

PhD Scholarship: First Nations water rights, management, and engineering

Project description:

Indigenous water management and engineering is complex and has history of over 40,000 years. Drawing on archival research and comparative analysis of water catchment restoration projects internationally, this project will examine the socio-cultural and environmental complexity and benefits of First Nations water rights, management and stewardship, and engineering systems. This research will also include identification of traditional and contemporary water management and engineering practices approved by Elders in a significant river restoration project. The student would be unconstrained by topic and could explore any significant line of inquiry in consultation with their supervisors.



The focus of the PhD will be developed and refined through a co-design approach between the members of the research team. This team includes the PhD candidate, first nations Elders, CSU researchers, industry partners such as Oz Fish, and First Nation peoples who are experts in this field.

This PhD project might follow these three phases: 1) identifying the social-cultural benefits of water catchment restoration projects nationally and internationally. 2) Archival and desk-top research. 3) Consideration of how these approaches and this knowledge can inform restoration, water justice and rights discussions, and cultural flow projects in the Murray Darling Basin. Archival research could take any number of forms and the student has significant freedom to explore options.

For this PhD project we are seeking a candidate to be part of a multi-disciplinary team. The candidate must possess the ability to research and deploy novel interdisciplinary techniques, including prioritisation of Indigenous and Indigenist theories and methodologies, and cultural responsiveness. The right candidate will be supported in developing their understanding and project design. If required, the successful applicant will have access to state-of-the-art lab equipment, research laboratories and facilities through CSU.

Under the mentorship of highly experienced and inter/transdisciplinary researchers, and the candidate will be supported in their continued training as a researcher. The candidate will gain exposure to researchers and employment opportunities across the academic, public, and private sector, both in Australia and internationally. There are significant opportunities to connect with future employers as part of this work.

Place of Employment and Place of Work:

The candidate will be enrolled in the Gulbali Institute. The primary place of employment would be the Dubbo Campus of Charles Sturt University. Fieldwork may be required.

Salary:

Stipend range: \$28,854-35,000 (tax free) per year over 3 years with generous support in the form of operational expenses and technical staff assistance from government research facilities. There will be the potential to supplement the stipend by undertaking a limited amount of casual work on related projects to diversify skills, in accordance with the university's employment rules for scholarship students.

Selection Criteria:

All scholarship applications are assessed against [three common selection criteria](#):

Previous Academic Performance: (70% of the assessment). This assessment considers the nature and level of the applicant's highest, relevant qualification and grade point average.

Research and/or Professional Experience: Evidence of an applicant's research achievements and relevant professional experience (15% of the assessment). This includes such aspects as peer-reviewed research outputs, high esteem academic awards and prizes, relevant research or professional experience.

Research Alignment and Supervisor Capacity at CSU: Alignment with strategic research priorities and strengths contributes up to around 15% of the assessment. This includes the strength of alignment with the [CSU Research Narrative](#); the supervisory capacity and the strength of the research environment within the field of research; and the expected impact and end user engagement of the proposed research.

Commencement:

Starting date will be Session 2 2022 or Session 1 2023.

Expressing an interest:

Applicants will need to [apply for enrolment](#) and also send an expression interest (including a full CV and a brief cover letter addressing the selection criteria of no more than two pages) outlining your experience and research interests to Dr Lee Baumgartner, Charles Sturt University (lbaumgartner@csu.edu.au; 0427 070 056) and/or Dr Peta Jeffries, Charles Sturt University (pjeffries@csu.edu.au).

Closing Date:

Expressions of interest will remain open until a candidate has been selected. Please submit a brief application including enrolment application, CV and expression of interest as per the details above.

Citizenship:

The opportunity is **only** open to Australian citizens, Australian residents or those eligible to study in Australia under the [commonwealth research training program](#). Please check your availability to apply prior to submitting an application.