

PhD Scholarship: ENVISAGE–Service Providers Melbourne Disability Institute

Empowering parents of children with neurodevelopmental disabilities.

This scholarship is provided by the [Melbourne Disability Institute](#) (MDI) at the University of Melbourne under the primary supervision of [Prof. Christine Imms](#) (Apex Chair of Neurodevelopment and Disability, The University of Melbourne), [Dr Sarah Knight](#) (Team Leader, Victorian Paediatric Rehabilitation Service) and Ms Rose Babic (Parent-Investigator, ENVISAGE).

Applications provisionally close 11.59pm AEDT, 18th April 2021.

About the opportunity

This Melbourne Disability Institute (MDI) funded PhD scholar will join ENVISAGE research team to develop and evaluate the effectiveness of a five-week online workshop for service providers who work with families of children with neuro-developmental disability (NDD); that is, to co-create **ENVISAGE-Service Providers (SP)**.

ENVISAGE stands for ENabling VISions And Growing Expectations. This body of research began with a program for families (ENVISAGE-F) new to the diagnosis of childhood disability and developed by our team of parents and clinician-researchers in Australia and Canada. ENVISAGE-F is comprised of five online workshops built on contemporary evidence-informed themes in childhood disability. The goal of the ENVISAGE-F program is to empower parents of children with NDD to be able to make choices informed by contemporary evidence, feel confident and competent in their communication and decision-making with service providers, enhance family well-being and prevent the mental and physical health problems to which families of children with NDD are known to be susceptible. By supporting and building family capacity we aim to engender conditions in which children can thrive.

The goal of **ENVISAGE-SP** is to expand [ENVISAGE-Families](#) to SPs with the aim of increasing SPs' knowledge of, attitudes towards, and self-efficacy to apply evidence-informed, holistic, strengths-based, function-promoting, and family-centred approaches, and to support the translation of these key ideas into clinical practice. **ENVISAGE-SP** has the potential to address SP practice gaps by providing SPs with a vehicle for how to better support families.

ENVISAGE-SP is being developed because findings from our parent-investigators, parent-consultants and parent-participants in ENVISAGE-F has consistently identified the need to engage with SPs (physicians, developmental therapists and others) about the ENVISAGE concepts, so that everyone involved in child-onset NDD work is using a common lens and language (based on the World Health Organisation's International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health framework) to set shared goals, expectations and priorities.

The proposed PhD program of research will nest within the overall ENVISAGE research program. Consistent with the team's practices, the research will use an integrated knowledge translation approach, guided by the Knowledge-to-Action cycle's framework, with families and service providers as research team members for all elements of our work.

The successful applicant will join a vibrant, supportive international network of consumers, clinicians and researchers with a common passion for enhancing the lives of parents and children with NDD. We welcome applications from eligible applicants from various academic disciplines, not limited to occupational therapists, speech pathologists, physiotherapists, psychologists, social scientists, social workers, medical practitioners and nurses. *People with disability or other lived experience of disability are strongly encouraged to apply.*

The scholarship benefits include:

- stipend of \$31,200 per annum (2020 pro-rata rate) for 3.5 years;
- additional funding of \$2,000 per annum for research support;
- support and mentoring from a wide range of leading researchers;
- collaboration opportunities for future research projects;
- training opportunities, access to a range of seminars, workshops and other events;
- opportunity to be involved with knowledge translation and education activities; and,
- networking opportunities with national and international researchers.

The scholarship applicant must:

- be eligible for acceptance into the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences PhD program. Refer to [MDHS entry requirements](#);
- be an Australian citizen or permanent resident with a professional qualification recognised in Australia;
- have, or be able to obtain, current police and working with children clearances; and,
- be enrolled full time at the University of Melbourne by 30th September 2021.

Important dates:

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| 18th April | Applications <i>provisionally</i> close 11.59PM AEST. |
| 23rd April | Shortlisted applicants will be invited to an interview. |

The successful applicant will be announced shortly afterward and supported to apply for PhD candidature at the University of Melbourne.

If you have any questions about this PhD opportunity please contact: Professor Christine Imms, christine.imms@unimelb.edu.au.

How to apply

Key selection criteria:

- Previous relevant research experience
- Experience with involving consumers/people with lived experience in research or service delivery development
- Relevant clinical or work experience with children with neurodevelopmental disabilities and their families
- Interest in pursuing this PhD project
- Commitment to beginning full time candidature as soon as enrolment is possible.

To express interest in the scholarship:

Please complete and submit the following information before the due date:

- i) A cover letter addressing the key selection criteria.
- ii) Scholarship Application Form.
- iii) Curriculum vitae.
- iv) Copy of academic transcripts including the explanations for scores, marks or ratings.
- v) The full names and addresses of TWO nominated referees. Referees should be external academic referees not connected with the proposed research project. (Please note that your referees will be required to submit their report under separate cover – see Scholarship Referee Form.)
- vi) Evidence of Australian citizenship or permanent residence.

Please combine the above items i) to vi) into a **single pdf document** and send to georgie.rose@mcri.edu.au.