

AMSI
VACATION
RESEARCH
SCHOLARSHIPS

2016/17



INFORMATION
B O O K L E T



Australian Government

Department of Education and Training



AMSI Vacation Research Scholarship & AMSIConnect Information Guidelines 2016/17

AMSI Vacation Research Scholarships are jointly funded by the Department of Education and Training and the Australian Mathematical Sciences Institute.

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INTRODUCTION

Congratulations on receiving an AMSI Vacation Research Scholarship in 2016/17.

This information booklet outlines a number of key components surrounding the scholarship, your research project, and AMSIConnect: a two-day student conference, where you will be asked to present your research findings to other VRS scholars.

AMSI will be in contact between now the end of December to confirm travel arrangements and provide more information about AMSIConnect.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact us directly.

Contact: Cate Parsons
Email: vrs@amsi.org.au
Phone: (03) 8344 2103

KEY DATES

Please see below an overview of key dates for AMSI VRS 2016/17:

ACTIVITY	DATE
Student Profile, Project & Travel Information Due	18 November 2016
Research Projects begin (<i>exact day may vary</i>)	1 December 2016
Students arrive at International House	7 February 2017
AMSIConnect	8-9 February 2017
Students depart International House	9 February 2017
Research Report and Blog Submission Deadline	28 February 2017

RESEARCH REPORT

The Research Report should be written in a formal style, as per scientific journal publication. It must be submitted on the AMSI Report Template and adhere to the AMSI Style Guide, which can be found online at <http://vrs.amsi.org.au/templates/>. You must supply both a .PDF and word/Tex file, and the saved files must be named as per the following guide: i.e. **LASTNAME_FIRSTNAME_VRS-Report.pdf**

Please email copies of your Research Report to vrs@amsi.org.au by 5:00pm on Tuesday, 28 February 2017.

Previous examples of completed projects can be found at <http://vrs.amsi.org.au/projects/>.

CHANGES TO YOUR RESEARCH TOPIC

We understand that minor amendments and changes to topics are occasionally required. If you find your project needs alternation in some way, please discuss with your supervisor, and email us at vrs@amsi.org.au.

If your project is significantly altered and varies greatly from the research project you initially proposed on your VRS application, permission to proceed must be granted by the AMSI Director and your Head of Department.

BLOG POST

The Blog Post gives you an opportunity to practice discussing your work with a wider audience. It is becoming increasingly important for researchers to develop skills that enable them to discuss their findings and its relevance to an audience outside academia.

You may write on one of these three topics:

- Your research project
- An area of mathematics that you are interested in, or
- How/why you became Interested in mathematics.

Blog posts should be between 300 and 500 words, and should be written in a manner that is accessible to non-specialist audiences. We have provided some additional information on how to write an engaging scientific blog. Examples of past blogs can be found here: <http://vrs.amsi.org.au/projects/>

(Note: please select “details” then “blog” to view previous examples).

Please email your blog text in word document format to vrs@amsi.org.au by 5:00pm on Tuesday, 28 February 2017. Saved files must be named as per the following guide: i.e. **LASTNAME_FIRSTNAME_VRS-Blog.docx**

If you have any relevant photographs (that you own the copyright to), you may also email these for use alongside your blog. Alternatively, AMSI can source stock images for each blog. Saved files must be named as per the following guide: i.e. **LASTNAME_FIRSTNAME_VRS-Image.jpg**

These blogs will be published throughout the year on the AMSI site, and will be shared across our various social media channels.

AMSIConnect

AMSIConnect gives VRS students the opportunity to present their summer research findings to other scholars and academic supervisors. This is a highly valuable exercise, which provides a platform to practise presenting within a professional conference capacity.

Please note: Attendance at AMSIConnect is compulsory and a condition of accepting an AMSI Vacation Research Scholarship. You must attend for the full duration of the event to fulfil this requirement.

Please contact us on vrs@amsi.org.au if you have any concerns or queries.

TRAVEL

AMSI will coordinate, book and pay for return economy airfares to each VRS student outside of Melbourne. These flights will arrive at the Melbourne Tullamarine Airport on Tuesday, 7 February, where transport to International House will be provided by a private bus service.

AMSI will send students requiring travel the flight itinerary ahead of the travel day. Any issues can be directed to Cate Parsons.

Please note: VRS students will be responsible for any additional costs associated with changing travel arrangements after confirmation is provided by AMSI.

ACCOMODATION

All VRS students will be provided with accommodation at International House for 2-nights to attend AMSIConnect. Students will check in on 7 February and check out on 9 February 2017.

International House
The University of Melbourne
241 Royal Parade
Parkville, Victoria, 3052.

Melbourne-based VRS students are asked to arrive at International House by no later than 5.00pm on Tuesday, 7 February to check in and get settled.

PRESENTATION GUIDELINES

VRS students should prepare a 10-12 minute presentation of their research, which will be followed by a 3-5 minute question and answer session. The Best Presentation – decided by popular vote – will be awarded a Book Prize.

Student presentations should be supported by a PowerPoint/LaTeX presentation, using the AMSI Presentation Templates and following the AMSI Style Guide, which can be found online at <http://vrs.amsi.org.au/templates/>.

Further guidelines for the presentation can also be found online.

SUPERVISOR ATTENDANCE AT AMSIConnect

AMSI strongly encourages VRS supervisors to attend AMSIConnect, in order to provide their student with professional support and to assist with questions if required. We also request that attending supervisors chair at least one session over the two-day conference.

Please speak with your supervisor to find out if they intend on attending.

STAY IN TOUCH!

Follow us on our various social media channels to stay on top of events, opportunities, and general news in the mathematical sciences.

Plus, you can keep an eye out for your own blog post throughout the year, and share amongst friends. Please tag us in status updates and photos from AMSIConnect – we'd love to see what you're up to!

Tag your posts with #AMSI and #VRS2017 to make sure we see them.

Facebook: [@DiscoverAMSI](#)

Twitter: [@DiscoverAMSI](#)

LinkedIn: [Australian Mathematical Sciences Institute](#)

TIPS ON WRITING YOUR BLOG

1. Find interesting research

You already have interesting research! It's what you will be studying for your VRS Project. But if you would prefer to write about some other area of research that's fine. Or perhaps you would prefer to write about your experience with maths and why you enjoy it so much.

2. Make sure you understand it!

We're sure you'll have a deep understanding of your own VRS research, but if you choose another area of research to write about make sure you understand what you're writing about. The better you understand it, the better you'll be able to communicate to your reader.

3. Show why it's interesting first

Tell us what you like about the project: perhaps some interesting applications, something to make it relatable, or interesting to the readers. Do this first so your readers aren't overwhelmed with methods and results first thing.

4. Let the research speak for itself

Don't exclude information because you don't think people will be able to understand it. People want to know all the details not just the end result and excluding details will either leave people annoyed because they feel like it's too dumbed down, or confused because they don't know how the research came to these conclusions.

5. Don't include details that are only relevant to scientists

We want these blogs to be accessible to the general public. So don't "dumb things down" to the extent they feel patronised. Rather, explain the research and results in a way that people without in depth knowledge of the subject will be able to understand. Try analogies, or explain a practical application. However you chose to do it, try and get the right balance between ease of reading and omission of details.

6. Don't use scientific jargon

This is not your research report, so don't use all the technical language you used in your research report. Basic scientific jargon is fine, but make sure you define any technical terms used within the blog.

7. Tell a story/be creative

This doesn't need to be you spewing out facts onto a page. Make it inventive and creative use jokes and anecdotes to enhance your article. Perhaps lead the reader through your research joking about the hiccups you had along the way. This is not a scientific report so you have the freedom to be creative!

8. Don't leave your work open for misinterpretation

Make sure your point of view or argument is the same all the way through. You can certainly provide alternative thoughts, but make sure the overall message is consistent. Remember, you want someone to feel they understand your ideas and arguments even if they stop reading half-way through.

9. Visuals are great, but use them wisely Visuals can be great!

Use images well and you will greatly enhance your article, use them wrong and you will confuse your readers. Don't just throw in graphs and tables of data unless they are really helping clarify a point. Once again remember that this article is for the wider community not just scientists.

10. Keep it concise

Your blog should be significantly shorter than your report. Keep it concise and don't get bogged down in unnecessary details. It's an interesting blog, not a PhD submission.

11. Cite your sources

This isn't too crucial for those using their own VRS research. But make sure you give credit where it's required, and if you do have some interesting further reading, include it for those who may want additional information.

12. Get your facts straight

Read over your work to make sure all the facts are right, and then perhaps get a friend to read over it to check that the spelling and grammar is right.

13. Have fun!

At the end of the day this is about making it enjoyable for your readers and the best way to do that is make it enjoyable for yourself.

Adapted from: <http://scienceofblogging.com>