

Signature Homes Scholarship

Closing Date: Sunday 12th July

ABOUT SIGNATURE HOMES

Signature Homes is one of Aotearoa New Zealand's largest and most established residential building groups, operating nationally across residential, commercial and construction sectors.

Founded in 1983, Signature Homes has been building homes for over 40 years, with a long-standing presence across the New Zealand market. The business is recognised for its focus on build certainty, consumer protection and service excellence, supported by experienced leadership and robust operational systems designed for longevity.

Signature Homes operates through a nationwide network, delivering homes across urban, regional and lifestyle markets throughout New Zealand.

PURPOSE OF SCHOLARSHIP

The purpose of the Signature Homes Scholarship is to provide financial support to high achieving AUT students who demonstrate innovative thinking, design excellence, and a strong commitment to shaping the future of residential housing in Aotearoa New Zealand. The scholarship aims to enable recipients to undertake postgraduate study toward professional architectural accreditation, while encouraging design responses that address affordability, sustainability, wellbeing, and the lived realities of New Zealanders.

TENURE

The Scholarship is tenable for one academic year and is a contribution towards tuition fees for students enrolled in the Master of Architecture (Professional) in the Huri Te Ao School of Future Environments.

VALUE OF SCHOLARSHIP

- There are two scholarships available.
- The value for each is
 - \$5,000 per year for up to 2 years for a student entering the Master of Architecture – Professional (MArch prof) (i.e. final year Bachelor of Architecture & Future Environments student at time of application), or

- \$10,000 for a student entering the final year of the Master of Architecture - Professional (i.e. currently in first year of Master of Architecture – Professional at time of application).

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- Applicants must be domestic students (NZ Citizen, NZ Permanent Resident).
- Applicants must be enrolled full-time, or part-time in the third-year of the Bachelor of Architecture and Future Environments or first year of the Master of Architecture - Professional programmes.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Applicants must apply through the on-line AUT scholarship application portal and will be required to upload the following:

Personal Statement

- A personal statement (up to 500 words) should be provided, detailing the applicant's motivation for applying for the scholarship, the potential impact it would have on their academic development, their aspirations following the completion of their degree.

Design Work

- Applicants must submit a piece of original design work responding to the competition brief "*The Future of Home*" in the following format:
 - A single-page design proposal at A1 size (landscape or portrait) in PDF format.
 - A link to a google document with design .ifc file

The submission should demonstrate the applicant's ability to propose a future-focused housing concept that responds to contemporary New Zealand housing challenges. Design work should reflect consideration of relevant themes, which may include (but are not limited to):

- Affordability and attainability
- Sustainability and energy performance
- Healthy home principles (e.g. natural light, ventilation, indoor air quality)
- Integration of innovative or smart technologies
- The New Zealand lifestyle, context, and built environment

Submissions should communicate visionary yet buildable thinking, and demonstrate the applicant's design capability, creativity, and understanding of residential architecture.

REFERENCE

Applicants must provide the name of one character referee to support their application. The nominated referee will receive an email from the application portal with instructions for submitting their reference.

CONDITIONS OF SELECTION

Once applicant eligibility has been confirmed, the scholarships office will provide the list of eligible candidates to the selection panel for consideration and recipient selection.

Selection of Scholarship recipients will be based on participation in, and performance within, the *Signature Homes – “The Future of Home”* design competition, as outlined in the Competition Brief and Competition Format.

In determining the recipients, consideration will include:

- The quality, originality, and relevance of the submitted design concept in response to the competition brief
- The extent to which the design demonstrates innovation while remaining realistic and buildable
- Alignment with themes of affordability, sustainability, healthy homes, technology integration, and the New Zealand context
- Completion of all competition requirements within the specified timeframes
- The outcome of the public voting process, which will determine the final two scholarship recipients.
- Only applicants who fully participate in the competition process, including design development, rendering collaboration, and public presentation phases, will be eligible for selection.

Timing

- Design Proposal & Application Submission deadline: Sunday, 12th July 2026 - process mid-semester break
- Selection of Finalists: Friday, 17th July 2026
- Rendering process: 4-week period finishing no later than Friday 18th September 2026s
- Competition launch and voting: 2-week period starting from Monday, 12th October 2026
- Winner announced announcement: late Friday, 6th November 2026

CONDITIONS OF ACCEPTANCE

Recipients of the Scholarship are required to participate fully in the *Signature Homes – “The Future of Home”* design competition and to comply with the Competition Brief and Competition Format as provided by Signature Homes.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- Actively engaging in the design process during the specified mid-semester break period
- Participating in collaboration with Signature Homes and the appointed visualisation partner throughout the rendering and briefing process
- Agreeing to the public showcase of their design work, including publication on Signature Homes’ digital platforms
- Acknowledging that final scholarship recipients will be determined through a public voting process, in accordance with the competition format and timeline

Failure to engage with the competition requirements or agreed timelines may result in withdrawal of the scholarship offer.

Deferral, Suspension and Appeals

- Except in cases where there are compelling medical reasons or adverse personal circumstances beyond a student’s control, the uptake of scholarships cannot be deferred.
- Recipients must be enrolled continuously in their programme of study. Suspensions or Leave of Absence for students who have already commenced their degree will not usually be approved unless there are compelling medical or personal circumstances beyond the student’s control.
- Deferral and suspension requests must be made in writing to the Scholarships Office.
- Students may appeal if there are compelling reasons for not meeting these requirements. Such an appeal must be supported by the student’s student advisor and Faculty and will be considered on one occasion only during the scholarship tenure. Should a student who fails a paper successfully appeal to have the scholarship reinstated the scholarship will not pay for a resit of failed paper(s).