

Georgina Sweet, born in 1875 in the Melbourne suburb of Brunswick, became the third woman to obtain a Bachelor of Science degree from Melbourne University (1896). She went on to complete an MSc (1898) and a PhD (1904) while working as a teacher and holding some minor university appointments. Her PhD study of the Australian marsupial mole finally earned her a University lectureship, held jointly at Melbourne University's Biology Department and Veterinary School. In the latter she developed the research work on parasitology that made her one of Australia's foremost scientists. She was awarded the David Syme Medal for her work on a parasite that caused nodules in beef cattle, spoiling the meat for export. In 1916 she became the first female acting Professor (of Biology) in an Australian university, and in 1920 she became the first female Associate Professor (in the Department of Zoology), but poor health led to her retirement in 1926.

In retirement she continued and expanded an active involvement in several women's organizations: a foundation member and first President of the Victorian Women Graduates' Association in 1920, she was Australian President of the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), 1927-1934; Vice-President of the world YWCA from 1934; and first President of the Pan-Pacific Women's Association, 1930. In 1935 she was appointed OBE (Officer of The Order of the British Empire (Civil) for services to women's movements.

After her death on 1 January 1946 members of the Australian Federation of University Women (now Australian Graduate Women) established the Georgina Sweet Scholarship as a memorial to her, as did the University of Melbourne.

In 2010, as part of its [Laureate Professorship programme](#), the Australian Government introduced the *Georgina Sweet Australian Laureate Fellowship*. The award is made to a highly ranked female candidate from the science and technology disciplines.