PhD Scholarship: Seagrass Restoration: Development of methods for the recovery of intertidal seagrass meadows.

Deakin University, School of Life and Environmental Sciences, Australia
Industry partner: Melbourne Water
Supervisors: Craig Sherman, Rhys Coleman, Perran Cook, Emma Jackson and Peter Macreadie.

Closing date for expression of interest: 15 April 2018

Overview: As key ecosystem engineers, seagrasses provide a range of important ecosystem services including nutrient cycling, carbon sequestration, coastal protection, and providing a structurally complex habitat to a variety of vertebrate and invertebrate species. Given these important roles, there has been increasing concern about the rapid declines seagrass populations are now experiencing globally.

In Western Port (South Eastern Australia), seagrass represents a major marine habitat, however, there has been significant loss of meadows over the last 40-50 years. Efforts to improve water quality and sediment loads in the 1990s and 2000s has seen improvements in the overall condition and extent of seagrass meadows in some parts of the bay, however, natural recovery has been slow and some areas have shown no sign of recovery despite improved water quality. Potential reasons for the lack of recovery in these areas may be the absence of seed banks or propagule supply, or that the local environmental conditions are no longer suitable (e.g. there may have been a change in sedimentary conditions). Rehabilitation and restoration of seagrass through seeds and/or transplant units, provides a mechanism to facilitate reestablishment in areas where natural recovery has not occurred and assist more rapid recovery in areas where natural recovery is occurring slowly.

Proposed research project: This project will develop restoration and recovery methodology for intertidal seagrass meadows in Western Port. The program will use a combination of field based trials and mesocosm experiments based at the Queenscliff marine research station to develop the appropriate methodologies needed for seagrass habitat restoration in Western Port.

The candidate should have a strong academic background in ecological theory, GIS and experience in field ecology. They will need to demonstrate strong writing and quantitative analysis skills and be highly self-motivated. The project is funded for three years; the successful student will be competitive for, and encouraged to apply for, additional internal and external funding sources.

Interested applicants are asked to complete and send the HDR expression of interest form to Craig Sherman (craig.sherman@deakin.edu.au) by 15 April. Successful candidates will then be invited to proceed with a formal application.
EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FORM
To undertake a Higher Degree by Research (PhD) in the Faculty of Science, Engineering and the Built Environment, School of Life and Environmental Sciences, for the project: “Seagrass Restoration: Development of methods for the recovery of intertidal seagrass meadows” funded by Melbourne Water and Deakin University.

Thank you for your interest in undertaking a research degree at Deakin University. Before proceeding, we need some information from you to enable us to adequately evaluate your background, academic standing and research interests.

Submission of this form and accompanying documentation is not a formal application for a Research Degree at Deakin.

It is standard practice for the Faculty to check all proposals for plagiarism before they are processed.

CLOSING DATE FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST: 15 APRIL 2018

IMPORTANT
An ‘Invitation to Apply’ will be required from the Faculty to progress to the formal application stage. The Invitation to Apply does not guarantee an offer of admission and will be subject to any conditions stipulated on the Invitation.

Please place ‘X’ in the appropriate box. If you wish to write (not type), please use CAPITAL LETTERS.

1. PERSONAL DETAILS

Title
- Mr
- Mrs
- Ms
- Dr
- Other

Family Name

Given Name

Email Address

Date of Birth (dd / mm / yy)

Country of Birth

Country of Citizenship or Permanent Resident

Have you previously applied for a course at Deakin University?

- No
- Yes

Deakin ID number

*International students: Please refer to http://www.deakin.edu.au/study-at-deakin/international-students/research-at-deakin for information regarding visa requirements, international student fees and English language proficiency requirements.

P2. ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS

Please list up to three highest qualifications (undergraduate and postgraduate) undertaken within the last ten years.

nb.: Honours is a 4th year of a Bachelor degree

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<th>Qualification eg. BA, BA(hon) or B.ED (hon)</th>
<th>Institution and its location</th>
<th>Year completed</th>
<th>Major or discipline</th>
<th>Language of Instruction</th>
<th>Honours/Final grade (e.g. H2A)</th>
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3. PUBLICATIONS

Please provide a list of publications in peer reviewed journals or books (if any). Please report also Journal’s Impact Factor and article total citations, as determined by Web of Science (Clarivate Analytics).

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<th>Title</th>
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<th>Mark or grade received</th>
<th>Which degree this thesis/dissertation was for.</th>
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4. THESIS / DISSERTATION

Please list at least one Bachelor, Honours and Master’s thesis/dissertation. Please provide the actual mark or grade received for the thesis, only use ‘pass’ if that is the actual grade received.

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Please describe the requirements of the thesis/dissertation including the period of research project, the required length of thesis/dissertation, how it was examined, etc. The more details provided the better we are able to assess your enquiry. If these details are available online, please provide the web address.

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5. **PROJECT AND SCHOLARSHIP:**

This expression of interest to undertake a Higher Degree by Research (PhD) also includes the possibility of receiving a PhD scholarship (stipend) for the duration of the PhD candidature. The project “**Seagrass Restoration: Development of methods for the recovery of intertidal seagrass meadows**” is externally funded (Melbourne Water) and, accordingly, has specific objectives and tasks. The successful candidates will be required to undertake field work in Western Port and surrounding areas and work at Deakin University’s experimental facilities and laboratories in Queenscliff (VIC). The overall objective of the project is to develop restoration and recovery methodology for intertidal seagrass meadows in Western Port. The program will use a combination of field based trials and mesocosm experiments to develop the appropriate methodologies needed for seagrass habitat restoration in Western Port. Full details of the project will be provided to those candidates who will be invited to proceed with a formal application.

In the box below, please provide (maximum 750 words) a statement addressing the question of **why you would be an ideal candidate for this project?**

6. **ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY**

If English is not your first language, you have to meet our English language proficiency requirements. Please check the Faculty English language requirements at [http://www.deakin.edu.au/study-at-deakin/international-students/research-at-deakin](http://www.deakin.edu.au/study-at-deakin/international-students/research-at-deakin)

**NOTE:** IELTS and TOEFL results are valid for two years after the test date.

The Faculty of Arts and Education will also consider the completion of the Deakin University English Language Institute (DUELI) English for Academic Purposes (EAP) program as evidence of your English language proficiency.
I have an IELTS (Academic) overall band score with a minimum of 7.0 with no band less than 6.5, or paper-based TOEFL 600 with no score lower than 5.0 or internet-based TOEFL 94 with no test score below 24.  

I have an IELTS (Academic) overall band score with a minimum of 6.5, and no band less than 6.0, or paper-based TOEFL 577 no score lower than 5, or internet-based TOEFL 94 with no test score below 24.

**OR**

I do not currently meet these requirements but I am willing to undertake an English for Academic Purposes program with DUELI if acceptable to the Faculty.

**OR**

I will be undertaking an English test.  
If yes, please specify the test AND the tentative test date:

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**REASON FOR EXEMPTION** - Please indicate which of the following applies to you.

1. English is my first language; or English is one of the official languages of my country.

2. In the last two years, I completed a course of tertiary studies of at least one years' duration full time at Deakin University or an equivalent tertiary education campus within Australia recognised by Deakin University.

3. In the last five years, I completed a course in a University degree program of at least two years’ duration, full time and conducted entirely in English and involving formal assessment of written work, in a country where English is the official language.

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**7. OTHER RELEVANT DETAILS**

Are there any other details that are relevant to this enquiry, for example, are you currently enrolled in a research degree or have you partially completed a research degree that you are no longer enrolled in; previous relevant work experience (such as restoration/ecological field work experience, or laboratory experience).  

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**THIS IS NOT A FORMAL APPLICATION.**

Please lodge the ‘Expression of Interest’ form and a copy of your C.V. by email to csherman@deakin.edu.au

It is in your interest to provide **ALL** information requested in this form as incomplete information may result in the delay in the processing of your Expression of Interest. You may use the proposal template on the following page as a guide.

**Privacy Statement:**

The information on this form is collected for the primary purpose of assessing whether you are to be provided with an invitation to apply for a research degree at Deakin University. In submitting this information you give your consent for it to be shared with Faculty staff who will make this decision.

You have a right to access personal information that Deakin University holds about you, subject to any exceptions in relevant legislation. If you wish to seek access to your personal information or inquire about the handling of your personal information, please contact the University Privacy Officer via email at privacy@deakin.edu.au.