

Royal Geographical Society of South Australia Library Research Fellowships



Overview

The RGSSA Library Research Fellowship program was created in 2023, using funds from the Dorothy Pyatt bequest, to give emerging and established scholars from around the world an opportunity to pursue their work in proximity to a distinguished collection of primary sources. The Fellowships also benefit from in-kind support offered by the State Library of South Australia and St Mark's College. Up to three fellowships are awarded each year for periods of time usually ranging from two to four weeks. Fellowships are open to Australian and international researchers. The main criteria for appointment are the quality and feasibility of the candidate's proposal, the qualifications/potential of the candidate, the relevance of the project to the holdings of the RGSSA Library, and the potential shown by the project for enhancing public knowledge of the RGSSA resources.

Fellowships will:

- contribute to a greater public and scholarly understanding or knowledge of the Society's collections;
- promote scholarly commentary on geographical issues which informs and engages contemporary discourse;
- support scholarly careers; and
- enhance the national and international reputation of the Royal Geographical Society of South Australia as an institution of scholarly significance.

The RGSSA Library

The RGSSA Library contains over 25,000 items and is one of the most significant collections of rare geographical books and manuscripts in Australia. It has strengths in geography, cartography, and related historical geography topics. The Library maintains a wide variety of hard-to-find primary and secondary resources including: books, manuscripts, archives, photos, maps, and atlases. It is located in one of the most beautiful library buildings in the world. More information about the Society's collections, including a link to the online catalogue, is available at <https://rgssa.org.au/library/library-overview>.

The RGSSA Library is located within the [State Library of South Australia](#) (SLSA) and Fellows will have access to the SLSA's extensive resources and services.

The Fellowship Program

The Royal Geographical Society of South Australia Library Research Fellowship program is intended to help bring to the RGSSA Library emerging and established international and Australian scholars who reside outside South Australia, and whose research would benefit from intensive use of the Library.

Research projects supported by the Fellowship program must fall within the range of subject areas that could be supported by the Library. Examples include, but are not limited to geographical themes with a significant historical component.

Fellowships can last up to four weeks and provide a weekly stipend of \$750. (\$3,000 maximum) to help defray the travel and living expenses relative to the residency. Fellowships are awarded to an individual. Funding will be paid directly to the individual for the purposes of supporting their Fellowship. Payments will be made in week 1 of the Fellowship. As Fellowship support may have tax implications, it is recommended that Fellows seek professional financial advice.

The RGSSA Library Research Fellowship scheme is also supported by [St Mark's College](#), a world-class university residential college with an enduring relationship with RGSSA and located a short walk from the RGSSA and SLSA. Subject to availability, St Mark's offers Fellows affordable short-term accommodation in private, well-furnished, and modern rooms within a safe, inclusive environment. The accommodation tariff levied by St Mark's includes three meals daily, WiFi, and a weekly room cleaning service. St Mark's welcomes Fellows, valuing their informal engagements with the College's students and staff and enlivenment of its scholarly environment.

For more details see the St Mark's College website (<https://stmarkscollege.com.au/>).

In addition to the stipend and favoured access to excellent accommodation proximate to the RGSSA, the Fellowship also offers the support of the SLSA, including: introductions to key SLSA staff and RGSSA members; appropriate workspace within the SLSA; internet access; occasions for engagement with other researchers; and community and scholarly organisations.

During their residency Australian and New Zealand researchers benefit from access to print and online collections of South Australian university libraries through ULANZ – the University Libraries of Australia and New Zealand. ULANZ is a library borrowing scheme that allows staff and students of Australian and New Zealand universities to borrow in person from any other participating university library. The scheme is a cooperative arrangement between the Council of Australian University Librarians (CAUL) and the Council of New Zealand University Librarians (CONZUL). Similar library lending arrangements may be made for researchers from other jurisdictions other than Australia and New Zealand, though there may be some limitations on access to university electronic collections.

What is Expected of a Fellow?

Fellows are required to:

- be in residence during the term of the award, which may be taken at any time during the year, subject to negotiation with the RGSSA;
- acknowledge the support of the RGSSA Library Research Fellowship in forums, presentations, theses/dissertations, and publications issuing wholly or in part from the Fellowship;
- assist the RGSSA and SLSA to promote the Fellowship through media and public communications, including through contributions to social media;
- provide a 150-300-word description of their work for *GeoNews*, the RGSSA newsletter;

- give a presentation (if opportunity allows during the Fellowship tenure) or record a short video on their research that may be used to promote the Fellowship scheme and the RGSSA;
- provide a report within one month of the agreed end date of their Fellowship outlining results of, and reflections on, their Fellowship experience, which will inform the RGSSA Council and the SLSA; and
- advise the RGSSA of any research outcomes of the Fellowship, and deposit material in the Library's collection if appropriate.

Fellows are also encouraged to submit work arising from their research for publication in the *South Australian Geographical Journal*.

Successful applicants' names, biographical statement, and information about the Fellowship project awarded may be published on our website and social media platforms.

Note: Fellows are also expected to bring their own computer.

Eligibility and Selection Criteria

Candidates for Fellowships may be established scholars or early career scholars who are:

- Australian residents, *excluding* individuals living in South Australia; and
- International residents providing they are eligible to apply for a visa. International residents will be responsible for securing their own visas.

You cannot apply if:

- you are currently undertaking a Masters project; or
- you have received an RGSSA Library Research Fellowship within the last three years.

Applications will be considered against the following criteria:

- quality and feasibility of the research concept;
- applicant's demonstrated capacity or potential for high quality research or scholarship;
- the relevance and value of the RGSSA Library's collections to support the research outcomes; and
- the project's potential for enhancing public knowledge of the RGSSA collections.

To Apply

Application must be made in writing to the RGSSA (details below). The application shall include:

- a two-page letter that **must** describe:
 - the project to be pursued including aims, context, explanation of how the RGSSA Library will be used in completing the project, and expected short- and long-term outcomes of the Fellowship work;
 - the number of weeks of support requested (up to 4) including proposed start and end dates.

- a brief curriculum vitae (maximum four A4 pages);
- list of publications or, if you are not an academic researcher or independent scholar, equivalent professional outcomes (maximum two A4 pages); and
- a letter of support from a reputable scholar in the field.

Deadline to apply: last Friday in October. Awards will be announced in late November for Fellowships to be held during the following year.

Electronic submission is required. Applications may be submitted via email to: Admin@rgssa.org.au

The awards will be made by the Council of the RGSSA after consultation with the Fellowship selection committee.

For further information on the Fellowship program, write to, phone, or e-mail:

Professor Guy M Robinson, Royal Geographical Society of South Australia, PO Box 3661, Rundle Mall, Adelaide, SA 5000. E: guy.robinson@adelaide.edu.au