THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY

PhD Scholarship in Coastal Infrastructure for Climate Change Adaptation

The PhD candidate will be based in the School of Civil Engineering at the University of Sydney under the lead supervision of Dr Aaron Opdyke. The candidate will be co-supervised by A/Prof Nader Naderpajouh in the School of Project Management and Dr Justin See from the Sydney Environment Institute. The scholarship is being funded by the John Grill Institute for Project Leadership.

Background and Research Focus

40% of the global population lives along coastlines – communities that are among the most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. The Asia-Pacific region is witnessing substantial investments in coastal infrastructure projects aimed at supporting community resilience to address these escalating risks. This PhD research endeavours to delve deeper into the intricacies of implementing coastal protection measures. It seeks to elucidate how factors in project inception (including goals and stakeholder involvement), organisational strategies (for example public-private partnerships), and design methodologies (such as nature-based solutions) influence disaster risk reduction outcomes of coastal infrastructure adaptation projects. By shedding light on the conditions conducive to deliver resilient infrastructure projects, this research aspires to contribute new insights towards equitable and effective coastal planning and adaptation strategies. The project will focus both regionally to understand lessons across the Asia-Pacific and at local project scales through one or more case studies. Specific country settings of fieldwork investigation and research methods will be mutually agreed between the candidate and supervision team.

Eligibility

Required Qualifications

- Bachelor degree in related field (e.g. civil engineering, project management, geography, disaster management);
- Eagerness to work in a multidisciplinary, multi-cultural team;
- Strong understanding of disaster risk and climate change adaptation concepts;
- Exceptional written and oral communication skills;

Preferred Qualifications

- Masters degree in related field (e.g. civil engineering, project management, geography, disaster management);
- Prior work experience in international settings, with a particular emphasis on the Asia-Pacific region;
- Familiarity with mixed research methods, including quantitative and qualitative.

Fieldwork and International Commitment

The position will require extended periods of international fieldwork. Candidates must be able and willing to travel and live overseas outside Australia (up to a maximum 12 months over the PhD). This may involve work in challenging contexts and lower income country settings.

The preferred start date is 1 July 2024 (Research Period 3) or 1 October 2024 (Research Period 4). This is negotiable and relocation to Sydney will be factored into a mutually agreeable commencement date.

Benefits

A full scholarship is available with a stipend valued at $40,109 annually (2024 rate) up to 3.5 years in addition to full tuition valued at $53,500 per year (indicative only for international students). The candidate will receive extensive support for research training and professional development. The School of Civil Engineering offers $2,500 at the start of candidature for a new computer and/or other technology resource needs and up to $10,500 over a student's candidature to support fieldwork, attendance at conferences, and other research-related expenses.

The candidate will be based in the Humanitarian Frontiers Lab and join a cohort of peers working to tackle global disaster and climate change challenges. The PhD program offers a transdisciplinary training environment to develop technical expertise and research skills.

How to Apply

Interested candidates are invited to submit the following documents via email to Dr. Aaron Opdyke at aaron.opdyke@sydney.edu.au by the application deadline of **1 May 2024**:

- A cover letter detailing your motivation for pursuing a PhD and alignment with the research topic.
- A CV highlighting relevant academic achievements, experience, and skills.
- Copies of academic transcripts for all completed and/or ongoing degrees.

Shortlisted candidates will be notified for interviews shortly after the application deadline. Applications received after the deadline will be considered on a rolling basis until the position is filled.