



## TWO PhD SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

Two enthusiastic PhD students are required to work on a project investigating the timely question of ‘*Are schools the heart of small town communities?*’.

The successful candidates will be enrolled in a PhD program in the School of Education, UNSW Sydney and will be part of a larger research program led by [A/Prof Scott Eacott](#). This research program also involves collaborators at other Australian and international universities. Candidates will work closely with this diverse and highly skilled group of international researchers in developing the projects.

### Position 1: Profiling small towns – Australia

There are 2.3 million people living in approximately 1,700 small towns throughout Australia. Deeply rooted in the nation’s character and mythology, these towns are a cultural rather than just geographic category. This PhD project will integrate Australian Bureau of Statistics (Urban Centres and Localities community profiles) and MySchool data to build a comprehensive database of small towns throughout Australia. This first of its kind database will provide in-depth understanding of the relationship between social and education measures as a catalyst for improving policy decisions and interventions.

### Position 2: Are schools the heart of small towns?

Schools are often described as the heart of small town communities. This PhD project will explicitly put this idea to the test. Undertaking fieldwork in small towns with and without schools, this work will investigate the role of schools in community identity. Drawing on the emerging field of relational theorising, this project will transform the way we understand schools and small towns in ways not previously possible. In doing so, it will address significant knowledge gaps while generating explanatory insights on the history and culture of small towns.

### The ideal candidate:

Both positions attract an Australian Government Research Training Program (RTP) Scholarship (\$28,092 AUD p.a. – 2020 rate). Applications are due by **18 September 2020**. The ideal candidate will have:

- A 1<sup>st</sup> class Honours degree, or equivalent, in education, sociology, history, community development, public administration, politics, public policy, cultural studies or related fields;
- Previous experience with either empirical research (e.g., data mining of ABS and/or education statistics, qualitative skills in interviews or focus groups) and/or the application of social critical theoretical frameworks to social problems. Particular preference would be given to candidates with a working knowledge of (or willingness to work with) Eacott’s [relational approach](#);
- Excellent time, data management, and interpersonal skills; and
- Evidence of well-developed verbal and written communication skills.

Further details about scholarship processes can be found [here](#).

If you have any queries about the positions, please contact [A/Prof Scott Eacott](#).