Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare

Dakhina Mitra Scholarship 2025-2026

Background information

The Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare is honoured to establish the Dakhina Mitra Scholarship in memory of Dr Dakhina Mitra who worked in social policy and research at the Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare from 2018 until she sadly passed away in 2022.

Dakhina's work was focused on making lives better and capturing and supporting the voices of those most impacted by hardship or disadvantage. In particular she had a deep commitment to child rights, to children's safety and nurturing, to children's voices being heard, and to children's right to have a say in the decisions affecting their lives.

Dakhina loved being at the Centre, feeling like she was at the heart of policy, research and advocacy work which could genuinely make a difference to the lives of children being raised in challenging environments.

Purpose of the scholarship

The Centre has established this scholarship in honour of Dakhina's work in seeking to make the world a better place for children and young people. The scholarship reflects Dakhina's deep commitment to and enjoyment of learning and using research to improve practice. The Centre wanted to pay tribute to Dakhina's warmth and generosity as a person, her positive approach to life, her joy in helping others, her integrity, her love of learning, and her passion for the rights and safety of children.

The Centre will provide an annual scholarship of $5000 to support a member of the child and family services sector to undertake study or professional development activities relating to improving outcomes for children and young people. The scholarship can be used towards books or study resources, tuition fees, technology for study purposes, or other costs related to undertaking study or professional development aimed at improving the lives of children.

Information about the scholarship

This information package will assist applicants to complete the nomination form. Information on the scholarship criteria is contained in the package, and these are the criteria the judging panel will be using when making their decision. Applications must address all of the criteria to be eligible.

Please make sure you read the information package carefully.

The Scholarship is open to any individual working in the child and family services sector in Victoria including individuals employed by a Centre Member Organisation, whose work supports better outcomes for children, young people and their families.

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Applicants need to complete all relevant sections on the nomination form. If submitting supporting documents, these must be referred to in your written nomination and be relevant to the criteria questions.

Supporting documents may include photographs, videos, support letters etc. All submissions and supporting documents become the property of the Centre. They cannot be returned and may be used to promote the Centre, OPEN and the Dakhina Mitra scholarship. Please be mindful of what you send in and ask for permission from anyone featured in the visual or written materials.

The scholarship award for 2025-2026 opens on **12th August 2025**, and will be announced on **21st October 2025**. The winner of the award will be invited to present at the OPEN Symposium 2026, to share how the scholarship has supported them to continue their learning journey.

Referees

One referee must be provided for each nomination. References for short listed nominees will be checked.

Eligibility criteria

- To be eligible for the Award, the Nominee must be a current employee or volunteer any individual working in the child and family services sector in Victoria including individuals employed by a Centre Member Organisation, whose work supports better outcomes for children, young people and their families
- A Nominee can be nominated for the Award by the Nominee's employer, a colleague or a client of the Nominee's employer (Sponsor).
- A Sponsor can nominate a single Nominee for consideration in the Award each round of the Awards. A round of the Awards is 3 years. The Nominee must consent to their nomination.

The judging panel

The Judging Panel will comprise representatives of the Board of the Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare.

The decision

The Judging Panel will consider the information provided on the nomination form and supporting documentation and may request additional information to assist in the decision-making.

The decision of the Judging Panel is final, and no correspondence will be entered into.

How to apply?

All entries for the Award must be received via completed form on the Centre's website no later than 12am AEDT on **21st September 2025** (Closing Date). There is no entry fee for a nomination.

The Sponsor's entry must explain in 500 words or less why it believes that the Nominee should receive the Award based on:

- the Nominee's contributions to their local community and their commitment to the vision, values and purpose of the CFECFW;
- how the Nominee would apply the Award towards their professional development; and
- how that professional development would benefit the Nominee and their Member Organisation.

All information submitted in the entry must be true and accurate at the time of submission.

Any queries for the award can be directed to memberships@cfecfw.org.au citing 'Dakhina Mitra Scholarship' in the email subject line.

Privacy Statement

Consistent with Victorian Government policy and legislation and the Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare in Child Privacy Policy, the Centre endorses fair information handling practice.

Private and personal information supplied will be used by the Judging Panel to assist their decision making only. Information will not be disclosed or used for any other purpose without the express consent of the person to whom the information relates, unless otherwise required by law.

Please refer to the Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare Privacy Policy at www.cfecfw.org.au for further information.