

POSITION DESCRIPTION



Applied Research Project Coordinator – Drought Resilient Landscapes

POSITION DETAILS

Position Title	Applied Research Project Coordinator – Drought Resilient Landscapes
Classification	HEW 6
Position Number	7015646
School/Office	HAWKESBURY INSTITUTE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT
Division	Provost

POSITION PURPOSE

The Hawkesbury Institute for the Environment is a research institute within Western Sydney University. The Institute conducts fundamental and applied research in ecology, physiology, genetics and global change biology. Within the past decade, the Institute has become a world-leading centre of excellence in measuring and forecasting vegetation responses to climate change. With a unique suite of world-class research facilities, the Institute collaborates widely with Australian and international institutions to craft scientific research of the highest calibre.

Western Sydney University has secured more than \$5.9 million through the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry's (DAFF) Future Drought Fund for the project 'Seeding diverse native ground cover on farms for drought and climate resilience'. Land-use change and degradation of open grassy woodlands is leading to ecosystem collapse and drought vulnerability in regional communities across NSW. To combat this, the program aims to create resources to deliver diverse, climate-ready seed for revegetation; drought-tolerant ground cover; nature positive biodiversity and soil carbon enhancement; and landscape connections that support ecological, social and cultural values.

This project brings significant co-investment from university, government, Landcare and Aboriginal organisations from across NSW. The 16-strong team (including Charles Sturt University, University of New England, the NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water, NSW Local Land Services, several Landcare and First Nations organisations, and regional farmers) will establish a whole-of-system approach in three regional (southern, central and northern) nodes delivering enduring outcomes designed to transform the capacity for regional communities to cope with future droughts.

The Applied Research Project Coordinator (ARPC) takes the lead role for the management of research activities associated with the delivery of the Future Drought Fund – Resilient Landscapes project. The role provides significant support to investigators through project coordination and implementation of field collections and trials.

The ARPC will liaise with and facilitate the sharing of knowledge among Western Sydney University researchers, funding partners and external stakeholders through managing engagement and communication of the research. The role will include management of project budgets and reporting to the funding body on research activities as required for the purpose of meeting project milestones.

The Applied Research Project Coordinator will also play a key role in practical aspects of the program by contributing to field surveys and restoration experiments; identifying suitable sites and species for collections and trials; organising and contributing to the fieldwork component, including through engagement with local stakeholders; and data collection and management.

KEY ACCOUNTABILITIES

1. Research Coordination
 - Support the lead investigators to coordinate research contributing to program deliverables.
 - Oversee the overall program funds and specific project budgets.
 - Liaise with project partners to maintain positive collaboration and information sharing.
 - Organise project steering and working group meetings
2. Data Collection/Management
 - Organise fieldwork, including coordinating with other participants.
 - Contribute to identifying suitable sites for collections and trials, including through engagement with local stakeholders.
 - Contribute to data collection and management.
3. Reporting
 - Assist lead investigators to meet milestone deliverables through program design and reporting.
 - Contribute towards data dissemination including reports outlining key findings.
 - Contribute towards accurate, up-to-date reports, including regular progress reports as required by the Research Agreement.
4. Stakeholder Engagement
 - Contribute towards stakeholder engagement, particularly involving farmers, land managers and government agencies.
 - Manage the project newsletter, website and social media.

QUALIFICATIONS, EXPERIENCE AND SKILLS

1. An undergraduate degree with experience in a relevant field or an equivalent combination of relevant experience and/or education/training.
2. Experience in coordinating multiple projects simultaneously to meet deadlines, preferably in a research environment.
3. Experience supporting multiple stakeholders, including government, industry and practitioners.
4. Demonstrated effective time management skills.
5. Ability to prepare and disseminate comprehensive reports and briefs and monitor budgets.
6. Ability to develop and deliver engagement, outreach and communications including updating project website.

7. Experience working with Australian native plants, planning and conducting surveys and field trials.
8. Experience with data and sample collection and management.
9. Full Australian driver's licence.

KEY RELATIONSHIPS

This position reports to the Associate Professor – Plant Ecological Genetics.

This position has no supervisory responsibilities.

Success in the role will be dependent on developing and maintaining positive relationships with:

- Institute Director
- Institute Manager
- Supervisor
- Colleagues in the theme, the Institute, and across the University
- Named research project team members, stakeholders and collaborators within WSU and external

CHALLENGES

- Navigating competing priorities across multiple partners with the need to deliver the program milestones.
- Balancing field work commitments while keeping on top of the program activities and reporting needs.
- Supporting the lead investigators with partner and stakeholder engagement through a solid understanding of the program aims and specific objectives.
- Facilitating knowledge sharing among partners and stakeholder to translate project outputs to clear learning for management and policy.

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: Provost

Date: 21/10/2025