



## Centre for Aboriginal Studies

## School of Physiotherapy and Exercise Science

### PhD Scholarship available for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student 2018-2020

- This scholarship aims to encourage and support an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student to undertake a PhD research project in the area of health.
- The goal of this scholarship is to strengthen capacity in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health promotion and physical activity research in Western Australia.

### Overview of the Project

*The Ironbark Program: Older Aboriginal People Standing Tall and Strong.* Older Western Australian Aboriginal people have a very limited choice of physical activity programs that are evidence based and offered in a culturally appropriate manner. The Ironbark Program is a culturally safe and appropriate program that showed promising results when piloted among older Aboriginal people in New South Wales. It is a physical activity and health promotion program developed with extensive consultation by, and piloted within, NSW Aboriginal communities

The aim of this research is to evaluate the effect of providing the Ironbark program on the health and well-being of older Aboriginal people in WA, by adapting the evidence based NSW Ironbark program to local conditions, and collaborating with WA Aboriginal communities through the on-going weekly program.

The project is funded by Healthway (WA). The project team is led by Curtin University - Associate Professor Anne-Marie Hill (School of Physiotherapy and Exercise Science) and Professor Marion Kickett (Centre for Aboriginal Studies) .

### Focus of the PhD Position

This project will involve research methods such observations, questionnaires, interviews, and physical assessments to address the overarching aim of enhancing our understanding of how an exercise program can be successfully operated for older Aboriginal people within an Aboriginal community. The successful student will have the opportunity complete their thesis in the area of Exercise for Older Aboriginal People with full support from the project team. The focus of the PhD project will be negotiated with the successful candidate based on their interests, skills/experiences, and goals.

## **Scholarship Requirements**

We are seeking applications from domestic students for this PhD scholarship. To be eligible for this scholarship, applicants must:

- Identify as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent and be accepted as such by the community in which they live or have lived: and
- have completed a Bachelor degree with strong performance, or be regarded by Curtin University as having an equivalent level of attainment; or
- have completed a Master degree
- be enrolled as a full-time student; and
- be enrolled as a domestic student (i.e., reside in Australia for the duration of the award); and
- meet the English language entry requirements at Curtin University

## **Essential Criteria**

To be successful with these scholarships, applicants will have:

1. University qualifications in allied health (e.g. physiotherapy, exercise sports science, occupational therapy) or a related discipline with a health or education component (nursing, physical education teacher, health promotion); and
2. Evidence of high quality verbal (e.g., interacting with patients or clients) and written communication skills (e.g., Honours thesis or reports completed in work setting), as well as excellent interpersonal skills (e.g., working in face to face setting with people in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities); and
3. Willingness to travel in outer Perth metropolitan area (e.g. Bunbury, Two Rocks) for data collection purposes (travel costs will be covered by the grant).

## **Desirable Criteria**

The following criteria are considered advantageous but not essential to be successful with this scholarship:

1. Experience with working with Aboriginal people in a community setting
2. Experience with collecting clinical measurements from older people such as walking speed
3. Evidence of peer-reviewed publications or relevant reports completed as part of employment
4. Work experience within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health organisation settings
5. Demonstrated capacity to work independently and as part of a multidisciplinary team to complete tasks within set timeframes and agreed budgets

### **Value of the Scholarship**

The successful candidate will receive a tax-free stipend of AUD 30,000 per annum for the duration of the award. The duration of the scholarship shall be for 3 years, with a maximum possible extension of up to six months (assessed on a case by case basis). The candidate will also receive support from the research team to apply for additional funding to support their studies.

### **Further Information**

The student will be based in the Centre for Aboriginal Studies with team support from the School of Physiotherapy and Exercise Science at Curtin University. It is expected that the successful candidate will have enrolled into and commenced the PhD program by April 2018. To obtain additional information about the project contact Anne-Marie Hill ([Anne-Marie.Hill@curtin.edu.au](mailto:Anne-Marie.Hill@curtin.edu.au)). Please include "Query re HILL\_project\_scholarships" in the email subject heading.

### **How and When to Apply**

Application packages should include (i) a curriculum vitae, (ii) the details of 2 professional referees (preferably from the past 2 years) and (iii) a statement addressing the essential and desirable selection criteria. Please submit your application by February 28<sup>th</sup> 2018 to Anne-Marie Hill ([Anne-Marie.Hill@curtin.edu.au](mailto:Anne-Marie.Hill@curtin.edu.au)) with "HILL\_project\_scholarships" in the email subject heading.

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