



The Royal Australasian College of Surgeons invites suitable applicants for the 2015 Rowan Nicks Scholarships and Fellowships. These are the most prestigious of the College's International Awards and are directed at qualified surgeons who are destined to become leaders in their home countries.



# OUTCOMES AND IMPACTS

Evaluation shows success of the Rowan Nicks scholarships program

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CHAIR, ROWAN NICKS SCHOLARSHIPS COMMITTEE

## Dear Fellow Surgeons

Many or indeed most of you will have heard of Rowan Nicks the Sydney cardiac surgeon who in his lifetime and after his death in 2011 has been a great benefactor of our College and established a series of scholarships targeting young surgeons from Africa, India and more recently South East Asia and the Western Pacific.

The Program has been going now for more than 20 years. In order to identify the benefits and the defects of it we developed a questionnaire examining these aspects. From the responses obtained we have written a paper which has just been published in 'The Australian and New Zealand Journal of Surgery'. I attach a copy of the abstract of this paper which, I hope, will be of some interest to the Fellowship.

As part of the ongoing development of the Rowan Nicks Scholarship we established a lectureship and have struck a medal commemorating Rowan. This lectureship is in its third year and up until now has been given by a distinguished speaker at the International Forum of the Annual Scientific Congress (ASC).

I am particularly happy to report that this year at the combined ASC of RACS and ANZCA in Singapore, the Rowan Nicks Lecture will be given by Datuk Harjit Singh who was a scholar hosted by Professor Russell Strong in Brisbane in 1993.

Datuk Harjit Singh is a distinguished member of the Malaysian surgical fraternity and has fulfilled many of the ideals that Rowan Nicks espoused when initiating the Scholarship.

## Evaluation of the medium-term outcomes and impact of the Rowan Nicks Scholarship Programme

Reference: Masterton, J. P., Moss, D., Korin, S. J. and Watters, D. A. K. (2014), Evaluation of the medium-term outcomes and impact of the Rowan Nicks Scholarship Program. ANZ Journal of Surgery. doi: 10.1111/ans.12493.

### Abstract Background

Rowan Nicks was a cardio-thoracic surgeon in Sydney. He endowed the Rowan Nicks Scholarship Program of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons which was initiated in 1991 to provide opportunities for clinicians from developing countries so that they return to their countries as leaders and teachers. This paper's objective was to evaluate the outcomes and impact of the scholarship on individuals and their communities.

### Methods

A survey was undertaken of 34 eligible scholars of whom 29 participated. It

was directed at whether objectives were achieved in technical skills, patient management and in competency in research and leadership.

### Results

98 per cent of scholars returned to work in their home country. 28 of 29 were working in their chosen specialty and had returned to their former positions. The clinical/operative skills obtained were regarded as useful by 86 per cent and 22 of 29 (76 per cent) scholars reported they had gained worthwhile leadership and administrative skills. Improved clinical outcomes for patients were achieved as evidenced by reduced mortality and less disability. There was also a positive impact on health systems. The best documented of these were improved trauma management, development of paediatric surgery in rural Bangladesh, a new cardiac unit in Myanmar, organ transplantation and better injury outcomes in Papua New Guinea.

### Conclusion

The Program has resulted in potential and actual leaders returning to their homes countries where they positively impacted on health and surgical services. This has resulted in a reduced burden of surgical disease in the scholars' countries as measured by less death, disability and deformity.

## The Rowan Nicks International and Pacific Islands Scholarships

provide opportunities for surgeons to develop their management, leadership, teaching, research and clinical skills through clinical attachments in selected hospitals in Australia, New Zealand and South-East Asia.

The goal of these Scholarships is to improve the health outcomes for disadvantaged communities in the region, by providing training opportunities to promising individuals who will contribute to the development of the long-term surgical capacity in their country.

### Application Criteria:

Applicants for the both the Rowan Nicks International and Pacific Islands Scholarships must:

- commit to return to their home country on completion of their Scholarship;
- meet the English Language Requirement for medical registration in Australia or New Zealand (equivalent to an IELTS score of 7.0 in Australia or 7.5 in New Zealand, in every category);
- be under 45 years of age at the closing date for applications.

### Applicants for the International Scholarship must:

- hold a relevant post-graduate qualification in Surgery;
- be a citizen of Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, Indonesia\*, Laos, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal or Vietnam

\*With preference given to Indonesian applicants from outside the major capital cities of Jakarta and Surabaya who will return to practice in regional areas.

### Applicants for the Pacific Islands Scholarship must:

- be a citizen of the Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Federated States of Micronesia, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu or Vanuatu;
- hold a Masters of Medicine in Surgery (or equivalent). However, consideration will be given to applicants who have completed local general post-graduate surgical training, where appropriate to the needs of their home country.

### Selection Criteria

- The Committee will consider the potential of the applicant to become a surgical leader in the country of origin, and/or to supply a much-needed service in a particular surgical discipline.
- The Committee must be convinced that the applicant is of high calibre in surgical ability, ethical integrity and qualities of leadership.
- Selection will primarily be based on merit, with applicants providing an essential service in remote areas, without opportunities for institutional support or educational facilities, being given earnest consideration.

**Value:** Up to \$50,000 for a 12 month attachment, depending on the funding situation of the candidate and provided sufficient funds are available, plus one return economy airfare from home country and support to attend the Annual Scientific Congress of the College, if the Scholar is in country at the time of the Congress.

**Tenure:** 3 - 12 months

## The Rowan Nicks Australia and New Zealand Fellowship

is intended to promote international surgical interchange at the levels of practice and research, raise and maintain the profile of surgery in Australia and New Zealand and increase interaction between Australian and New Zealand surgical communities.

The Fellowship provides funding to assist a New Zealander to work in an Australian unit judged by the College to be of national excellence for a period of up to one year, or an Australian to work in a New Zealand unit using the same criteria.

### Application Criteria:

Applicants must:

- have gained Fellowship of the RACS within the previous ten years on the closing date for applications.
- provide evidence that they have passed the final exit exam to allow them to obtain a Fellowship of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons by the time selection takes place.

### Selection Criteria:

- The Committee will consider the potential of the applicant to become a surgical leader and ability to provide a particular service that may be deficient in their chosen surgical discipline.
- assess the applicants in the areas of surgical ability, ethical integrity, scholarship and leadership.

The Fellowship is not available for the purpose of extending a candidate's current position in Australia or New Zealand.

**Value:** Up to \$50,000 for a 12 month attachment, depending on the funding situation of the candidate and provided sufficient funds are available, plus one return economy airfare between Australia and New Zealand and support to attend the Annual Scientific Congress of the College, if the Scholar is in country at the time of the Congress.

**Tenure:** 3 - 12 months

Application forms and instructions are available from the College website:

[www.surgeons.org](http://www.surgeons.org)

Closing date: **Monday 2 June, 2014.**

Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application by **30 October 2014.**

**Please contact:** Secretariat, Rowan Nicks Committee, Royal Australasian College of Surgeons  
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