

POSITION DESCRIPTION

School of Geography
Faculty of Science

Research Assistant (Stream Ecology)

POSITION NO	0041921
CLASSIFICATION	PSC 5
SALARY	\$66,562 - \$76,454 p.a. pro-rata
SUPERANNUATION	Employer contribution of 9.5%
EMPLOYMENT TYPE	Full-time (1.0 FTE), fixed-term position available for 12 months Fixed term contract type: Externally funded contract employment
OTHER BENEFITS	http://about.unimelb.edu.au/careers/working/benefits
CURRENT OCCUPANT	New
HOW TO APPLY	Online applications are preferred. Go to http://about.unimelb.edu.au/careers , select the relevant option ('Current Staff' or 'Prospective Staff'), then find the position by title or number.
CONTACT FOR ENQUIRIES ONLY	Professor Barbara Downes Tel +61 3 8344 9152 Email barbarad@unimelb.edu.au <i>Please do not send your application to this contact</i>

For information about working for the University of Melbourne, visit our websites:

about.unimelb.edu.au/careers
joining.unimelb.edu.au

Position Summary

The Research Assistant (Stream Ecology) is a member of the Freshwater Ecology Research Laboratory in the School of Geography and works in a team under the supervision of Dr William Bovill and Professor Barbara Downes. This position contributes to an ARC Linkage project entitled *Restoring functional links between riparian zones and streams by enhancing structural retention*, which is a collaboration between The University of Melbourne and major partners Melbourne Water and the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning. The project is investigating whether increasing the capacity of river channels to retain detritus can improve river condition and the abundance and diversity of aquatic invertebrates. The appointee provides logistical support for ecological field research, conducting ecological fieldwork and genus-species level identifications of riverine invertebrates.

1. Selection Criteria

1.1 ESSENTIAL

- ▶ Minimum of an Honours degree or equivalent level of work experience in ecology
- ▶ Proven capacity to show initiative and self-motivation with the ability to work independently.
- ▶ Demonstrated understanding of experimental and sampling design principles
- ▶ Demonstrated capacity to organise and carry out ecological fieldwork successfully
- ▶ Ability to work as part of a team
- ▶ Experience in keeping accurate records of data, data entry, and management and maintenance of electronic databases.
- ▶ Strong written and oral communication skills in English

1.2 DESIRABLE

- ▶ Research experience in freshwater systems
- ▶ Experience with taxonomic identification of freshwater invertebrates

2. Special Requirements

- ▶ Drivers license valid in the state of Victoria
- ▶ The ability and willingness to travel for fieldwork throughout different locations in Victoria, for up to several days at a time.

3. Key Responsibilities

- ▶ Organise logistics, such as vehicles, equipment, accommodation, property access and permitting for field trips
- ▶ Attend field trips and conduct fieldwork in rivers to identify riverine invertebrates as required
- ▶ Attend and participate in ARC linkage team meetings , actively contributing to the discussions about fieldwork planning

- ▶ Enumerate and identify sampled invertebrates using a microscope
- ▶ Process other samples (for example, organic matter) in the laboratory
- ▶ Contribute to writing up research papers
- ▶ Maintain field and laboratory data sheets and enter data in database
- ▶ Maintenance and acquisition of field and laboratory equipment and supplies
- ▶ Supervise casual staff in the field, providing on-site training in basic sampling procedures
- ▶ Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) and Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S) responsibilities as outlined in section 6.

4. Job Complexity, Skills, Knowledge

4.1 LEVEL OF SUPERVISION / INDEPENDENCE

The Research Assistant is expected to work closely with the ARC Linkage Research team and other members of the Downes Freshwater Ecology Laboratory. The incumbent will report and work under general direction of Dr William Bovill and Professor Barbara Downes.

4.2 PROBLEM SOLVING AND JUDGEMENT

It is expected that the Research Assistant will be capable of applying sampling procedures with minimal direction. The Research Assistant will be expected to show initiative and to prioritise and allocate time effectively to carry out multiple tasks set by the supervisor.

4.3 PROFESSIONAL AND ORGANISATIONAL KNOWLEDGE

The Research Assistant will be expected to coordinate duties associated with the position (administrative, purchasing, permitting, EHS compliance and field work). The Research Assistant will be expected to develop a working knowledge of Business Service structures within the Faculty of Science.

4.4 RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

The Research Assistant is expected to responsibly manage field and laboratory resources, including maintenance of instruments and general equipment, and procurement of consumables.

4.5 BREADTH OF THE POSITION

The Research Assistant will be expected to develop a working knowledge of all the research procedures including an understanding of the basic principles involved.

5. Other Information

5.1 ORGANISATION UNIT

<http://www.geography.unimelb.edu.au/>

After 54 years in which Geography has been located in other Faculties and Departments of the University, a new School of Geography was formed in 2015 within the Faculty of Science. Located on Bouverie Street in Carlton, the School currently comprises 20 academic staff, and 5 professional staff who include a cartographer, and a laboratory and technical officer. Academic research and teaching specialises in the geographic areas of international development, urbanisation, geomorphology, and biogeography. Environmental change is an overarching theme of interest, and is analysed with reference to both social and natural sciences. Research is supported by palynology, geomorphology, aquatic –ecology, and paleo-climatology laboratories and a full range of field equipment. Geography teaching is undertaken in the undergraduate majors of Geography (offered in the BSc and the BA) and Environmental Geography (offered in the B Environments). Masters teaching is in the MSc (Geography) and in the University-wide Master of Environment. The School has a thriving postgraduate research training program with approximately 65 PhD students currently enrolled.

5.2 BUDGET DIVISION

<http://www.science.unimelb.edu.au>

Science has made important contributions to teaching and research at the University ever since it was founded in 1854. The research degree of DSc was available from the very beginning. The first BSc was conferred in 1889 and the first MSc in 1893. In 1903 the various science departments and schools were formally constituted as a Faculty. The Faculty of Science now has over 40,000 alumni and is one of the largest faculties in the University comprising seven schools: BioSciences, Chemistry, Earth Sciences, Ecosystem and Forest Sciences, Geography, Mathematics and Statistics, and Physics.

The Faculty is custodian of the Bio21 Molecular Science and Biotechnology Institute, Office for Environmental Programs and home to numerous Centres.

The Faculty manages more than \$240 million of income per annum, with a staff base in the order of 220 professional staff, and more than 500 academic staff.

The Faculty of Science offers a range of undergraduate, honours, graduate and research degrees; enrolling over 7,500 undergraduate and graduate students. The Faculty of Science is the custodial Faculty for the BSc (Bachelor of Science) with enrolments of approximately 6,200 students.

The Faculty of Science is a leader in research, contributing approximately \$50 million in HERDC income per annum. The Faculty of Science is highly research focused, performing strongly in the ARC competitive grants schemes, often out-performing the national average. The Faculty of Science is currently growing its competitiveness and standing in the NHMRC space.

The Faculty of Science provides community services and industry partnerships based on a solid foundation of research in the pure and applied sciences. The Faculty has an endowment of approximately \$45 million. The annual income from the endowment supports more than 120 prizes, scholarships and research awards.

5.3 THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE

The University of Melbourne is a leading international university with a tradition of excellence in teaching and research. With outstanding performance in international rankings, Melbourne is at the forefront of higher education in the Asia-Pacific region and the world. The University of Melbourne is consistently ranked among the world's top universities. Further information about our reputation and global ranking is available at www.futurestudents.unimelb.edu.au/explore/about/reputation-rankings

Established in 1853, shortly after the founding of Melbourne, the University is located just a few minutes from the centre of this global city. The main Parkville campus is recognised as the hub of Australia's premier knowledge precinct comprising eight hospitals, many leading research institutes and a wide range of knowledge-based industries.

The University employs people of outstanding calibre and offers a unique environment where staff are valued and rewarded. Further information about working at The University of Melbourne is available at hr.unimelb.edu.au/careers.

5.4 GROWING ESTEEM, THE MELBOURNE CURRICULUM AND RESEARCH AT MELBOURNE: ENSURING EXCELLENCE AND IMPACT TO 2025

- ▶ Growing Esteem describes Melbourne's strategy to achieve its aspiration to be a public-spirited and internationally-engaged institution, highly regarded for making distinctive contributions to society in research and research training, learning and teaching, and engagement. www.growingesteem.unimelb.edu.au
- ▶ The University is at the forefront of Australia's changing higher education system and offers a distinctive model of education known collectively as the Melbourne Curriculum. The new educational model, designed for an outstanding experience for all students, is based on six broad undergraduate programs followed by a graduate professional degree, research higher degree or entry directly into employment. The emphasis on academic breadth as well as disciplinary depth in the new degrees ensures that graduates will have the capacity to succeed in a world where knowledge boundaries are shifting and reforming to create new frontiers and challenges. In moving to the new model, the University is also aligning itself with the best of emerging European and Asian practice and well-established North American traditions.
- ▶ The University's global aspirations seek to make significant contributions to major social, economic and environmental challenges. Accordingly, the University's research strategy *Research at Melbourne: Ensuring Excellence and Impact to 2025* aspires to a significant advancement in the excellence and impact of its research outputs. <http://www.unimelb.edu.au/research/research-strategy.html>

The strategy recognises that as a public-spirited, research-intensive institution of the future, the University must strive to make a tangible impact in Australia and the world, working across disciplinary and sectoral boundaries and building deeper and more substantive engagement with industry, collaborators and partners. While cultivating the fundamental enabling disciplines through investigator-driven research, the University has adopted three grand challenges aspiring to solve some of the most difficult problems facing our world in the next century. These Grand Challenges include:

Understanding our place and purpose – The place and purpose grand challenge centres on understanding all aspects of our national identity, with a focus on Australia's 'place' in the Asia-Pacific region and the world, and on our 'purpose' or mission to improve all dimensions of the human condition through our research.

Fostering health and wellbeing – The health and wellbeing grand challenge focuses on building the scale and breadth of our capabilities in population and global health; on harnessing our contribution to the 'convergence revolution' of biomedical and health research, bringing together the life sciences, engineering and the physical sciences; and on addressing the physical, mental and social aspects of wellbeing by looking beyond the traditional boundaries of biomedicine.

Supporting sustainability and resilience – The sustainability and resilience grand challenge addresses the critical issues of climate change, water and food security, sustainable energy and designing resilient cities and regions. In addition to the technical aspects, this grand challenge considers the physical and social functioning of cities, connecting physical phenomena with

lessons from our past, and the implications of the technical solutions for economies, living patterns and behaviours.

Essential to tackling these challenges, an outstanding faculty, high performing students, wide collaboration including internationally and deep partnerships with external parties form central components of *Research at Melbourne: Ensuring Excellence and Impact to 2025*.

5.5 EQUITY AND DIVERSITY

Another key priority for the University is access and equity. The University of Melbourne is strongly committed to an admissions policy that takes the best students, regardless of financial and other disadvantage. An Access, Equity and Diversity Policy Statement, included in the University Plan, reflects this priority.

The University is committed to equal opportunity in education, employment and welfare for staff and students. Students are selected on merit and staff are selected and promoted on merit.

5.6 GOVERNANCE

The Vice Chancellor is the Chief Executive Officer of the University and responsible to Council for the good management of the University.

Comprehensive information about the University of Melbourne and its governance structure is available at www.unimelb.edu.au.

6. Occupational Health and Safety (OHS)

All staff are required to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of other personnel who may be affected by their conduct.

OHS responsibilities applicable to positions are published at:

<http://safety.unimelb.edu.au/topics/responsibilities/>

These include general staff responsibilities and those additional responsibilities that apply for Managers and Supervisors and other Personnel.