

## Seeking applicants for PhD opportunities relating to the 20-minute neighbourhood – Melbourne and Canberra

Opportunities exist within Deakin University's Institute for Physical Activity and Nutrition (IPAN) to undertake a PhD related to an Australian Research Council (ARC) funded project. The project will assess the projected lifestyle benefits associated with the 20-minute neighbourhood. A 20-minute neighbourhood is one where everyday destinations are easily accessible. This ARC project will compare the location and type of food and physical activity behaviours undertaken by residents of existing 20-minute neighbourhoods with the type and location of behaviours undertaken by residents living outside 20-minute neighbourhoods.

The proposed PhD projects listed below will complement the main objectives of the ARC funded work. We are happy to discuss other PhD topics of interest related to this project.

The following projects will be based at Deakin University. One PhD scholarship is available for the most suitable candidate. We will work with other suitable candidates to assist with the preparation of scholarship applications to Deakin University or an externally-funded scheme where relevant.

### 1. Neighbourhood quality and health-related behaviours

Primary supervisor: Dr Lukar Thornton, Deakin University, [lukar.thornton@deakin.edu.au](mailto:lukar.thornton@deakin.edu.au)

The quality of neighbourhoods can affect people's health-related behaviours. This project will investigate how behavioural choices are influenced by multiple aspects of the neighbourhood, including streetscapes, services, food stores, public open space or transport infrastructure. Factors to consider include the quality, costs, and opening hours of services and amenities and the aesthetics of neighbourhood characteristics.

### 2. Estimating bias in neighbourhood effects research

Primary supervisor: Dr Karen Lamb, Deakin University, [karen.lamb@deakin.edu.au](mailto:karen.lamb@deakin.edu.au)

Bias associated with self-selection is assumed to impact the validity of neighbourhood effects research. This project will focus on novel statistical techniques to measure and reduce the impact of any such bias.

### 3. The role of social interactions on food and physical activity behaviours

Primary supervisor: Dr Lukar Thornton, Deakin University, [lukar.thornton@deakin.edu.au](mailto:lukar.thornton@deakin.edu.au)

Social interactions may shape the interface between an individual and their neighbourhood environment and this project will assess how these processes influence food and physical activity behaviours.

In addition to the projects outlined on the previous page, an opportunity exists to undertake a related PhD project through the University of Canberra. Interested applicants will need to discuss scholarship opportunities with Associate Professor Neil Coffee at the University of Canberra. The procedure for admittance and scholarships for this project is separate to the process for projects based at Deakin University.

Details of the University of Canberra project are below:

### **Using different transport modes to assess the 20-minute neighbourhood**

Primary supervisor: Associate Professor Neil Coffee, University of Canberra, [neil.coffee@canberra.edu.au](mailto:neil.coffee@canberra.edu.au)

The relationships between 20-minute neighbourhoods and behaviours may differ when transport modes other than walking are used to define the 20-minute neighbourhood (e.g. cycling and public transport). This project will assess how alternative approaches to defining the 20-minute neighbourhood influence food and physical activity behaviours.

### **Skills and interests of potential applicants may include the following:**

Epidemiology; statistics; public health; geography; Geographic Information Systems (GIS); land-use/urban planning; food/nutrition; physical activity.

### **Further information**

<http://www.deakin.edu.au/courses/scholarships/find-a-scholarship>

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