

MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday, 10 December 2025

Scholarship sets up Whitsundays school leavers for success

School leavers living in the Whitsundays will be eligible for over \$25,000 in financial support to study at James Cook University courtesy of a new scholarship from the North Queensland Export Terminal (NQXT).

The aim of the NQXT Whitsunday Futures Education Grant is to support the next generation of Whitsunday locals to pursue higher education and a career in the resources sector.

The scholarship will provide a \$4,500 bursary to two successful applicants annually over three years, to help ease the financial pressure of relocating to attend university while studying full-time.

Students with home addresses in the Whitsunday Regional Council Local Government Area (including Bowen, Airlie Beach, Proserpine, Collinsville) and studying certain science and environmental science majors are encouraged to [apply here](#).

JCU Vice Chancellor Professor Simon Biggs said JCU was delighted to partner with NQXT Pty Ltd and help provide an avenue for students in Central Queensland to continue their education at the highest level.

“This scholarship will be awarded to students studying Environmental Science, Marine Science, Geology, Data Science, and related fields - who have both strong academic potential and a desire to give back to their community,” he said.

“Scholarship recipients will receive financial assistance to alleviate the costs of studying full-time, as well as undertake a work placement at the North Queensland Export Terminal to gain hands-on industry exposure, mentorship, and invaluable networking opportunities.”

When awarding the scholarship, JCU and NQXT Pty Ltd will assess applicants on academic performance, community involvement, and extracurricular achievements, as well as their commitment to live and work in Central Queensland upon graduation.

The North Queensland Export Terminal is a multi-user export cargo handling facility located within the Port of Abbot Point, about 25 kilometres north of the town of Bowen on Queensland’s east coast.

The Terminal has a nameplate capacity of 50 million tonnes per annum and provides export access for customers with high quality thermal or metallurgical coal mines in the Bowen and Galilee basins.

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NQXT Pty Ltd General Manager Mark Smith said the business was excited that the first scholarship would be awarded early next year.

“We are pleased to be able to provide this terrific opportunity for a young person from our local community to take a first step towards their future career,” Mr Smith said.

“The North Queensland Export Terminal plays a vital role in supporting local, state, and national economies by enabling the export of Queensland’s high quality thermal and metallurgical coal to the world, which generates the royalties that are a mainstay of the Queensland budget.

“The jobs and contracts required to operate and maintain the Terminal support hundreds of local families as well as the local coffee shops and restaurants, car dealerships and other services businesses where those workers spend their wage.

“Global demand for thermal coal which provides affordable, reliable energy and a path out of poverty for millions around the world, and for the metallurgical coal needed to make steel for infrastructure like bridges and buildings and new energy infrastructure like wind turbines, continues to grow as populations increase, more people enter the middle classes, and the use of energy-intensive technologies like AI develops.

“We have a responsibility to our stakeholders to invest in the technology, systems, and infrastructure required to meet that demand, as well as any new export commodities that may emerge, and this scholarship is an important part of making sure we have the pipeline of local talent to support operations well into the future.”

Applications for the NQXT Whitsunday Futures Education Grant are now open. To apply, [click here](#). Applications close January 16, 2026.

ENDS

Editors’ notes

Photo captions:

- A ship sailing in to berth at the North Queensland Export Terminal to load high quality Queensland coal.
- Students at James Cook University’s Townsville campus.

[About the North Queensland Export Terminal](#)

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- The North Queensland Export Terminal is a multi-user export cargo handling facility within the Port of Abbot Point, about 25 kilometres north of the town of Bowen on Queensland's east coast. The Terminal has been operating safely, responsibly, and efficiently since 1984.
- The Terminal has a nameplate capacity of 50 million tonnes per annum and provides export access for customers with high quality thermal or metallurgical coal mines in the Bowen and Galilee basins.
- More than 30 million tonnes of Queensland thermal and metallurgical coal are exported through the Terminal each year. This high-quality Queensland coal helps to provide the world with access to affordable and reliable energy.
- The Terminal plays an important role in supporting the Queensland and Australian economies through the service it provides to Australia's resources sector. The local jobs and contracts required to operate and maintain the facility support Bowen and the Whitsunday region.
- The Terminal is owned by the Queensland Government's North Queensland Bulk Ports and is leased by NQXT Pty Ltd under a 99-year leasehold that was acquired in June 2011.
- NQXT Pty Ltd is proud to be part of the Bravus group of companies operating in regional Queensland.

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