

NCVER Building Researcher Capacity Fellowships

The National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) is currently funding a scheme referred to as Building Researcher Capacity (BRC) in vocational education and training (VET). One of the scheme's initiatives is to offer fellowships. The primary aim of these fellowships is to build researcher capacity in secondary data analysis, thereby promoting the use of NCVER data to address issues in the VET sector. The initiative aims to encourage proposals to use NCVER data sets to improve our understanding of VET from researchers in any of the social science disciplines.

BACKGROUND

The challenge for those undertaking data analysis based on either administrative collections or surveys is to understand the conditions under which the data was collected so that conclusions are valid, and to be imaginative and skilful in applying and developing methods that take account of those factors but still address the questions in hand.

The principal objectives of the scheme are:

- ❖ To build capacity in analysis of NCVER data amongst new researchers to VET
- ❖ To add value to the NCVER investments in the collection, preservation and promotion of large scale national data sets, by encouraging their use, interrogation and exploitation; and

THE SCHEME

The NCVER fellowship scheme promotes research in the broad area of VET. The proposed research must use NCVER surveys and/or statistical data (<http://www.ncver.edu.au/statistic/21075.html>).

The fellowships, in the spirit of building capacity in analysis of NCVER data, will provide an opportunity for the award holders to:

- ❖ fulfil or partially fulfil the requirements for a postgraduate degree by research,
- ❖ enhance a growing track record in data analysis,
- ❖ contribute to and perhaps expand their interest in research to the VET sector.

Preference will be given to researchers who have:

- ❖ an interest in broadening their research expertise to the VET sector
- ❖ quantitative data analysis experience in the social and/or behavioural sciences
- ❖ experience programming in SAS
- ❖ the support of a host higher education institution or research organisation.

The research topic and nature of the fellowship arrangements will be negotiated between the host institution, the researcher and NCVER. Opportunities for an NCVER researcher to act as a second supervisor may also be negotiated.

Fellows will be offered between \$10 000 and \$20 000 per annum, for a period of up to three years depending on the nature of the research topic. The funding is to go towards the research process only. The funding may be used for:

1. Expenses associated with undertaking the data analysis. This may involve visiting NCVER in Adelaide to gain expertise and experience with the data set(s).
2. Conference expenses – for the purpose of presenting papers of which the fellow is the author (and or joint author with the supervisor and/or NCVER researchers) and in connection with his/her research. Researchers who attend a conference without presenting, or present a paper or poster of which the researcher is not the author, will not be financially supported under this scheme.
3. Purchase of specialist books, periodicals, software that are essential to the research, but are not normally available in the University or host institution.
4. Attendance at courses offered within the Australian Consortium for Social and Political Research Incorporated (ACSPRI) Summer and/or Winter.

In addition to the funds, NCVER will provide access (including access to CURF data) and support in the use of NCVER data to fellowship recipients free of charge.

During the fellowship period recipients will be required to provide NCVER with:

- ❖ two progress reports (depending on the nature and duration of the fellowship)
- ❖ a paper to be published by NCVER (subject to NCVER's quality assurance processes)

NCVER will also encourage fellows to:

- ❖ attend and present at the NCVER No Frills conference typically held in July each year (this is a free event but fellows will be responsible for using part of their funding to cover travel and accommodation to this event)
- ❖ produce papers for submission to journals and presentations at conferences (either VET or non-VET related), where appropriate.

Applications – to discuss available opportunities please contact Bridget Wibrow in the first instance: bridget.wibrow@ncver.edu.au. NCVER will assess the proposed research project against current research priorities <http://www.ncver.edu.au/research/priorities.html> and completed research (search the [VOCED](#) database).

How can NCVER's data help your research topic?

The VOCED database makes thousands of education and training research findings from Australia and across the world available in one central place: www.voced.edu.au.

NCVER's range of statistics about students, apprentices and employers can be found at: <http://www.ncver.edu.au/statistic/index.html>

The Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth (LSAY) is a research program that tracks young people as they move from school into further study, work and other destinations. It uses large, nationally representative samples of young people to collect information about education and training, work and social development: <http://www.lsay.edu.au/index.html>

NCVER has recently developed a new tool, the VET Atlas, which enables people to gather statistics about students and demography in their own regions. The VET Atlas can be found at <http://www.ncver.edu.au/resources/atlas.html>.