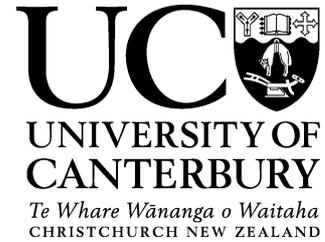


Memorandum



To Ki:	UC Academic Staff
From : Nā	Professor Lucy Johnston, Tumu Tuarua Rangahau Deputy Vice Chancellor Research and Innovation Professor Brigid McNeill, Amo Rangahau Dean (Postgraduate Research)
Date Rā	16 February 2026
Subject Kaupapa:	Call for applications: UC Connect Doctoral Scholarships

The University of Canterbury is calling for applications for Connect PhD Scholarships focused on **water**. For the purposes of these scholarships, water research is considered in broad terms. We welcome proposals from any discipline area that address gaps in knowledge about water from cultural, economic, social and/or environmental perspectives. This could include research relevant to freshwater management, hazard resilience, engineering and infrastructure, policy and governance, social usage and indigenous perspectives.

There are up to 10 Connect PhD scholarships focused on water research that are available for commencement in 2026.

UC Connect Doctoral Scholarships are co-funded by the University of Canterbury and external partners* from industry, business and community. Candidates who hold a Connect scholarship will collaborate with the partner organisation for the duration of their degree.

This scheme offers real benefits to both parties:

- For the external research partner, the contribution of a researcher who will help to develop answers to the questions the partner organisation is pursuing, and to translate research outcomes into real world applications. The research partner is also able to be involved in research supervision.
- For the research candidate, the opportunity to be immersed in a real-world environment and conduct research on current initiatives and problems in sustainability, while completing a research degree with the support of their university supervisors. The candidate will have an excellent opportunity to develop transferable skills and grow their professional networks.
- For the supervisor, the opportunity to develop new or grow existing partnerships and promote research collaborations. For the research candidate and the supervisor, having a group of students from across disciplines researching the same broad theme provides opportunity for cross-disciplinary interactions and support.

Scholarship Value and Contributions:

Both parties to the partnership provide:

- \$50,000 per partner over the 3 years.
In addition, the University of Canterbury will cover tuition fees for the thesis enrolment for up to a total of 360 points.

Application Process:

This process will involve several steps:

1. Submission of the Joint Expression of Interest (EOI) form by the UC Researcher(s) and Research Partner detailing the research project. EOIs are due **30 April 2026** and should be submitted to graduateschool@canterbury.ac.nz. A student does not need to be identified at this stage.
2. EOIs will be reviewed by a panel comprised of members of Graduate Research Committee. The EOIs will be evaluated on the following criteria:
 - (a) Alignment of the research with the sustainability theme
 - (b) The benefits of the research for the research partner
 - (c) Suitability of the proposed project for PhD research
 - (d) Preference may be given to cross-disciplinary/cross-faculty projects
 - (e) Experience of the supervisory team, particularly in regard to undertaking collaborative supervision and/or research with external partners.
3. Programme announcement and candidate recruitment. Successful candidates must meet the criteria for admission to the PhD programme at UC. The Connect scholarships are available to domestic and international students.
4. Scholarship contracting.

*Note: the external research partner is - An organisation legally and operationally external to the University of Canterbury; and - Financially independent of UC, with the capacity to commit funds from outside University controlled accounts; and - Represented by a named individual who is not a current UC staff member or employee.