Planning for bushfire protection: maintenance of bushfire protection measures

CENTRE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL RISK MANAGEMENT OF BUSHFIRES
SCHOOL OF EARTH, ATMOSPHERIC AND LIFE SCIENCES
UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG, NSW, AUSTRALIA

Students are invited to apply for a Doctor of Philosophy scholarship in the area of bushfire risk management.

ABOUT THE SCHOLARSHIP

The scholarship is being offered by the Bushfire & Natural Hazards Cooperative Research Centre (www.bnhrc.com.au) and the University of Wollongong. The project will examine the maintenance of Bush Fire Protection Measures incorporated into the design and construction of developments over time.

Despite considerable research into bushfire planning and preparedness, little is known about the preparedness of people who have completed developments to meet planning and building regulatory standards. Specifically, it is not known whether Bush Fire Protection Measures (BFPMs) incorporated into the design and construction of developments are adequately maintained and therefore provide benefits over the longer-term. The potential for poor maintenance to compromise BFMPs is illustrated by the Wye River/Separation Creek bushfires in Victoria, where stored domestic materials contributed to the ignition of a number of houses built to bushfire regulatory standards.

This project will examine the extent to which BFPMs are maintained over time and how this influences risk at household and community scales. The research will focus on Development Application (DA) approved developments on Bush Fire Prone Lands (BFPLs) at specific times since completion (e.g. 3, 5 and 10 years). In partnership with the NSW Rural Fire Service and Centre for Environmental Risk Management of Bushfires, the successful applicant will develop a research project that addresses aims such as:

1. Examine council DAs and required BFPMs for developments in NSW.
2. Interview residents, owners or managers responsible for maintaining BFPMs (focusing on awareness and understanding of BFPMs, actions to maintain or negate BFPMs, etc.).
3. Site assessments to determine the extent to which BFPMs have been maintained (involving on-site assessments and/or analysis of remotely sensed data).

5. Consider recommendations for policy and practice to ensure maintenance of BFPMs over time.

The project would be suitable for a social scientist or scientist with interests in bushfire risk management.

**STIPEND**

The scholarship is for three and a half (3.5) years full-time with a stipend of $AUD 28,092 pa (tax free and indexed annually).

**CONDITIONS FOR APPLICATION**

- Applicants should hold an Honours 1 or high 2A (or equivalent) undergraduate degree in a relevant discipline or the equivalent combination of professional experience and academic qualifications.
- Applicants are expected to commit to full-time study and have the capacity to be based at the Wollongong campus.
- Both domestic and international prospective students are encouraged to apply.

**APPLICATION**

Applicants should send a CV with the names and email addresses for two referees, and a one page statement outlining relevant experience and expertise relevant and a 2-3 page summary of their proposed project.

The application should be attached to an EMAIL sent to Dr Josh Whittaker at wjoshua@uow.edu.au. Please format as a single document (pdf or word doc) that includes cover letter, Curriculum Vitae, copy of academic transcript, a brief research proposal (3 pages maximum) and contact details for 2 referees.

Submit application or for any enquiries email: wjoshua@uow.edu.au

APPLICATIONS CLOSE

Closing Date: Friday 3 April 2020