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| **Position Description – Postdoctoral Researcher** Peatland Soils **/** Research Assistant |

# Position Details

**Position Title:** **Postdoctoral Researcher** Peatland Soils **/** Research Assistant

**Position Number:** NEW

**College/Portfolio:** Science, Engineering and Health

**School/Group:** Science/Applied Chemistry and Environmental Science

**Campus Location:** Based at the University of Palangka Raya in Indonesia and RMIT City campus, Melbourne Australia.

**Classification:** Academic Level A

**Employment Type:** Fixed Term (external Research funded) 2 years to December 2021

**Time Fraction:** between 0.6 and 1.0 FTE by negotiation

# RMIT University

RMIT is a global university of technology, design and enterprise in which teaching, research and engagement are central to achieving positive impact and creating life-changing experiences for our students.

Founded in 1887, RMIT is a multi-sector university with more than 87,000 students including 15,000 at postgraduate level and 11,000 staff globally. The University offers Postgraduate, Undergraduate, Vocational Education and Online programs to provide students with a variety of work-relevant pathways.

With three campuses and two sites in Australia, two campuses in Vietnam and a research and industry collaboration centre in Barcelona, Spain, RMIT is a truly global university. RMIT also offers programs through partners in Singapore, Hong Kong, mainland China and Indonesia, and has research and industry partnerships on every continent.

RMIT enjoys an international reputation for excellence in education and applied and innovative research, as well as industry and community engagement.

RMIT prides itself on the strong industry links it has forged over its 130-year history. Collaboration with industry is integral to the University’s leadership in education and research, and to the development of highly skilled, globally-focused graduates.

RMIT was ranked 250th in 2019 QS World University Rankings. The University is also ranked eighth in Australia and 30th in East Asia and the Pacific for employer reputation and 21st in the Top 50 Universities Under 50 Years Old.

In the 2018 QS Rankings by Subject, RMIT was ranked 11th in the world and number one in the Asia Pacific for Art and Design, and 26th in Architecture and the Built Environment. RMIT is also among the world’s top 100 universities in Engineering (Civil and Structural; Electrical and Electronic; and Computer Science and Information Systems); Accounting and Finance; Business and Management Studies; and Communication and Media Studies. The 2018 Shanghai Ranking’s Global Ranking of Academic Subjects highlighted RMIT’s strength in Engineering and Technology in particular.

RMIT also ranks in the world’s top 400 in the 2018 Academic Ranking of World Universities and in the world’s top 500 in 2018 Times Higher Education World University Rankings.

For more information, visit [rmit.edu.au/about](http://rmit.edu.au/about)

# College/Portfolio/Group

The College comprises four Schools delivering a broad range of programs in science, engineering, health and technology at apprenticeship, certificate, bachelor, masters and PhD levels.  Many programs articulate between vocational and higher education, creating pathways for further study.  There is a vibrant research community attracting funding from a range of government and industry sources. The College has an annual income of approximately $425 million and employs over 1,000 staff providing on and offshore programs to approximately 20,000 students.

More information about the College may be found at: www.rmit.edu.au/seh

**School of Science**The School of Science provides over 45 bachelor and postgraduate programs, and undertakes world class research across the disciplines of physical sciences, mathematical sciences and computer science.

One of RMIT's top-performing research schools, we deliver research that addresses the 'real life questions' essential to Australia's innovation agenda. Our high-quality teaching programs inspire students to pursue careers in a range of industries including health, materials technology, food, geospatial and surveying, environmental analysis, banking and commerce, as well as computing and IT roles and research and development across a wide range of areas.

The School has staff, students and facilities on both the City and Bundoora campuses, has 300 staff, 327 higher degree research students, 3347 coursework students and an annual budget of $120 million.

Details relating to the School can be found at[www.rmit.edu.au/about/our-education/academic-schools/science/](http://www.rmit.edu.au/about/our-education/academic-schools/science/)

# Position Summary

The Peatland Soils Research Assistant will undertake research activities aligned with RMIT’s commitments to “Improving Community Fire Management and Peatland Restoration in Indonesia”, FST/2016/144 (hereafter referred to as the “Project”). This research is funded by the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. The aim of the Project is to reduce unwanted peatland fires through generation of new knowledge to underpin peatland restoration and develop gender inclusive sustainable livelihoods for men and women living in and around restored peatlands. The project objectives are to: (1) Prevent unwanted fires through managing the causes and drivers of peatland fire, (2) Identify inclusive and sustainable livelihood options for men and women in rewetted peat localities, (3) Quantify the effect of peatland restoration practices on peat characteristics, water dynamics, and production system options, (4) Improve the community, institutional, social and policy aspects of peatland restoration and fire prevention initiatives and policies, and (5) Support the effective management and dissemination of knowledge for peatland restoration and fire prevention. The Peatland Soils Research Assistant will work into Objectives 2, 3 and 5 of the Project, drawing on soil science, agriculture, water chemistry, science communication and transdisciplinary research expertise. In particular, soil physics expertise in the rigorous field and laboratory measurement of peat soil water retention, hydraulic conductivity and water infiltration will be very valuable in this position. Experience with soil chemistry, including mid infra red and/or nuclear magnetic resonance spectroscopy of soils and the application of spectroscopy to predict other soil properties would also be well regarded, Further, aptitude and/or experience in integrating data sets of soil properties into conceptual, visual and mathematical models to communicate with a range of community and government stakeholders will be essential towards the later part of the project. It is expected that the Peatland Soils Research Assistant will work with an increasing degree of autonomy as skills and experience develop.

# Reporting Line

Reports to: Samantha Grover, Lecturer, Applied Chemistry and Environmental Science

# Organisational Accountabilities

RMIT University is committed to the health, safety and wellbeing of its staff. RMIT and its staff must comply with a range of statutory requirements, including equal opportunity, occupational health and safety, privacy and trade practice. RMIT also expects staff to comply with its policy and procedures, which relate to statutory requirements and our ways of working.

Appointees are accountable for completing training on these matters and ensuring their knowledge and the knowledge of their staff is up to date.

# Key Accountabilities

1. Conduct research activities under limited supervision both independently and as a member of a team including: undertaking the research activities as laid out in the ACIAR Project agreement; publishing research outputs in Q1 journals, presenting research outputs at conferences and workshops; generating science communication material to convey soil chemistry and physics results to a range of audiences including smallholders, local and central government, policy makers and ACIAR, capacity building with Indonesian partner scientists; participating in supervision of undergraduate and postgraduate student research projects.
2. Deliver on Project milestones within agreed timelines.
3. Maintain regular communications between RMIT and Project partners in Indonesia and Australia.
4. Undertake administration related to the Project.
5. Undertake limited undergraduate and postgraduate coursework teaching activities proportionate to 10% of the position, in accordance with the College’s Academic Workload Framework

# Key Selection Criteria

1. Excellent written and oral science communication skills
2. Emerging publication record, as evidenced by publications in peer reviewed international journals.
3. Excellent interpersonal and communications skills appropriate for interacting with students, staff and industry, together with a strong commitment to teamwork and multidisciplinary collaboration.
4. Demonstrated capacity to work effectively with and to negotiate sensitively with researchers from different cultures.
5. Disciplinary knowledge pertinent to the Project: soil chemistry, soil physics, peat soils, tropical peats.
6. Ability to work autonomously whilst displaying a strong commitment to work in a team environment, including the demonstrated ability to confidently and effectively work with colleagues, project team leaders, and industry partners.
7. Capacity to relocate to and/or regularly travel to Indonesia.
8. Demonstrated ability to meet deadlines and effectively manage varying workloads and respond to changing priorities as required.

# Qualifications

**Mandatory:** Postgraduate qualification in a relevant discipline area (soil science, environmental science).

Appointment to this position is subject to passing a Working with Children check

**Preferred:** Ability to communicate in Bahasa Indonesia would be advantageous

 A driving licence and first aid qualifications would be advantageous

Completionof the Essentials in Tertiary Teaching Practice program or equivalent[[1]](#footnote-1) (if the appointed candidate does not meet this requirement at time of appointment, they will be supported to complete this as a requirement to fulfil their probation).

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| **Endorsed:** | Signature:Name:Title:Date: | **Approved:** | Signature:Name:Title:Date: |

1. Equivalence is defined in the exemption criteria at http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=3sdrya7u8m9v1 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)