

Dr Clara Bookless Scholarship



Dr Clara Bookless was instrumental in bringing Professor Anthony Bateman and MBT to Australia. As a member of the SA Branch AAIMH Committee organising the 2008 AAIMH Conference she suggested that we invite Professor Anthony Bateman as a keynote speaker to the conference, following meeting him and Professor Peter Fonagy at some MBT training she had recently completed in Frankfurt, Germany. Thus began AAIMH's commitment to providing MBT training. The first MBT training organised by AAIMH was in 2010, following the interest generated by Professor Bateman's keynote address and post conference workshop. Many of us were introduced to MBT through the trainings that were organized in Adelaide from 2010 onwards, which Clara played an instrumental role in. Clara also established a supervision group with Professor Bateman, a group which subsequently became MBTAG (MBT Australia Group). Clara trained as a Psychologist and worked for many years as a researcher particularly in the trauma field. She had a passion for working with the mother/infant dyad and worked for many years with what is now known as CaFHS, as a Psychologist doing mother infant therapy, and had a particular interest in working with mothers with a Borderline Personality Structure. Clara also a trained as psychoanalyst

Sadly Clara died in 2022, following a short illness.

AAIMH (SA Branch) is proud to acknowledge Clara's contribution to the Infant Mental Health field and particularly the development of MBT in Australia. In honour of her memory and contribution to AAIMH (SA Branch) and the development of MBT in Australia AAIMH have established The Clara Bookless Scholarship for MBT Training to honour her memory and contribution.

Scholarship Guidelines

1. The Committee's decision is final, and no correspondence will be entered into.
2. Applicants must be members of AAIMH SA or apply to become members at the time of the grant application.
3. Only individuals may apply – not organisations.
4. Individuals may not apply on behalf of a second applicant
5. Any applicant sitting on the AAIMH SA Committee at the time will:
 - declare a Conflict of Interest and absent themselves from decision making
 - be subject to the same criteria and assessment of their application.
6. Payment for lost hours of work/employment time will not be made as part of the scholarship.
7. The scholarship is intended to enable an AAIMH SA member to attend MBT based training.
8. Up to \$2000 has been allocated for this scholarship
9. Conference registration fee, airfares and accommodation may be included.
10. Have not received a grant from AAIMH SA in the previous one year. Priority will be given to eligible applications who have not received support in the previous two years.
11. This scholarship applies to the Lighthouse Training workshop with Gerry Byrnes & Rory Bolton Monday 23rd November to Thursday 26th November 2026

Suitable Applicants

Suitable applicants are those who fulfil all the following requirements. They:

- are members of AAIMH SA or become members of AAIMH SA.
- are working with infants (0-3 years) or studying or researching a topic directly related to infants.
- can demonstrate they comply with the aims of AAIMH www.aimh.org.au.
- can show how they will take their new learning back to their own, or other workplaces to enhance infant mental health.
- must demonstrate an inability to receive sufficient funding from any other source e.g. from employer.
- are not intending to use the grant in the first instance, for personal financial gain.

Conditions of Accepting the Grant

In accepting the grant, successful applicants agree to:

1. Provide a written report or oral presentation to AAIMH SA within two months of completion of the event.
2. Provide receipts and financial accounting for the way the grant was spent.
3. Show evidence of commitment to attend the seminar

Selection Criteria

Preference will be given to applicants:

1. Who are working with disadvantaged groups (including indigenous groups) or in disadvantaged regions.
2. Who are individuals from disadvantaged groups.

AND

3. Explain (in less than 300 words)
 - Why the member is applying
 - How the individual's new learning will be used and transferred back to their own, or other workplaces, to enhance infant mental health

APPLICATIONS OPEN MONDAY 21st SEPTEMBER 2026

APPLICATIONS CLOSE FRIDAY 16th OCTOBER 2026

Send your applications to: sapresident@aimh.org.au

Email Subject - "APPLICATION – CLARA BOOKLESS SCHOLARSHIP"