

Wet Tropics Management Authority 2019 Student Research Grant Scheme Funding Guidelines

The [Wet Tropics Management Authority](#) has a core responsibility to support research to improve knowledge and management of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. The Wet Tropics Management Authority is currently developing a Strategic Plan 2020 – 2030 that will guide better protection and management of the Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area. The Strategic Plan will outline Strategies and Actions, and it is important that these are evidence based, and underpinned by best available knowledge.

The Student Research Grant Scheme is a key initiative to support targeted environmental, social and cultural research by postgraduate students, to inform delivery of the Wet Tropics Strategic Plan. As such, the focus of the 2019 Student Research Grant scheme is to support research which contributes to Actions particularly under Strategy 1 of the Strategic Plan (please see Appendix 1).

Applications for the 2019 Student Research Grant Scheme are now open.

Well-conceived projects, meeting the priorities of the Wet Tropics Management Authority and demonstrating scientific rigour and innovative research will be viewed favourably.

The Authority has a particular interest in research that protects and conserves the natural and cultural integrity of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area and contributes to our understanding of: 1) threatening processes including climate change and invasive species, 2) threatened species and ecosystems, 3) forest rehabilitation, fire management and Aboriginal land management.

Applicants must also clearly identify how they intend to collaborate or engage in knowledge transfer with Rainforest Aboriginal people with reference to the Protocols as outlined in Appendix 2.

Funding

Funding of up to \$4,000 (ex GST) is available for PhD and Masters research projects. Up to \$1,500 (ex GST) is available for honours projects.

Funding may support costs associated with field work, equipment purchase, field data collection, laboratory research and data analysis. Grants are for a 12-month period.

Conditions

- Applicants must be able to show proof of current enrolment at an Australian university.
- The project must be carried out within Australia.
- All material published—including thesis document, presentations and journal articles—must acknowledge funding and support from the Authority.
- Funds granted are to be spent on the activities outlined in the application.



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- In the event of cancellation of a funded activity, the Authority must be notified in writing and the unspent funds returned.
- A one-page interim report must be provided to the Authority by **Friday 13 December 2019**. The interim report should include significant findings to date.
- A two-page summary report is to be provided to the Authority by **Monday 9 March 2020**. If this is not submitted by the student then it will be the responsibility of the supervisor. This report should include major findings and outcomes, significance of the project to the management of the World Heritage Area and further research suggestions.
- A two-page summary report is to be provided to the relevant Rainforest Aboriginal people groups identified throughout the project by **Monday 9 March 2020**. If this is not submitted by the student then it will be the responsibility of the supervisor. This report should include major findings and outcomes, significance of the project to the management of the World Heritage Area by Rainforest Aboriginal people and further research suggestions.
- The Authority reserves the right to publish the summary report on its website and publications.

Who can apply?

Postgraduate students (Honours, Masters and PhD) currently enrolled at an Australian university are eligible to apply.

Closing date

The closing date for applications is **5.00 pm, Friday 1 March 2019**.

Application forms

The application forms can be downloaded [here](#).

Assessment

Assessment will be undertaken by the Wet Tropics Management Authority Student Research Grant Committee comprising members of the [Wet Tropics Scientific Advisory Committee](#) and Authority staff. Applicants may be asked for additional information to support their application.

Notification

Applicants will be notified of their success or otherwise by **Friday 22 March 2019**.

Enquiries and Resources

For further information regarding funding applications, please contact the Wet Tropics Management Authority by phone (07) 4241 0522 or email wettropics@wtma.qld.gov.au. For further information regarding Rainforest Aboriginal peoples' cultural values pertaining to land management within the Wet Tropics area, please email wettropics@wtma.qld.gov.au with the subject heading 'RAP papers'. Please refer to the following links to help you identify "the right people for the right country":



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<http://terrainnrm.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=b1212875f4cb46b892df07b4bb884447>; <http://www.nntt.gov.au/assistance/Geospatial/Pages/NTV.aspx>.

Objectives of the Student Research Grant Scheme

Research into the environmental, cultural and social value of the Wet Tropics has been fundamental to its management since before its inscription on the UNESCO World Heritage List.

The Authority has a well-established role in supporting, advising, guiding and partnering with researchers and in interpreting and communicating research outcomes. A key goal for the Student Research Grant Scheme is that the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area is used, enjoyed and celebrated as the World's finest learning landscape for tropical rainforest and its sustainable management.

As per the Scientific Research Permitting Protocols, the Wet Tropics Management Authority is prioritising research that appropriately engages with and involves Rainforest Aboriginal people in research activities and outcomes, and establishing a number of co-research projects between researchers and relevant Rainforest Aboriginal people.

Through the Student Research Grant Scheme, the Authority seeks to support continued research, build on the legacy of past research investment and ensure knowledge generated is accessible to rainforest and protected area managers in the Wet Tropics and elsewhere.



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The Wet Tropics World Heritage Plan

The vision of the Wet Tropics Management Authority is: ***“To protect the values of the Wet Tropics through collaboration, culture, knowledge and passion”.***

The draft Wet Tropics World Heritage Plan (the Plan) sets out the strategies that the Wet Tropics Management Authority will implement to continue to meet its obligations to protect and present the World Heritage values of the Area. The Plan outlines 10-year outcomes that the Authority will deliver and outlines the actions that will achieve this. The performance of the Authority will be measured against the Plan and the key performance indicators will be regularly monitored. Though the Plan is a ten-year plan, the actions and strategies will be reviewed after five years to ensure delivery and relevance.

The Plan will be released for public consultation in early 2019, however a number of draft strategies and relevant actions have been identified. These strategies and actions should guide your application:

10 YEAR OUTCOMES				
<p>The Authority will ensure that by 2030:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. World Heritage values of the Wet Tropics are maintained and or enhanced. 2. Rainforest Aboriginal people’s rights, interests, traditions and culture are embedded in World Heritage management and with aspirations for Traditional Owner led management, livelihoods and wellbeing. 3. Management of the Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area is a shared responsibility of an engaged and informed Wet Tropics community. 4. The Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area is recognised as a world class sustainable nature and cultural based tourism destination. 				
PURPOSE AND EFFECT				
<p>The primary purpose of the Plan is to identify, protect, conserve, present, transmit to future generations and, if appropriate, rehabilitate the World Heritage values of the Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area. This is in accordance with Australia’s obligation under the World Heritage Convention. Under section 41 of the <i>Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993</i> (Qld), the Wet Tropics Management Authority must prepare a management plan for the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area.</p>				
STRATEGIES				
<p>1. Climate change and other threats. <i>Respond to the impacts of climate change and priority cross-tenure threats to the World Heritage Area.</i></p>	<p>2. Support Rainforest Aboriginal people. <i>Promote and incorporate the rights, interests and aspirations of Rainforest Aboriginal people in the management of the World Heritage Area.</i></p>	<p>3. Involve the community. <i>Optimise community participation and connection with the World Heritage Area through innovative interpretation, with a focus on education, volunteering and social inclusion.</i></p>	<p>4. World class tourism and recreation. <i>Enhance World Heritage presentation and support opportunities for nature- and culture-based tourism and recreation.</i></p>	<p>5. Minimize impacts. Manage activities that may have an impact on the Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area appropriately through a regulated permit and zoning system.</p>

For the purpose of the Student Research grant, you should address how your project will align and inform at least one of the following proposed key actions to deliver on Strategy 1:

- Action 1.1: Develop a climate change adaptation plan for the World Heritage Area and coordinate delivery of priority actions.
- Action 1.2: Establish a biosecurity taskforce to coordinate strategies and responses to major biosecurity threats across the Wet Tropics.
- Action 1.3: Eradicate yellow crazy ants from the World Heritage Area.
- Action 1.4: Support the recovery of threatened species across the Wet Tropics.



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- Action 1.5: Rehabilitate degraded areas to improve integrity of the World Heritage Area.
- Action 1.6: Support all Wet Tropics land managers to implement appropriate fire regimes in response to a variable and changing climate.

Further, and if appropriate, applicants should consider how research into the above key action areas can also support meeting Strategy 2: Support Rainforest Aboriginal people.



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2019 STUDENT RESEARCH GRANT SCHEME RESEARCHER PROTOCOLS TO IMPROVE ENGAGEMENT AND INVOLVEMENT OF RAINFOREST ABORIGINAL PEOPLE IN SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

Background

This protocol focuses on improving engagement and involvement of Rainforest Aboriginal people in scientific research activities. The emphasis on engaging with relevant Rainforest Aboriginal people provides an important opportunity for relationship-building between research institutions and Rainforest Aboriginal people in the Wet Tropics

Identifying the right people for right country

There are 20 Rainforest Aboriginal tribal groups with rights and interests in the Wet Tropics. Each tribal group has their own traditional laws and customs, which provide the foundation for native title rights and interests over a geographic area; and their own cultural institutions, which provide the administrative processes and organisations (i.e. Prescribed Body Corporates) that Rainforest Aboriginal people operate from.

It is important to talk to the right people for right country; to consider what rights and interests are affected; and how free, prior and informed consent should be applied moving forward. Any documentation should be in plain English.

The following mapping tool can help with finding the right people for right country in the Wet Tropics – (<http://terrainnrm.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=b1212875f4cb46b892df07b4bb884447>).

The Protocol

The Student Research Grant Recipients will be required to consult with Rainforest Aboriginal people in the following way:

1. Contact relevant cultural institution and seek advice on the level of engagement required and any cultural protocols to be followed.
2. Contact the identified Rainforest Aboriginal people and:
 - a. Define and outline clearly the proposed activity, the purpose and nature of the need for engagement.
 - b. Identify the researcher(s) who will be carrying out the activity.
 - c. Provide a description of expected outcomes and benefits.
 - d. Explain comprehensively and mutually agree to methods of information collection, storage, access and presentation.
 - e. Obtain written consent for the use of any culturally sensitive information.
 - f. Ask whether anyone has registered any intellectual cultural property that should be protected and obtain prior, informed consent for its use.
 - g. Discuss and mutually agree on the kind and level of Rainforest Aboriginal participation required during the life of the proposed activity.
 - h. Mutually agree on a process for reporting results of the permitted activity.
 - i. Provide an offer to meet if requested.

- j. Exchange contact details for both Rainforest Aboriginal people and the Research Grant Recipient.
 - k. Advise Rainforest Aboriginal people that they may seek advice from WTMA if required.
3. Be prepared to accept advice from Rainforest Aboriginal people and negotiate alterations to the proposal.
 4. Report to Rainforest Aboriginal people and the cultural institution on the results of the research activity in the manner agreed.

Further Information

The Wet Tropics Management Authority encourages researchers and research institutions associated with the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area to undertake their projects consistently with best practice guidelines:

The Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007) - requires good faith engagement and cooperation with Indigenous peoples through their own representative institutions in order to gain their free prior and informed consent (article 19) before undertaking projects that affect Indigenous peoples rights to land and resources, including exploitation of resources (article 32) (http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS_en.pdf).

The Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2018) – guides institutions and researchers in responsible research practices; and promotes integrity in research and explains what is expected of researchers by the community (<https://nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/publications/australian-code-responsible-conductresearch-2018#block-views-block-file-attachments-content-block-1>).

The Convention on Biological Diversity (1993) (<https://www.cbd.int/intro/>) and the Nagoya Protocol (2010) – creates greater legal certainty and transparency for both providers and users of genetic resources (article 6) by establishing more predictable conditions for access to genetic resources; and helping to ensure benefit-sharing when genetic resources leave the country providing the genetic resources (https://www.iucn.org/sites/dev/files/import/downloads/short_paper_article_6.p df).

The IATSIS Guidelines for Ethical Research in Australian Indigenous Studies (2012) - recognises that Indigenous people are also researchers, and all participants must be regarded as equal partners in a research engagement (<https://aiatsis.gov.au/research/ethical-research/guidelines-ethical-researchaustralian-indigenous-studies>).

National Health and Medical Research Council Guidelines Keeping Research on Track II (2018) - provides guidance on ethical conduct for research involving Indigenous people; and Keeping Research on Track provides a checklist of eight important steps in the research process, for researchers and community/organization involvement (https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/ files_nhmrc/file/publications/indigenous-ethicalguidelines.pdf; https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/ files_nhmrc/file/publications/keepingresearch-on-track.pdf).



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