

One Basin CRC PhD Opportunities



Project ID

1B25-E

Date advertised

5 July 2025

University

To be confirmed (from ANU, Flinders U, CSU, U Adelaide, U Melbourne, U Southern Queensland, U Sydney)

Primary supervisor(s)

To be confirmed

Co-supervisors

To be confirmed

Industry Partner(s)

Cotton Research and Development Corporation

The One Basin Cooperative Research Centre (One Basin CRC) offers attractive PhD packages in a broad range of disciplinary fields and across multiple universities in Australia.

Key features

- 3.5-year scholarship, Flexible funding up to AU\$70,000 funding package (allocated between stipend and operating costs)
- Industry embedded through 6-month internship (or part-time equivalent) and opportunities for travel, networking, and engagement with local communities and partner organisations.
- Candidates will spend the majority of their time at One Basin CRC's Loxton, Mildura, Griffith, or Goondiwindi hubs.

Project working title

Building community trust to drive collective action on enhancing water quality in regional communities

Description of the topic of PhD project

Water quality is a critical and sensitive issue for regional communities - intersecting with agricultural productivity, environmental health, and community well-being. However, efforts to address water quality are often hindered by distrust and a lack of safe, constructive spaces for dialogue and engagement. There is a pressing need to create mechanisms that foster trust, enable transparent data sharing, and support proactive, community-led responses to water quality challenges.

Our research will explore how to bring diverse communities together for meaningful discussions around water quality, using a trust-building, proactive, and non-punitive approach that can be adapted to other sensitive landscape issues. The goal is to co-design a framework that integrates technical, social, and policy dimensions, enabling shared understanding and collective action.

Guiding questions for further development:

- What does a "safe" conversation and collective action look like in communities with historical distrust?
- How can we measure the value (economic, social, intrinsic) of individual/organisational collaboration on water quality?
- What role can individuals and organisations play in facilitating trust and action?
- How can we trial and refine proactive initiatives before crises emerge?

Potential components of a research program include:

1. Developing understanding about drivers and barriers to engagement, sharing and trust building, including gauging whether this differs by geography or industry;
2. Developing safe spaces for dialogue & tools for engagement e.g. "Water quality report cards" to initiate conversations, where these indicate general conditions (e.g., "good" or "poor") without singling out individuals or organizations.
3. Data sharing with sensitivity e.g. developing protocols for sharing sensitive data in a way that allows time and space for response before public scrutiny.
4. Pilot program in Southern Queensland which measures the environmental, social and economic value of collaboration & case study integration e.g. Northern Reef catchment or Fitzroy partnership.
5. Scalability and adaptability: modular models that are adaptable to other parts of the catchment or other landscape issues.

Requisite qualifications and experience

Individuals with Masters or honours degrees in the following disciplines, or with equivalent research or work experience, are invited to make an expression of interest: **Social science, Economics, Agricultural science, Environmental science (landscape connectivity).**

Mike Stewardson
One Basin CRC CEO



Apply via:
onebasin.com.au

"Our PhD program will give you the professional skills and networks to accelerate your career in research or practice across the water, agriculture or environmental sectors."

