

INDUSTRY PhD  
**PROGRAM**  
**GUIDELINES**

**END  
FOOD  
WASTE**  
AUSTRALIA



ENDING FOOD WASTE **STARTS WITH ALL OF US.**



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## THE GOAL

The End Food Waste Cooperative Research Centre (EFW CRC) aims to bring together university research excellence and industry know-how in sponsoring current industry professionals to undertake an on-the-job PhD that takes an exploratory and systematic approach to identifying and ending food waste within our major agrifood partners and their supply chains, with a focus on existing or potential Australian Food Pact full members.

## OUR FOCUS

- Current agri-food industry employees, such as food technologists, food production managers, process engineers, and sustainability or food waste managers who want to undertake an integrated on-the-job PhD that directly aligns with their existing role (or a redefined role) with the support of their food industry employer over 3.5 years.

### OR

- New students that a company would co-sponsor for \$100k over 3.5 years (in lieu of a university providing the base scholarship) to map and advance food waste reduction within that company.

## PROGRAM DURATION

- Funding for a full-time student will be a minimum of three years, and up to a **maximum of 3.5 years**, subject to the Participating University's scholarship policies and scholarship agreement with EFW CRC and the Industry Partner. Students who remain enrolled at the Participating University beyond the period of CRC funding may be funded by the enrolling school.
- Part-time candidature is **NOT** on offer.
- All industry PhD's will need to commence by **January 2025** to be complete by June 2028, EFW CRC's completion date.

## FINANCIAL SCHOLARSHIP AND SUPPORT

- **Option 1:** The industry partner provides the ongoing salary support to the existing staff member over 3.5 years in lieu of a stipend. The salary component will be counted as an in-kind contribution to EFW CRC, and may be able to be claimed against the R&D Tax Incentive. EFW CRC will provide \$50,000 over 3.5 years in financial support for the PhD student through the host university to support operating expenses, including travel, and a PhD completion bonus. The employer will also provide study leave so the staff member can be involved in the EFWCRC Future Leaders Program, subject to work requirements, and have dedicated time to complete PhD candidature requirements.
- **Option 2:** The industry partner and the EFW CRC each contribute \$100,000 in financial support for the PhD project, which is to cover the student's base stipend plus top-up (\$43,500 p.a. combined), research support operating expenses, including travel, and a PhD completion bonus.
- Please see **Appendix A and B outlining proposed Scholarship Options 1 and 2** for consideration.



- The PhD student has access to both university research facilities and industry infrastructure and networks to support their research project.
- The PhD student will be included as part of the EFW CRC Future Leaders Program and will be provided with additional professional development opportunities as part of their involvement in the program.

## ROLE OF THE EFW CRC

- Advertise the industry PhD program with existing and potential Australian Food Pact members to attract potential students with the prerequisite academic background - generally an existing Honours or Masters degree - and food waste research interests.
- Clearly communicate the application process, including eligibility criteria, required documents, and deadlines for industry partner and students.
- Review the EOI from the Industry Partner.
- Facilitate the matching process between industry partner, Principal Academic Supervisor from the university partner and student candidates based on their research interests and proposed projects.
- Work with industry partners and university faculty to define research projects that align with the interests and objectives of both the company and the EFW CRC.
- Ensure that the research projects offer meaningful opportunities for student engagement and contribute to advancing knowledge in the field for the EFW CRC and the company.
- Approve each industry research project that a PhD Student undertakes through an Australian Food Pact industry partner.
- Provide a EFW CRC Student Coordinator to support the student experience.
- Provide financial support to the student through either **Option 1 or 2** respectively for a full-time student with a minimum of three years, and up to a maximum of 3.5 years, subject to the Participating University's scholarship policies and scholarship agreement with EFW CRC and Industry Partner.
- Provide a number of Research Higher Degree activities ('EFW CRC RHD Activities'):
  - The Future Leaders Program through CQU and KPMG, which involves a professional and personal development program.
  - EFW CRC Annual Conference/National Food Waste Summits.
- Support the policies of the university at which the PhD student is enrolled: e.g. occupational health and safety requirements, candidature and review requirements, thesis submission requirements and codes of practice regarding the responsibilities of the supervisor and the student.
- Establish clear guidelines regarding ownership and management of intellectual property resulting from the research conducted during the program.
- Establish collaborative governance structures involving representatives from both the university and industry partner to oversee the program and make strategic decisions.
- Negotiate partnership agreements that outline the terms and expectations of the industry partner collaboration. This will include financial commitments, intellectual property rights, research collaboration arrangements, and other relevant terms.
- Monitor the progress of students and evaluate the effectiveness of the projects in reducing food loss & waste in the companies involved.





- Incorporate the company impact of each industry PhD into the overall impact of EFWA in halving food waste in Australia by 2030.

## ROLE OF INDUSTRY PARTNERS

- Have a strong commitment to employee education and development, along with the application of research to determine and address the industry partner's food waste reduction needs.
- Submit an EOI to EFW CRC based on the industry partner's food waste business needs.
  - Identify a project to be completed by an employee of the organisation.
  - Outline the objectives and expected outcomes of the project, including the specific research areas of interest and potential applications of the research within the company.
  - Recommends a suitably qualified employee to undertake the PhD through EFW CRC to complete the research project outlined.
- Demonstrates commitment to actively participate in the program by providing financial support, access to resources, and mentorship to the students.
  - **Option 1:** The industry partner provides the existing salary to the student in lieu of a stipend. The EFW CRC provides \$50,000 in financial support for the PhD student through the host university to cover operating research expenses and a PhD completion bonus.
  - **Option 2:** The industry partner and the EFW CRC each contribute \$100,000 in financial support for the PhD student providing a co-sponsored stipend of \$43,500 p.a., operating research expenses, and a PhD completion bonus.
- Appoints an executive level Industry Advisor from within the company to support the student and research project that:
  - Provides advice, support and guidance to the student and their research, by sharing their industry experience, expertise, subject specific knowledge, and industry insights.
  - Participates in project meetings as required.
  - Follows any supervisor requirements from the University regarding being part of a supervisory team.

## ROLE OF UNIVERSITY PARTNERS

Partner universities are the Universities of Adelaide, Queensland and Southern Queensland, Central Queensland University, Curtin University, Queensland University of Technology, RMIT University, and Swinburne University.

- The University will be responsible for the selection of eligible PhD students, with the support of the Industry Partner and is subject to meeting the participating university's admission requirements.
- Develops a joint research proposal that agrees on the research objectives and expected outcomes with the Industry Partner.
- Awards an Australian Government RTP fee exemption scholarship (or similar scholarship) to the PhD Student.
- Appoints a supervisory committee comprising of the primary Academic Supervisor from the university together with the Industry Advisor from the Industry Partner.
- Holds regular meetings, workshops, and collaborative events to foster a strong working relationship between the PhD student, academic advisors, and industry partner.



- Ensures the progress of the PhD student is regularly assessed through milestones, progress reports, and presentations as per university standards.
- Recognises that the PhD Student will be undertaking an industry focussed on-the-job PhD which must align with company needs, as identified in the agreed project proposal.
- Ensures the PhD student fulfills the academic requirements of the university and any additional requirements set by the industry partner. This may include delivering a final report, presenting findings to the industry, or other deliverables agreed upon in advance.
- Administers and manages the funds it receives from EFW CRC-Industry PhD Scholarship for its higher degree by research students enrolled at partner university as per the agreement.

## ROLE OF DOCTORAL STUDENTS

Financial support of Research Higher Degree students by EFW CRC is provided within the framework of legal agreements between EFW CRC and the universities in which the universities make certain undertakings regarding these projects. Students and their Academic Supervisor and Industry Partner should be aware of the following:

- That EFW CRC approves each project that the student undertakes.
- The university must enter into an agreement with each student in order to comply with the university's obligations under the Core Participant Agreement (regarding e.g. IP and confidentiality of EFW CRC project data).
- That a EFW CRC representative participates in the annual review process of each student undertaken by the university.
- That each student is required to attend and participate in the following EFW CRC Research Higher Degree activities ('EFW CRC RHD Activities'):
  - The Future Leaders Program
  - EFW CRC Annual Conference/National Summit
  - Professional and personal development program as needed.
- That any publication by the student will be in accordance with/comply with the EFW CRC Publication Policy.
- That the student provides EFW CRC with a copy of his/her thesis.
- That, at the request of EFW CRC, the university will embargo a student's thesis for a period not exceeding the maximum period permitted under the relevant policies and procedures of the university.
- That, EFW CRC may require an examiner of a student thesis to sign a confidentiality agreement prior to the examination of the thesis.
- Academic matters involving students for the purpose of satisfying their host university's academic requirements are the responsibility of the Academic Supervisor and the student.
- The student, Academic and Industry supervisors will follow the policies of the university at which the student is enrolled: e.g. occupational health and safety requirements, candidature and review requirements, thesis submission requirements and codes of practice regarding the responsibilities of the supervisor and the student; and
- If for any reason the student is unable to commence or continue carrying out the Project at an adequate level, the University must immediately advise the EFW CRC in writing and support for that student from EFW CRC will cease.



## ROLE OF EFW CRC PRINCIPAL ACADEMIC AND INDUSTRY SUPERVISORS

Tasks below are primarily the responsibility of the Academic Supervisor who is the Principal Supervisor. They are responsible for ensuring that Co-Supervisors and Industry Supervisors are familiar with the requirements and expectations of the research institution and the EFW CRC when fulfilling the role of a student supervisor.

- It is the responsibility of the students' Principal Supervisor to ensure that all research organisation requirements are met during the recruitment, onboarding and overall management of the student as well as any requirements for Co-Supervisors and EFWCRC Industry Supervisors (NB: this role is mandatory) involved with the student.
  - Principal, Co- and Industry Supervisors new to the EFWCRC family should become familiar with:
    - The background on EFWCRC (e.g. through the [website](#) and [annual report](#)).
    - Relationship between CRC and University.
- The expectations that exist between all involved parties: industry partner, university, student and EFW CRC expectations (as detailed in the student commencement proforma).
- The Principal Supervisor should coordinate and host a first day meeting with student. Ensure the student understands the background of the EFWCRC, the EFWCRC expectations and can "connect the dots" between all involved parties (RHD student, University, EFWCRC Executive Team, EFWCRC Industry participants and EFWCRC Projects).
- Ensure student meets and/or connects any other EFWCRC students housed within your university.
- Follow any other specific Supervisor requirements the University has in place regarding HDR student commencements (e.g. expectations, meet and greet, university paperwork, workspace, University training, connection with a PhD mentor/buddy, campus tour, student facilities, PhD specific support/advice, library etc).
- Set up initial meetings with all supervisory team, industry sponsors and any other key contacts. This may occur as multiple meetings.
- Advise EFW CRC Student Coordinator approximately twice a year of student progress, any significant interruptions to the student's progress or 'red flag students' at risk of not completing. \* Approx. Timings: Nov (Annual Conference) & April/May (in alignment with bi-annual retreats and/or University assessments/reviews).
- The University Academic Supervisor administers and manages the EFW CRC funds for your HDR students. A sample breakdown of expenditure is provided in Appendices A and B.

For more information contact:

**Dr Bianca Jayde Kay**

E: [bianca@endfoodwaste.com.au](mailto:bianca@endfoodwaste.com.au)

**Tangerine Holt**

E: [tangerine.holt@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:tangerine.holt@unimelb.edu.au)



## APPENDIX A

**Option 1** (Existing salary + operating + completion bonus): Recommended Allocation of EFW CRC- Industry PhD Scholarship (Overseen by the University partner).

Expenditure Item	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4 (6 months)	Total
Industry partner provides existing employee salary	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	50,000	\$350,000 <sup>1</sup>
<b>End Food Waste CRC provides operating costs</b>					
Future Leaders Program (RHD Activities)	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$10,000
Operating costs (e.g. consumables, travel, data collection, industry engagement)	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$5,000	\$35,000
PhD completion bonus (when thesis passes examination)	-	-	-	\$5,000	\$5,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$12,500</b>	<b>\$12,500</b>	<b>\$12,500</b>	<b>\$12,500</b>	<b>\$50,000</b>

<sup>1</sup> Nominal salary of \$100,000 p.a. used as example. Salary may be eligible for R&D Tax incentive offset.

## APPENDIX B

**Option 2** (3.5 year scholarship + operating + completion bonus): Recommended Allocation of EFW CRC- Industry PhD Scholarship (Overseen by the University partner).

**Combined base stipend + top-up = \$43,500 p.a.**

Expenditure Item	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4 (6 months)	Total
Industry partner provides existing employee salary	\$28,500	\$28,500	\$28,500	\$28,500	\$100,000 <sup>2</sup>
<b>End Food Waste CRC stipend top-up</b>	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$7,500	\$52,500
Future Leaders Program (RHD Activities)	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$1,500	\$7,500
Operating costs (e.g. consumables, travel, data collection, industry engagement)	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$5,000	\$35,000
PhD completion bonus (when thesis passes examination)	-	-	-	\$5,000	\$5,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$55,000</b>	<b>\$55,000</b>	<b>\$55,000</b>	<b>\$35,000</b>	<b>\$200,000</b>

<sup>2</sup> Stipend may be eligible for R&D Tax incentive offset.

