

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position:	Postdoctoral Research Fellow (Environmental Assets Valuation)
Work area:	School of Science and Engineering
Classification:	Level A
Supervisor:	884 Deputy Head of School, School of Science and Engineering
Position No:	

Overview of the Sustainability Research Centre

While the Postdoctoral Research Fellow (Environmental Assets Valuation) formally works within the School of Science and Engineering, the position has a primary functional association with the work of the Sustainability Research Centre (SRC). The SRC is focused on understanding the relationships between people, place and change. The SRC applies a transdisciplinary and collaborative approach broadly aligned with the fields of human geography and environmental management and leads USC's sustainability teaching programs with the goal of helping regions transition towards sustainability.

Position Overview:

USC and the Sunshine Coast Council (SCC) have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding to advance mutual interests for the benefit of the region. Sunshine Coast Council's *Environment and Liveability Strategy 2017* identifies the need to grow the natural economy by strengthening the economic base around the region's natural assets and distinctive landscape features. A USC/SCC Project Steering Committee will provide oversight and guidance to the Postdoctoral Research Fellow (Environmental Assets Valuation), who will have reporting obligations to both USC and the Project Steering Committee in relation to the *Valuing the Sunshine Coast's Natural Assets project* which will form the basis for the majority of the position's work. The position will be based primarily at the USC Sunshine Coast campus in the Sustainability Research Centre, but from time to time and as required to progress the project, the incumbent will be accommodated for at the SCC office.

At the University of the Sunshine Coast, a Level A Postdoctoral Research Fellow:

- (i) is developing their research profile. They make positive contributions to research projects; co-supervise honours students and candidates for higher degrees by research; participate in research teams; and are developing a track record of publishing in quality refereed journals;
- (ii) is developing productive industry and community links that benefit students, the community and/or the University. For example, they are applying discipline knowledge and skills that benefit external stakeholders and partners and can be involved in activities that encourage participation in University life through outreach activities;

- (iii) can demonstrate engagement within the University through contributions to academic administration and activities that contribute to the student experience.

All staff are expected to contribute to the achievement of the University's strategic goals and priorities and provide service to the University commensurate with their level of appointment and the opportunities available to them.

The primary focus of the Postdoctoral Research Fellow (Environmental Assets Valuation) is to undertake research to better understand the economic value of the Sunshine Coast's natural assets to inform strategic decision making on how to protect the natural values that exist in the area, while at the same time meeting demands for social and economic development. It is anticipated that the outputs from this project will support the continued need to invest in the protection, enhancement and management of the region's natural environment by identifying the return on investment. The research objectives are to:

- identify and critique a range of ecosystem services valuation frameworks, approaches, and methods;
- select preferred frameworks, approaches, and methods in consultation with SCC and other key stakeholders (which can also facilitate periodical updates to ensure key messages remain current);
- identify direct and indirect use and non-use values of the Sunshine Coast Local Government Area's (SCLGA's) natural assets including biodiversity, waterways and wetlands, and coastline values across the region and across tenures;
- undertake economic and related assessments of the identified values;
- develop key messages to raise awareness of the realistic values of the region's natural assets;
- develop key messages to contribute to debate and discussions regarding the region's natural assets and the importance of ongoing strategic investment;
- identify and apply methods to determine Council's return on investment from their annual 'environment' expenditure;
- highlight the economic outcomes associated with maintaining current environment management investment levels; and
- consider how policies, investments, and environmental change may influence values derived from natural assets and ecosystem services under different scenarios.

Duties can include:

1. Develop strategic research partnerships and maintain effective working relationships with industry partners and conduct research either as a member of a team or independently with partners.
2. Conduct research and development activities.
3. Publish research outcomes in high quality scientific journals, conference papers and industry reports.
4. Prepare and submit research proposals to external funding bodies.
5. Undertake professional activities including, subject to availability of funds, attendance at conferences and seminars in the field of expertise.
6. Co-supervise, mentor or, where appropriate, supervise honours or postgraduate research projects with direct relevance to the *Valuing the Sunshine Coast's Natural Assets project*.
7. Develop and maintain effective working relationships with relevant staff and students within the University.

8. Contribute to the integration of environmental valuation research methods and outcomes into learning and teaching.
9. Perform other duties within the range of skills normally associated with this classification, including those associated with an evolving research, teaching, learning and professional environment, as required.

Selection Criteria

Essential

1. Completion of a relevant doctoral qualification along with research experience in environmental economics related to environmental valuation methods.

Applicants must demonstrate:

2. Evidence of research performance success through high quality journal and refereed publications, research grant funding or involvement in projects
3. Well-developed project management skills enabling the development of effective systems to monitor and report on the project
4. Highly developed verbal and written communication, interpersonal, consultation and negotiation skills to effectively collaborate with a wide range of people and develop effective working relationships with key external and internal contacts
5. Strong analytical and evaluation skills

Desirable

6. Experience with benefit transfer methods