



Master Degree Scholarships for Orientation & Mobility Specialists

2018 Scholarships

➤ Opportunities for university graduates

Interviews to be conducted between 16th October – 3rd November, 2017

- Sydney Metro North
- Sydney Metro South
- Northern NSW
- Southern NSW/ACT

Guide Dogs NSW/ACT invites suitably qualified and interested applicants to be considered for scholarships to undertake a Master of Disability Studies (Sensory Disability) through the Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children (RIDBC) Renwick Centre, Sydney, a program administered by the RIDBC and affiliated with Macquarie University.

Our scholarship program is the first step toward launching your career as an Orientation & Mobility Specialist with Guide Dogs NSW/ACT. Selected candidates for scholarship must successfully complete the first semester of the Master degree program (full-time) in 2018 and other employment criteria, leading to an offer of full-time employment as an Orientation & Mobility Specialist from July 2018. Subsequent semesters of the Master program will be completed part-time by distance education/block release and/or online while employed full-time at Guide Dogs NSW/ACT.

All course fees are covered as part of your scholarship by Guide Dogs NSW/ACT.

You are extended an invitation to find out more about a career as an Orientation & Mobility Specialist by attending an open day. Refer to the Information Pack on our website for more information about dates and locations.

Prior to submitting your application for these scholarship opportunities, interested applicants must ensure they meet the entry requirements of the RIDBC Renwick Centre, Macquarie University. Enquiries about this program and the entry requirements are to be made in the first instance to Claire Farrington at RIDBC on (02) 9872 0811 / claire.farrington@ridbc.org.au.

Once academic suitability has been confirmed by the RIDBC Renwick Centre, your application can be forwarded via email to: jobs@guidedogs.com.au quoting the Master Degree Scholarship opportunities. It is a strict requirement that applications include:

- Your current and detailed CV inclusive of how you meet the essential criteria for scholarship and the contact details of two professional referees (preferably not exceeding 2 pages); and
- A written response to the following question (between 250-300 words): *“Why are you applying for this opportunity?”*

For more information please see the Information Pack on our website at <https://www.guidedogs.com.au/jobs>.

Applications close: 2 October 2017

For further information please contact Sonya Leotta at Guide Dogs NSW/ACT on (02) 9412 9373.

INFORMATION PACK:
OPEN DAYS FOR INTERESTED APPLICANTS

ACT Office

Address: Unit 11, 40-42 Corinna Street, Phillip ACT 2606

- Wednesday 13th September 2017, from 12pm to 2pm
- Tuesday 19th September 2017, from 1pm to 3pm

Albury Office

Address: Suite 3, 549 Kiewa Street, Albury NSW 2640

- Monday 11th September 2017, from 10am to 1pm
- Friday 22nd September 2017, from 2pm to 5pm

Armidale

Address: My Future/My Choice Expo
Armidale Ex Services Club, 137 Dumaresq Street, Armidale NSW 2350

- Wednesday 13th September 2017, from 10am to 2:30pm

Blacktown Office

Address: Suite 302 Level 3, 83 Flushcombe Road, Blacktown NSW 2148

- Tuesday 12th September 2017, from 9:30am to 12pm
- Wednesday 20th September 2017, from 2pm to 5pm

Chatswood Office

Address: 2-4 Thomas Street, Chatswood NSW 2067

- Tuesday 12th September 2017, from 2pm to 4pm
- Wednesday 20th September 2017, from 10am to 12pm

Dubbo

Address: Western Plains Cultural Centre
76 Wingewarra St, Dubbo NSW 2830

- Thursday 14th September 2017, from 10am to 1pm
- Tuesday 19th September 2017, from 1pm to 4pm

Newcastle Office

Address: Suite 15, 2nd Floor, 133 King Street, Newcastle NSW 2300

- Wednesday 13th September 2017, from 9:30am to 11:30am
- Wednesday 20th September 2017, from 3pm to 5pm

Tweed Heads

Address: Tweed Heads Sports Club
4 Minjungbal Drive, Tweed Heads South NSW 2486

- Thursday 14th September 2017, from 11am to 1pm
- Monday 18th September 2017, from 11am to 1pm

A CAREER AS AN ORIENTATION & MOBILITY SPECIALIST

Our Principles

Guide Dogs NSW/ACT exists to enhance the dignity and quality of life of people who are vision impaired by assisting in their achievement of independence through access and mobility.

We believe that people who are vision impaired have equal rights with all other people. We believe that all people have the right of respect for their human dignity.

What We Do

We provide, among other things:

- low vision assessment and training
- assessment and training in Orientation and Mobility
- compensatory training to people affected by stroke or other brain trauma
- mobility aids including long canes, electronic aids, and Guide Dogs
- advocacy and community education on the needs and rights of people with disabilities

Locations

Services are delivered in the most appropriate location to meet client needs. For example:

- the home, domicile and suburb of clients
- to, from and at the clients' places of employment
- at schools, universities and other educational institutes
- from motels in Sydney and other regional centres

Guide Dogs NSW/ACT has teams of Orientation & Mobility Specialists based in the ACT, Albury, Blacktown, Chatswood, Coffs Harbour, Dubbo, Lismore, Newcastle, Tamworth and Wollongong.

Costs to Clients

Guide Dogs NSW/ACT services are provided through the NDIS or free of charge to clients. As a not-for-profit organisation, Guide Dogs NSW/ACT derives most of its financial support through the generosity of the people of New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory. Guide Dogs NSW/ACT receives minimal funding from the State or Federal Governments at this time.

Applicants

Guide Dogs NSW/ACT is seeking to sponsor a number of university graduates to undertake a Master of Disability Studies (Sensory Disability) at the RIDBC Renwick Centre, Macquarie University (face-to-face training will be completed at the Renwick Centre). This specially designed program uses the current structure of Macquarie University's Master degree, with some important modifications to meet the requirements of Guide Dogs NSW/ACT as the major employer of those who graduate from it.

The course requires completion of an approved sequence of 32 credit points. The program is offered in two parts. The first three or four courses are undertaken over one semester of full-time study, commencing in first semester 2018. Each course is worth 4 credit points. The remaining four or five courses are completed within the following eighteen months, on a part-time basis while working full-time for Guide Dogs NSW/ACT.

Upon successful completion of the first three or four courses and demonstration of suitability to undertake the Practicum, sponsored candidates commence full-time employment with Guide Dogs NSW/ACT in July 2018. Sponsored candidates will then be required to complete the remaining courses in the following eighteen months, outside of work time. Guide Dogs NSW/ACT will meet all course fees for sponsored students, providing courses are successfully completed and on time.

Enquiries about the Master program, including entry criteria, program content and on-campus accommodation should be directed to Claire Farrington, Executive Officer, Graduate Studies RIDBC Renwick Centre on (02) 9872 0811.

How Do I Apply For Scholarship?

Applicants for scholarship need to:

1. Meet the entry criteria of Macquarie University. You need to liaise directly with the RIDBC Renwick Centre. Telephone Claire Farrington on (02) 9872 0811.
2. Apply to Guide Dogs NSW/ACT for Master Degree Scholarship via jobs@guidedogs.com.au and submit an application in accordance to the strict application requirements:
 - Your current CV inclusive of how you meet the essential criteria for scholarship and the contact details of two professional referees (not exceeding 2 pages); and
 - A written response to the following question (between 250-300 words): *“Why are you applying for this opportunity?”*

What Happens Next?

Acknowledgement of receipt of your application will be forwarded by Guide Dogs NSW/ACT. Once applications are closed (2 October 2017) all applications will be considered and a short-list of candidates invited to attend an interview and other selection processes. Selected candidates for Master Degree Scholarship will be offered a Deed of Sponsorship (an agreement).

The RIDBC Renwick Centre academic year commences on Monday 19th February, 2018 and selected candidates must complete enrolment no later than December 2017. The University enrolment procedure is independent of your application for scholarship with Guide Dogs NSW/ACT (please refer to “Studies in Orientation and Mobility at the RIDBC Renwick Centre” document attached). If you are successful in your application for scholarship, the enrolment with the university also requires you to provide the following:

1. Details of your work experience;
2. Certified copies of transcripts and awards of all study completed at tertiary institutions; and
3. A marriage certificate or equivalent (to establish any change of name).

The Role of an Orientation & Mobility Specialist

Specialists spend most of their time assessing, planning for and, training people with vision impairment. This is done on a one-to-one basis to develop the client’s ability and confidence to move around environments safely. An Orientation & Mobility Specialist must enjoy working with a cross section of the community including people of all ages and backgrounds. Orientation & Mobility programs can take place anywhere a person needs to travel on a regular basis which might include taking public transport, travelling to recreation activities, work, school, university, or to shopping centres.

Each program is designed to meet the needs of the individual. Most of the time working in the job is spent away from the office.

A mature approach and excellent spoken and written communication skills are essential. Above all, applicants must be sensitive and responsive to the needs and preferences of the service user. Applicants must be able to work autonomously as well as within a team environment. Further, applicants need to have good planning skills and be able to work to deadlines.

The work of a Specialist can involve extensive suburban or rural travel and for those in country NSW, long distances with time away from home on occasion. As such, a drivers licence is required for field work.

All applicants must have an undergraduate degree in a relevant profession from a recognised University (e.g., OT or other allied health, disability, psychology, or education). Proficiency in the use of PC and laptop computers, standard desktop software, and the iPhone is required.

Essential Criteria for Scholarship:

- Confirmation from the RIDBC Renwick Centre that you meet the entry requirements for the Master of Disability Studies (Sensory Disability);
- Completion of a relevant tertiary degree;
- A minimum of 2 years prior employment experience in occupational therapy or other allied health, disability, psychology, or education;
- Possess a current C Class drivers licence with a good driving history;
- Possess a satisfactory National Police Check and a Working With Children Check clearance (only required to present this documentation once directed in latter stages of the selection process - undergoing background screening is essential for successful applicants); and
- Ability to manage the physical demands and inherent requirements of the Orientation & Mobility Specialist job.