

CDU-NTG PhD Scholarship Opportunity



Understanding methods for improving the retention of workers in the Northern Territory human services non-government organisation (NGO) sector

3 years full-time appointment | \$32,192pa | Casuarina Campus or Alice Springs

About the Opportunity

The Northern Territory has long faced issues in attracting and retaining skilled workers including in the human services sector, which is in a period of significant change. With increasing demand for services, the growing complexity of population needs, the impacts of technological improvements and increased costs associated with new and more complex service provision, recruiting and retaining skilled staff in the Territory (especially in regional and remote areas) continues to be a significant challenge for service providers, especially workers with the necessary cultural knowledge and competencies.

In this research project, the candidate will engage with government and industry sectors to undertake qualitative and quantitative research which enhances the capacity for the sector to improve the retention of human services workers in the NGO sector in the Territory. This will include synthesising literature, policies, programs and research in other jurisdictions globally which may be considered comparable to the Northern Territory. The focus for the primary research can be negotiated with the successful candidate and may include, but is not limited to:

- Surveys and statistical analysis of the drivers for attraction and retention for skilled workers in the sector
- Analysis of existing secondary data including ABS and other sources to provide a baseline profile of the workforce in the NT and nationally
- Qualitative primary research including focus groups, case studies, key informant interviews and other methods to investigate in depth the issues workers and the sector faces in retaining staff.
- A focus on services which are primarily delivered in a remote context to Aboriginal residents to identify issues and provide policy-relevant knowledge for that context

Results will inform policies and programs to attract and retain NGO human service workers in the NT and elsewhere. The candidate will ideally deliver insights on how the findings relate to human services workers in other sectors (for example all levels of government).

Research objectives and research questions will be formulated based on the topic in conjunction with the supervisory panel, government and industry partners. The preferred method for completion of the thesis is via the publication and via the inclusion of academic journal articles (papers), which will comprise a substantive part of the thesis. However, the candidate will not be limited to this process.

Research objectives may include:

- Investigation of drivers for attraction and worker retention in the Northern Territory human services NGO sector.
- Comparison of worker retention with other sectors and compare the sector in the NT with other jurisdictions and the national situation.
- Investigate links between recruitment and attraction methods with retention.
- Grow knowledge about retention-related issues from the transitioning of workers to the Territory from other settings (university, employment in another jurisdiction) with intentions to remain in the NT to uncover non-workplace related drivers affecting retention

The opportunity will include a minimum of 3-month HDR internship within Social Policy, Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet. The details of the internship will depend on the final project plan.

Scholarship Details

The successful applicant will receive a Research Training Program (RTP) Scholarship which will include a \$32,192pa (tax exempt and indexed annually) and a RTP Fee Offset for the tuition fees. For further information on the RTP Scholarship conditions, please visit [Higher Degree by Research Scholarships at CDU](#).

Eligibility

The successful applicant must:

- be an Australian Citizen, an Australian Permanent Resident; or a New Zealand Citizen
- meet the PhD course entry requirements at CDU outlined [here](#).

About You

To be considered for this opportunity you should have:

- be eligible for entry to a PhD – see above for details
- Have excellent writing skills
- Demonstrate flexibility, initiative and an ability to work independently, set goals and achieve them
- Be passionate about making positive change and informing policy to enhance community wellbeing
- Be able to source, analyse and report on primary and secondary data

Priority will be given to First Nations applicants.

How to Apply

To submit an expression of interest please send the following to Associate Professor Andrew Taylor at andrew.taylor@cdu.edu.au

- An up-to-date CV
- Academic transcripts
- A one-page outline of the research you would ideally like to undertake and the proposed methods

For further enquiries please contact Associate Professor Andrew Taylor at andrew.taylor@cdu.edu.au.