

## Call for Scholarship applications

3-year Doctoral Scholarship



Joint Centre for Disaster Research,  
Massey University  
New Zealand



### **PhD Research Scholarship: Enhancing disaster communications for collective actions.**

The Joint Centre for Disaster Research (JCDR) is awarding a three-year PhD Scholarship from mid 2020 – 2023 as part of the Resilience in Practice Model (RPM), Resilience to Nature's Challenges (RNC) research programme, Kia manawaroa – Ngā Ākina o Te Ao Tūroa. The scholarship is available to students of all nationalities. The starting date is any time from mid-2020.

**Closing Date for Applications:** 30th April 2020

#### **Subject area:**

Encouraging individuals and communities to prepare for disasters is a key focus of risk communication. While there is a wide body of literature on how our communications can increase individual intentions to act, there is comparatively little research on how to encourage community action, using risk communication to enhance collective efficacy and social capital.

Collective efficacy, or the belief that people can work together to prepare for an event effectively, has been found to be key to motivating people to undertake preparedness actions that can improve their outcomes from disasters. Countries that have higher levels of individualism (such as Aotearoa New Zealand) need to engage more deliberately with others in order to develop, sustain and apply collective efficacy belief. Achieving the latter also requires insight into the development of positive outcome expectancy (i.e. the belief that undertaking a certain action beforehand, will be beneficial in a subsequent disaster, for example in terms of survival or safety), necessary to motivate people's interest in developing and applying collective efficacy in DRR contexts.

It is important to better understand how communication and collaboration can affect collective action, as many of our disaster preparedness and climate change adaptation activities require communities to work together to be the driving force of change. This PhD project will further our understanding of the existing collective action processes in New Zealand communities, and explore how risk communication can influence feelings of positive outcome expectancy that can help build collective efficacy and social capital. Research topics may include citizen science for building

resilience, social norms and their role in protective behaviours, and social media use for risk communication (e.g. crowd-sourced data). Comparative and/or bi-cultural case studies are encouraged. The research will include consideration of the way(s) in which Mātauranga Māori, and other collectivist cultures, influence collective efficacy in a New Zealand context. Through this PhD we aim to gain insight into how risk communications can enhance and encourage community preparedness. It is anticipated that findings from this PhD research can inform communication fields beyond disasters, such as climate change adaptation, environmental action, and health behaviours.

The subject area of this PhD can be adjusted according to the student's qualifications and area of research interest.

### **About the Joint Centre for Disaster Research:**

The JCDR is located within the School of Psychology and is based at the Wellington Campus of Massey University in New Zealand. The Centre undertakes multi-disciplinary applied teaching and research aimed at understanding the impacts of disasters on communities, improving risk management and enhancing community preparedness, response and recovery from various hazard events. You can find out more here <http://disasters.massey.ac.nz/>

### **About Resilience to Nature's Challenges:**

Resilience to Nature's Challenges is a national research programme that is building new knowledge and tools to contribute to greater resilience in our unique rural, urban, coastal and Māori communities to natural hazards including earthquakes/tsunamis, volcanoes, weather and coastal hazards. We work with stakeholders to generate co-created research that communities, organisations and agencies can use to improve New Zealand's natural hazard resilience. You can find out more about us here <https://resiliencechallenge.nz/>. This project sits within the Resilience in Practice Model (RPM), the goal of which is to advance scientific understanding of resilience in New Zealand, identify solutions and deliver resilience outcomes for the nation.

<https://resiliencechallenge.nz/scienceprogrammes/resilience-in-practice/>

### **The scholarship**

This PhD scholarship is available to a suitable student who is accepted into a PhD program at Massey University. The successful scholarship holder will receive NZ\$32,000 per year for up to 3 years. This amount includes the student stipend and the domestic PhD and other enrolment fees:

<https://www.massey.ac.nz/massey/admission/fees/quick-guide/2020-quick-guide.cfm#domestic-postgraduate-fees> – *(international students that reside within NZ for the duration of their Doctoral candidature, and meet the University's eligibility criteria, pay domestic fees).*

### **Eligibility**

The scholarship is available for pursuing a PhD programme. The student is expected to have an Honours or Masters (with a research thesis component) qualification in a relevant discipline (interdisciplinarity is encouraged), such as: geography, social science, communications, earth science, sociology, or engineering.

The successful candidate will be enrolled fulltime at Massey University and reside in New Zealand, for the tenure of the project. Candidates must meet the **PhD eligibility criteria** for enrolling at

Massey University (<http://www.massey.ac.nz/massey/research/higher-research-degrees/how-to-apply-for-the-phd/how-to-apply-for-the-phd.cfm>).

### **Timetable**

- Applications close: 30<sup>th</sup> April 2020
- Selection of candidate by 15<sup>th</sup> June (offer must be accepted within 3 weeks)
- Ideal PhD Studies commencement date: 1 September 2020, however start date can be flexible for the appropriate candidate.

### **Enquiries and Applications:**

Applicants should submit an email to **Heather Gunn (H.M.Gunn@massey.ac.nz)**, with the subject heading of 'Collective Action PhD application'. Please include:

- A curriculum vitae (max. 2 pages)
- Academic transcript
- List of publications (if any)
- Contact details
- One A4 page cover letter outlining your interest in the topic, and why you would like to be considered for this scholarship.

### **Enquiries about the topic can be directed to:**

Emma Hudson-Doyle ([e.e.hudson-doyle@massey.ac.nz](mailto:e.e.hudson-doyle@massey.ac.nz)) or Julia Becker ([j.becker@massey.ac.nz](mailto:j.becker@massey.ac.nz)).