

POSITION DESCRIPTION



WESTERN SYDNEY
UNIVERSITY



Postdoctoral Research Fellow in Restoring Resilient Groundcover

POSITION DETAILS

Position Title	Postdoctoral Research Fellow in Restoring Resilient Groundcover
Classification	Academic level A
Position Number	NEW
School/Office	Hawkesbury Institute for the Environment
Division	Provost

POSITION PURPOSE

This Postdoctoral Research Fellow (PRF) role is central to the project 'Drought Resilient Innovation - Seeding Economic and Ecological Diversity', which aims to enhance the diversity and functional resilience of native groundcover in grassy woodlands. This is an engaging and technically varied early-career research role that brings together experimental ecology, ecological restoration, drought resilience and applied field research, with the opportunity to translate rigorous scientific findings into practical outcomes for government, industry and land-management partner.

The PRF will design and implement glasshouse and field-based trials under the direction of the project lead to demonstrate and enhance restoration outcomes through site preparation, soil amendments, planting approaches and drought manipulations, with a particular focus on enhancing drought stress resistance and resilience of restored groundcover in grassy woodlands. In addition, the PRF will contribute to monitoring biodiversity outcomes and co-benefits (carbon, ecosystem services), and dissemination and translation of key findings, of restoration trials across the NSW western slopes in collaboration with investigators from partner organisations. Accordingly, the PRF should have strong theoretical and practical experience in restoration ecology, with knowledge of native vegetation and soil physico-chemical and biological attributes in grassy woodlands as well as interventions suitable for restoration.

The PRF will work closely with the project team, principally at Western Sydney University, to meet project milestones. The PRF will further contribute to the supervision and mentoring of Higher Degree Research students where appropriate and approved.

KEY ACCOUNTABILITIES

1. Contribute to the design and delivery of glasshouse and field-based trials testing the efficacy of current and novel restoration interventions to enhance restoration outcomes
2. Inform the design, and contribute to, the implementation of multi-site restoration trials with project collaborators
3. Contribute to the implementation of monitoring framework to assess cost-benefits of restoration interventions across program projects
4. Analyse and interpret data and prepare peer-reviewed publications, technical reports, presentations and stakeholder-facing research products
5. Communicate project outcomes via presentations, reports and scientific publications
6. Contribute to translation of findings to guide stakeholder uptake of suitable practices
7. Contribute to HDR supervision and mentoring, where appropriate and approved
8. Ensure that research activities are undertaken according to best practice, meet ethics and work health and safety requirements, and that data collecting and management is rigorous

QUALIFICATIONS, EXPERIENCE AND SKILLS

1. A PhD degree or progress towards the formal completion of PhD thesis examination in a relevant field (ecological restoration, soil ecology)
2. Strong theoretical and practical knowledge of plant and soil ecology to guide restoration interventions and assessment of ecological outcomes in grassy woodlands
3. Demonstrated experience with designing, implementing, and managing glasshouse and/or field-based restoration trials
4. Demonstrated capacity to assess aboveground and belowground restoration outcomes
5. Experience with climate change manipulations to test ecosystem resistance and resilience
6. Excellent written and verbal communication skills, with experience in presenting results to diverse audiences and publishing in scientific literature
7. Excellent organisational skills, including the ability to work with multiple collaborators to deliver timely results

KEY RELATIONSHIPS

- This position reports to Professor Uffe N Nielsen, Hawkesbury Institute for the Environment
- **Key internal relationships:**
 - Project collaborators Associate Professor Paul Rymer, Professor Sally Power, and Dr Eleonora Egidi, HIE
 - Academic staff and students involved in restoration and ecosystem research
 - Technical Officers at Hawkesbury Institute
- **Key external relationships:**
 - Project Investigators at Partner Universities
 - Government and Industry stakeholders

CHALLENGES

- *Designing, establishing and managing complex glasshouse, field-based trials, and multi-site restoration projects*
- *Meeting stakeholder needs and desires across a multi-disciplinary and multi-organisation collaborative program*

- *Building and sustaining interdisciplinary collaboration across university, industry and government stakeholders*

UNIVERSITY EXPECTATIONS

The University expects that all employees are aware of, and comply with legislation and Western's policies and procedures relevant to the position, including but not limited to:

- Code of Conduct
- Work Health and Safety and Wellbeing Management System
- Enterprise Agreement or Award
- Anti-discrimination principles, Equal Employment Opportunity and staff and student equity.

Approved by: HR Business Partner

Date: 29 September 2026