



School of Civil Engineering Best PhD Thesis Award

Terms and Conditions

1. Background

- a. The Best PhD Thesis Award is established to formally recognise and celebrate outstanding doctoral research completed within the School of Civil Engineering at the University of Sydney. This award seeks to honour a PhD candidate whose thesis demonstrates an exceptional level of originality, scholarly rigour, and potential for significant impact on the field of civil engineering. Beyond academic excellence, the award aims to highlight research that advances knowledge, contributes meaningfully to industry or society, and exemplifies the high standards expected from doctoral candidates in the School.
- b. The award also serves as a platform to promote a culture of research excellence and integrity, encouraging current and future candidates to aspire toward producing high-quality, influential work. It underscores the School's commitment to fostering innovative, relevant, and rigorous research that aligns with broader institutional and disciplinary goals.

2. Eligibility Criteria

- a. Students must have been enrolled in a Doctor of Philosophy program with the School of Civil Engineering and have received a completion letter during 1 January until 31 December of the previous year.
- b. Students must not have exceeded the maximum period of candidature for their degree, which is set at 3.5 years of Equivalent Full-Time Study (EFTS).
- c. Students must have completed their examination via the oral examination process.
- d. If a student has completed their PhD beyond this 3.5 EFTS threshold, their application may still be considered, provided they submit a well-substantiated justification demonstrating that the extended duration was due to circumstances beyond their control. The final decision regarding the acceptance of such applications rests solely with the selection committee.

3. Selection Criteria

- a. The Prize will be awarded based on the:
 - I. originality, impact and examination outcomes of the thesis,
 - II. publications and disseminations of the student during their degree, and
 - III. the students' broader engagement during their degree.
- b. The Associate Head of Research Education will convene a committee composed of members of the Research Education Committee (REC). This committee will review all eligible nominations and develop a shortlist based on the selection criteria.



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- c. The same committee will conduct a detailed assessment of the shortlisted candidates using the official scoring rubric. Based on these evaluations, a recommendation will be made for the award recipient and any commendations.
- d. The prize will be awarded by the Head of School, School of Civil Engineering, on the recommendation of the selection committee.
- e. The selection committee will consider the following when reviewing the student's submission by their primary supervisor.
 - I. thesis (PDF),
 - II. examiner reports,
 - III. chair of examination report,
 - IV. a statement of support from the student's primary supervisor (maximum 2 pages), and
 - V. a list of research outputs during their PhD study.
- f. A grading rubric totalling 100 points will be applied, aligned with the qualitative criteria outlined above.
- g. Score thresholds will be used to distinguish levels of achievement:
 - I. Winner (only one per year within the school): Applicant must achieve a score of 85% or higher.
 - II. Highly Commended: Applicants who demonstrate strong merit but do not meet the winner threshold may be acknowledged accordingly.
- h. If no applicant achieves the minimum score of 85%, no award will be conferred for that year.

4. Value

- a. This award has a value of \$1500 and will be paid as a one off payment.
- b. No other amount is payable.
- c. The award will be awarded subject to the availability of funds.
- d. Certificates may be awarded to runners-up in recognition of their achievements.

5. Termination

- a. The University reserves the right to withdraw the award, if the University determines that the student is guilty of serious misconduct, including, but not limited to, having provided false or misleading information that has a relationship to the awarding of this award.
- b. Once withdrawn, the award will not be reinstated unless due to the University error.