocktail drunk by the naval officer hero of his favourite novel, Nicholas Monsarrat's *The Cruel Sea*, a story set during the Battle of the Atlantic in the Second World War when the navy ensured that the British did not starve.

Pink Lady® eating quality is assured through measures of firmness, sugar content (brix) and skin redness and only apples passing these tests are sold as the Pink Lady® (with the pink heart label). Apples not up to standard are sold as Cripps Pink, the variety name.

The apples contain the highest concentration of flavonoids grown. Flavonoids are natural chemical compounds found in plants, including apples, which are associated with health benefits. Testing a range of apples grown in Australia, researchers found the highest concentrations in Cripps Pink, mainly the skin.

Important Disclaimer

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