PhD SCHOLARSHIP IN HUMAN GEOGRAPHY

Applications close: 29 February 2016

ABOUT THE SCHOLARSHIP

A Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) scholarship in Human Geography is available at the Australian Centre for Cultural Environmental Research (AUSCCER).

The scholarship is offered by the University of Wollongong (UOW) in association with an Australian Research Council (ARC) funded project: ‘Bushfires, Faith and Community Cohesion: Building a Resilient Australia’. ARC DECRA Fellow Dr Christine Eriksen will supervise the successful candidate.

The bushfire emergency in Australia has social, ethical and political, as well as biophysical causes. Hidden in embedded vulnerability, social norms and institutional structures, these causes are critical obstacles to building resilient communities. This project aims to identify key ways to heighten resilience by examining how faith (sacred and secular) affects the ability of individuals and communities to prepare for, respond to and recover from bushfires. The research critically examines evidence of bushfire vulnerability, resilience and adaptation strategies driven by, retained in, or promoted through faith and ethics. By critically examining how faith affects risk engagement, this project accentuates the choices we face as individuals and as a nation in terms of mitigating and adapting to extreme events and a changing climate.

Potential research topics include:

- Examining evidence of bushfire vulnerability, resilience and adaptation strategies:
  - driven by ethics ingrained in different belief systems
  - retained in myths, scriptures, oral and written narratives
  - lowering or heightening community cohesion and carrying capacity
- Exploring the potential for engaging individuals and communities with bushfires safety through faith groups
- Disasters, faith and socio-cultural wellbeing: pre- and post-disaster
- The politics of faith and religion in a secular disaster management context
- NB: proposed case studies must focus on Australia

The successful candidate will assist with the ARC DECRA research and will be given the opportunity and support to focus on a specific topic for in-depth study.

The successful candidate will be provided with research supervision and will have access to Higher Degree Research training and support programs, state of the art equipment and infrastructure, and extensive library collections and facilities.

AUSCCER is part of the School of Geography and Sustainable Communities in the Faculty of Social Sciences [http://socialsciences.uow.edu.au/dgsc/index.html]. It offers a vibrant, interdisciplinary research environment. Co-supervision possibilities are available both within the research group and across different faculties.
STIPEND

The scholarship is for three and a half (3.5) years full-time with a stipend of $AUD 26,288 per annum (tax free and indexed annually).

ELIGIBILITY

Applications are invited for commencement in early to mid 2016.

Applicants should have a record of excellent academic performance and have attained one of the following qualifications: Bachelors degree with First Class Honours, Masters degree by Research or equivalent results. Additional relevant research experience and/or peer-reviewed research activity, awards and/or publications will be regarded favourably. Candidates with lived experience of disaster mitigation, management and recovery are particularly encouraged to apply.

Both domestic and international prospective students are encouraged to apply.

APPLICATION

For further information about the project and the PhD scholarships, please contact Dr Christine Eriksen at ceriksen@uow.edu.au. Applicants are strongly advised to discuss the application and proposed research project by email with Dr Eriksen before submitting an application.

Applicants should submit:

1. A cover letter detailing relevant experience and proposed research project, a CV and an academic transcript to Dr Christine Eriksen at ceriksen@uow.edu.au
2. A full Higher Degree Research (HDR) admission application including a UOW Scholarship application via https://www.uow.edu.au/apply/index.html. The application should include an academic transcript, copy of passport or birth certificate and an outline of your proposed research project. In the Scholarship Details Section applicants should select ‘Other UOW Funded Scholarship’ and include the name of the ARC DECRA Fellow (Dr Christine Eriksen) and the grant ID number (DE150100242).

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