

30<sup>th</sup> of August, 2020

Dr Sandra Gardam

Via email: sandra.gardam@sta.org.au

Dear Dr Gardam,

I am delighted to submit my application for the current round of Superstars of STEM. Due to financial hardship, I would like to request that my application be manually registered and I would like to apply for one of the scholarship places as I meet the program selection criteria and prerequisites. I fulfil *Part A* as I can demonstrate an inability to pay. I am currently finalising my doctorate and I was initially on a full PhD scholarship. Through no fault of my own, I had to change my research topic mid-way through my candidature. The University of Western Australia (UWA) restarted my candidature but not my scholarship, which has since run out. Up until last semester I was teaching at UWA, however, due to limited funding and courses being moved online due to the pandemic, permanent academics are now teaching the units. I also fulfil the requirements of *Part B* as I reside in a designated regional area.

Even though I have not completed my PhD, I am eligible to apply as I have an undergraduate STEM degree and at least 4 years experience working in environmental science. I have a Bachelor of Applied Science majoring in Ecology (awarded with Distinction), a Bachelor of Arts (majoring in Mandarin Chinese) and a Bachelor of Science (awarded with First Class Honours) in the biomechanics of sharks and ray vertebrae. I also have experience working as an environmental science and aquatic ecologist for both the government and private sector.

Aside from this, I speak Mandarin Chinese and regularly give public presentations in person and online. I have also authored a children's book on marine conservation, an article in *The Conversation* and presented my work at *The World Fringe Festival 2020*. For my work I was awarded the 2020 prize internship with *The Naked Scientists* and *Fresh Science 2019*. In a voluntary capacity, I am the Secretary and Student Representative for the Australian Marine Sciences Association (AMSA WA; [www.amsa.asn.au](http://www.amsa.asn.au)), and a member of Surf Life Saving Australia and the State Emergency Service.

I can provide official verification (including documentation from UWA) for all of the above upon request. I am happy to provide any further information required and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

All the best

Charlotte



Charlotte Birkmanis 佳兰  
BApSc(Dist), BAarts, BSc(Hons I)