

**Title: PhD opportunity: Ecology of Aboriginal food plants (Dja Dja Wurrung Country)**

**Advertiser: La Trobe University – Centre for Future Landscapes**

**Location: Bundoora (Melbourne) / Bendigo, Victoria**

**Project description**

A doctoral scholarship awarded to an outstanding candidate to undertake research on the role of cultural fire in Aboriginal food production.

This Industry PhD Research Scholarship, established by La Trobe University in partnership with Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation/Djandak Enterprises and Central Victorian Biolinks Alliance (CVBA), will be awarded to a qualified applicant with a background in botany, fire ecology or vegetation science.

Interest in Aboriginal food plants is occurring at the same time as Traditional Owners are reviving cultural fire practices. This project will investigate links between Aboriginal women's cultural fire use, traditional farming practices and the ecology and management of plant species traditionally used for food and fibre, with a particular focus on murnong (yam daises). The candidate will work closely with Dja Dja Wurrung women, CVBA and the Centre for the Study of the Inland at La Trobe University, to combine botanical survey, plant population ecology, glasshouse trials and monitoring of cultural burns at research sites on country to increase knowledge for the on-going protection and management of traditional yam-field grasslands. Research outcomes are expected to inform cultural fire, food growing and biodiversity conservation practices in Victoria.

The PhD candidate will be based at La Trobe University (Melbourne) and will spend time at Djandak Enterprises (Bendigo) with regular field trips to central Victoria.

**To be eligible to apply for this scholarship, applicants must have:**

- a Masters by research degree in a relevant discipline completed within the last ten years assessed at a La Trobe Masters by research standard of 75 or above;

OR

- an Honours degree, Masters by coursework or ungraded Masters by research degree completed within the last ten years where you achieved a weighted average mark of 70 or above across any coursework subjects;

AND any of the following assessed at a La Trobe Masters by research standard of 75 or above:

- a research thesis of approximately 15,000-20,000 words; or
- the degree includes a written research component comprising at least 3/8 of one year; or
- you are the lead author of a peer-reviewed publication or other research published within the last ten years

**Additional essential criteria:**

- Demonstrated experience in field botany, preferably with good species identification skills
- Applicants must be able to work independently as well as in a team, show a high level of initiative and collaboration, and have good communication skills
- Experience working with Aboriginal communities

**Desirable:**

- Well-developed quantitative skills are desirable
- Victorian Aboriginal candidates are encouraged to apply

**Benefits of the scholarship include:**

- a La Trobe Research Scholarship for three and a half years, with a value of \$28,092 per annum, to support your living costs (2020 rate)
- a fee-relief scholarship for up to four years to undertake a PhD at La Trobe University
- a \$12,500 operating grant across the duration of the project
- opportunities to work with La Trobe's outstanding researchers, and have access to our suite of professional development programs.

**How to apply**

- Expression of Interest: send your resume, transcripts, certificates and relevant publications (if any) in one PDF file to [J.Radford@latrobe.edu.au](mailto:J.Radford@latrobe.edu.au) by 17 April 2020. You will be notified of the outcome by email.
- If your expression of interest is successful, you will be invited to an interview with representatives of La Trobe and Djandak Enterprises.
- Selected applicants will be invited to apply for candidature, following the interview. Details on how to apply are available at: <https://www.latrobe.edu.au/study/apply/research/doctor>
- Complete and submit your application by 31 May 2020 for admission into La Trobe's PhD program, indicating your wish to be considered for the PhD Research Scholarship the ecology of Aboriginal food plants.

**Selection process:**

The successful candidate will be made an offer for candidature and scholarship.

You will be advised of an outcome in June 2020.

It is anticipated that the successful applicant will commence candidature in Semester 2 2020.

**Who to contact for further information:**

Dr Jim Radford (Research Centre for Future Landscapes), [J.Radford@latrobe.edu.au](mailto:J.Radford@latrobe.edu.au)