



NATIONAL CENTRE OF
IMPLEMENTATION SCIENCE



THE UNIVERSITY OF
NEWCASTLE
AUSTRALIA

4 x PhD Scholarships

Hunter New England Population Health (HNEPH) Research Group

We are seeking expressions of interest (EOI) from four (4) highly motivated candidates interested in pursuing a PhD program in implementation research with the National Centre of Implementation Science (NCOIS) and Hunter New England Population Health Research Group (HNEPHRG).

WHO ARE NCOIS AND HNEPHRG?

The research will be undertaken as part of the National Centre of Implementation Science (NCOIS). NCOIS is a National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) funded Centre for Research Excellence. Comprising of world leading Australian and international researchers, the NCOIS executes science research to improve the implementation of chronic disease prevention programs in community settings and develops initiatives to build research capacity in implementation science, facilitate knowledge translation and collaboration.

HNEPHRG is co-located with Hunter New England Population Health (HNEPH), Australia's largest population health unit to conduct applied chronic disease prevention and health services research. The group collectively supervises 20 PhD students undertaking complex interventions in a range of community and health care settings. HNEPHRG provides students with a dynamic research environment at the intersection of research and health policy and practices and specialises in implementation science and behavioural medicine. The groups includes leading academics including 10 externally funded NHMRC and ARC research fellows. For more information about the group please see the manuscript recently published in the journal of clinical epidemiology.¹

WHAT WOULD THE PHD FOCUS ON?

For more than a decade, through the [Good for Kids. Good for Life program](#) have worked with schools to support their implementation of healthy eating and physical activity policies and programs. These four PhD scholarships will extend on our program of healthy eating and physical activity research within the school based setting. These projects are funded through National Health and Medical Research Centre (NHMRC) Grants and will **investigate how we best increase the scale and or sustainment of nutrition and physical activity programs in schools**. Specifically these projects are;

1. Sustaining schools' implementation of physical activity programs. To read more about this project see <https://bjism.bmj.com/content/56/7/385>
2. Scaling an effective healthy lunch box program (SWAP-IT). To read more about this project see <https://www.jmir.org/2021/6/e25256/>

WHAT ROLE WOULD THE STUDENT HAVE ON THE PROJECT?

As part of NCOIS and HNEPHRG the PhD students will be part of a multi-disciplinary team working alongside leading public health researchers, health psychologists, dietitians, education consultants and health promotion practitioners. As part of this team you will be well supported to develop applied skills in public health research so that by the end of your candidature you have developed core competencies in planning, implementation, evaluation and dissemination of public health programs.

WHAT ARE WE LOOKING FOR IN A POTENTIAL PHD STUDENT?

We encourage applicants with a relevant undergraduate or postgraduate degree with an interest in population health to apply. Relevant degrees may include but are not restricted to; psychology, teaching, dietetics, nursing, physiotherapy, sports science, medicine or other allied health. Whilst graduates who have completed an Honors project is advantageous it is not essential. Students in their final year of study are eligible to apply.

WHAT ARE THE SCHOLARSHIP DETAILS?

The successful applicants will be offered a 3.5 year full-time scholarship at the value of \$28,597 per annum (2021 rate - indexed annually). In addition, and in accordance with the scholarship rules, the successful applicants will also be offered the opportunity to be employed one day per week through the research group on a commensurate HEW scale. For additional information about undertaking a PhD at UoN see <https://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/research/future-students/scholarships>

WHAT ADDITIONAL SUPPORT IS AVAILABLE?

In addition to the support provided via NCOIS and HNEPHRG the student will have access to administration support, statisticians and all IT requirements. Students are provided office space within HNEPHRG. Students will also be supported by the research environment of The University of Newcastle and Hunter Medical Research Institute (HMRI). Students are encouraged join in staff development, meetings and numerous other professional learning opportunities. These projects are all externally funded through the NCOIS or grant funding including NHMRC funding and as such all project costs are covered.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

The position is for a PhD student commencing in second semester 2022. Please refer to the [admission eligibility criteria](#) for minimum academic requirements. In addition the successful applicant must be able to meet the following criteria:

1. Excellent organisational, time management, written and verbal communication skills;
2. The ability to work both independently and in a team environment;
3. Demonstrated ability to write reports or peer-reviewed manuscripts
4. Commitment to Indigenous health

Interested applicants should e-mail a **one page** letter outlining how they meet the above eligibility criteria, a brief (2 page) CV and copies of academic transcript to Nicole Nathan Nicole.Nathan@health.nsw.gov.au and Rachel.Sutherland@health.nsw.gov.au

APPLICATIONS CLOSE

22nd April 2022

REFERENCE

1. Wolfenden L, Yoong SL, Williams CM, Grimshaw J, Durrheim DN, Gillham K, Wiggers J (2017). *Embedding researchers in health service organizations improves research translation and health service performance: the Australian Hunter New England Population Health example*. J Clin Epidemiol. 85:3-11 [http://www.jclinepi.com/article/S0895-4356\(17\)30254-8/abstract](http://www.jclinepi.com/article/S0895-4356(17)30254-8/abstract).