The Hawkesbury Institute for the Environment (HIE) is a research institute within Western Sydney University. HIE has rapidly become a research leader in environmental and ecological research, with a strong reputation for delivering research outcomes of the highest quality. HIE is home to a team of over 50 academic research scientists and more than 60 PhD students, with access to a unique suite of world-class research facilities.

We are looking for two highly motivated and qualified candidates to undertake 3-year research-driven PhD programs commencing in 2019. The scholarships on offer are part of an exciting new project funded by the Australian Research Council that will investigate aboveground and belowground effects of drought, with a particular focus on identifying causes and consequences of shifts in carbon and nutrient cycling. Specifically, the project will assess drought impacts at 20 sites on six continents where rainfall has been manipulated for a minimum of three years. At each site we will assess changes in soil processes, soil biota and vegetation using a combination of tried-and-tested techniques and novel analytical and molecular approaches with great opportunities for developing new skills. More detailed work will take place at three Australian and North American sites. The project will ultimately provide empirical information to inform management practices and policy decisions of natural and managed ecosystems under current and future climatic conditions.

Given the broad scope of the project we encourage applicants with expertise in topics related to biogeochemical cycling, microbial ecology and/or ecosystem ecology to apply. The successful candidates will be part of a collaborative project with common goals, but will be encouraged to develop their own research questions within the existing framework.

Applications are open to Australian and New Zealand citizens or permanent residents of Australia as well as strong international candidates. The position is based at the Hawkesbury campus of Western Sydney University, Richmond, NSW, with opportunities for field work at sites in Australia managed by researchers at WSU and University of Sydney as well as in North America through collaboration with Chief Investigator Prof Osvaldo Sala at Arizona State University.

The application form can be downloaded:
www.westernsydney.edu.au/graduate_research_school/grs/scholarships/current_scholarships