

Masters by Research

Project

The Centre for Urban Research welcomes candidates for RMIT University's Master by Research (Project) program. This program of study combines professional practice projects with an academic dissertation. Studies may be undertaken individually or with the support of employers. Tuition costs are funded by the Australian Government's Research Training Program and RMIT University.

The Centre for Urban Research

The Centre for Urban Research (CUR) is a leading centre for urban and environmental studies in Australia combining critical and applied perspectives. The centre offers Masters by Research (Project) supervision across its areas of research strength, including:

- Healthy Liveable Cities
- Planning and Transport in City Regions
- People and Environment
- Housing and Urban Societies
- Climate Change Transformations
- Interdisciplinary Conservation Science
- Urban Cultures and Technologies
- Critical Urban Governance
- Health, Place and Society

CUR is linked to the RMIT Sustainability and Urban Planning Program which offers undergraduate and postgraduate coursework degrees. The Centre works closely with researchers across the University and has a large network of Australian and international research partners.

Opportunity for Students

RMIT University Masters by Research (Project) candidates undertake a professional practice project and then write an academic dissertation based on their project. This dissertation includes a literature review, a chapter on the methodology they used, and presentation and discussion of their findings. The project and dissertation program is supervised by one or more RMIT academic supervisors and is formally examined by two external academic examiners.

The project component is negotiated with the student's supervisor and should involve a sustained intellectual contribution to professional or practice knowledge that goes beyond routine application of existing knowledge. In the area of urban and environmental studies a Masters project could involve:

- addressing an important practice question or problem where limited existing knowledge or understanding exists, or where significant judgement is required to adapt existing knowledge.
- developing a new area of policy or regulation where the existing knowledge and practice base is uncertain or inadequate.
- preparing a major strategy at local, state or national scales.
- designing and applying a sustained program of intervention in a novel policy or practice area.
- preparing or assessing a major development proposal requiring complex decisions.
- the design application and testing of new analytical or methodological approaches to a policy, program or project.
- a major professional or practice report involving advanced professional and analytical skills

Projects are typically of 12 months duration. While much professional practice is undertaken in groups or teams the candidate's role should involve leading the project overall or a demonstrable contribution to key elements.

Ideally the candidate would negotiate with their employer to support the study program by allowing the project to be used as the focus of study. Employers may also allow part of the candidate's working time to be used to undertake the project. Candidates are encouraged to complement their academic supervision by including a professional



supervisor or reference group for their project. Although projects are expected to be concurrent with studies, in some circumstances partially retrospective projects may be agreed.

The Masters by Research (Project) program duration is 18-24 months full-time-equivalent with the first 6-12 months usually spent on the project and the remainder on the academic dissertation. Candidates may also take the Research Strategies coursework subjects as electives.

This program best suits candidates with sustained professional or practice experience who wish to extend their knowledge via a structured, academically-founded and supported program of independent inquiry. As a Higher Degree by Research, the intellectual expectations of the Masters by Research (Project) are greater than those of coursework Bachelors or Masters degrees, and require extended independent critical reflection on professional knowledge and practice that is systematically positioned among research and scholarly literatures.

Candidates may enroll at any time on a full-time or part-time basis, however it is preferred that enrollment aligns with RMIT semesters to ensure timely completion of the Research Strategies subject. Studies may be undertaken on-campus* or remotely using digital platforms. Candidates have access to professional development, networking, and formal training. They also participate in the intellectual life and culture of RMIT University including via the Centre for Urban Research.

Through their studies Masters by Research (Project) graduates will have gained:

- advanced and integrated theoretical and conceptual understanding of a complex body of knowledge, and
- expert, specialised intellectual and technical research skills in a body of knowledge or professional practice.

For some students conversion to a PhD program may be possible, subject to RMIT University policy.

Information for Employers

The RMIT University Masters by Research (Project) provides the opportunity for your staff to enrol in a program that offers higher level professional research skills via a project aligned with your organisation's goals. Australian Government fee support means there is no direct cost to your organisation.

The Masters by Research (Project) program in the Centre for Urban Research is well suited to employers in areas of urban and environmental practice where new knowledge is valued and applied. Benefits arising from employer support for the Masters by Research (Project) can include:

- exploring and testing new ideas within the context of academic support and supervision
- extending or deepening research skillsets and expertise within the organisation
- responding to sector, market or organisational challenges or opportunities
- building research links to RMIT University as a leading global research institution

Employers may elect to allocate a work time fraction to their enrolled staff to support the project and research, or commit other resources to support the research. Alternatively, employers may also fund research scholarships to embed an RMIT University research candidate within their organisation (RMIT scholarships are currently \$31,000 p.a. FTE).

RMIT University welcomes a collaborative approach to projects that links candidates, academic supervisors and employers and builds longer-term university-employer relationships. RMIT University also welcomes embedding of Masters by Research (Project) candidates who undertake studies within relevant ongoing University research programs and projects. For example, where an employer funds a major policy-relevant research project a staff member could undertake their Masters by Research (Project) within that project team. While candidates' studies are undertaken individually and at their own pace, there is potential for groups of candidates from one or more employers to enrol together to share insights and experience.

*Subject to any COVID-safe operational requirements.

Enquiries and enrolment

To enquire about enrolment in the Masters by Research (Project) in the Centre for Urban Research at RMIT University, please contact:

sgr.admissions@rmit.edu.au

For information about the Centre for Urban Research and research higher degrees at RMIT please visit:

www.cur.org.au

www.rmit.edu.au/research/research-degrees

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