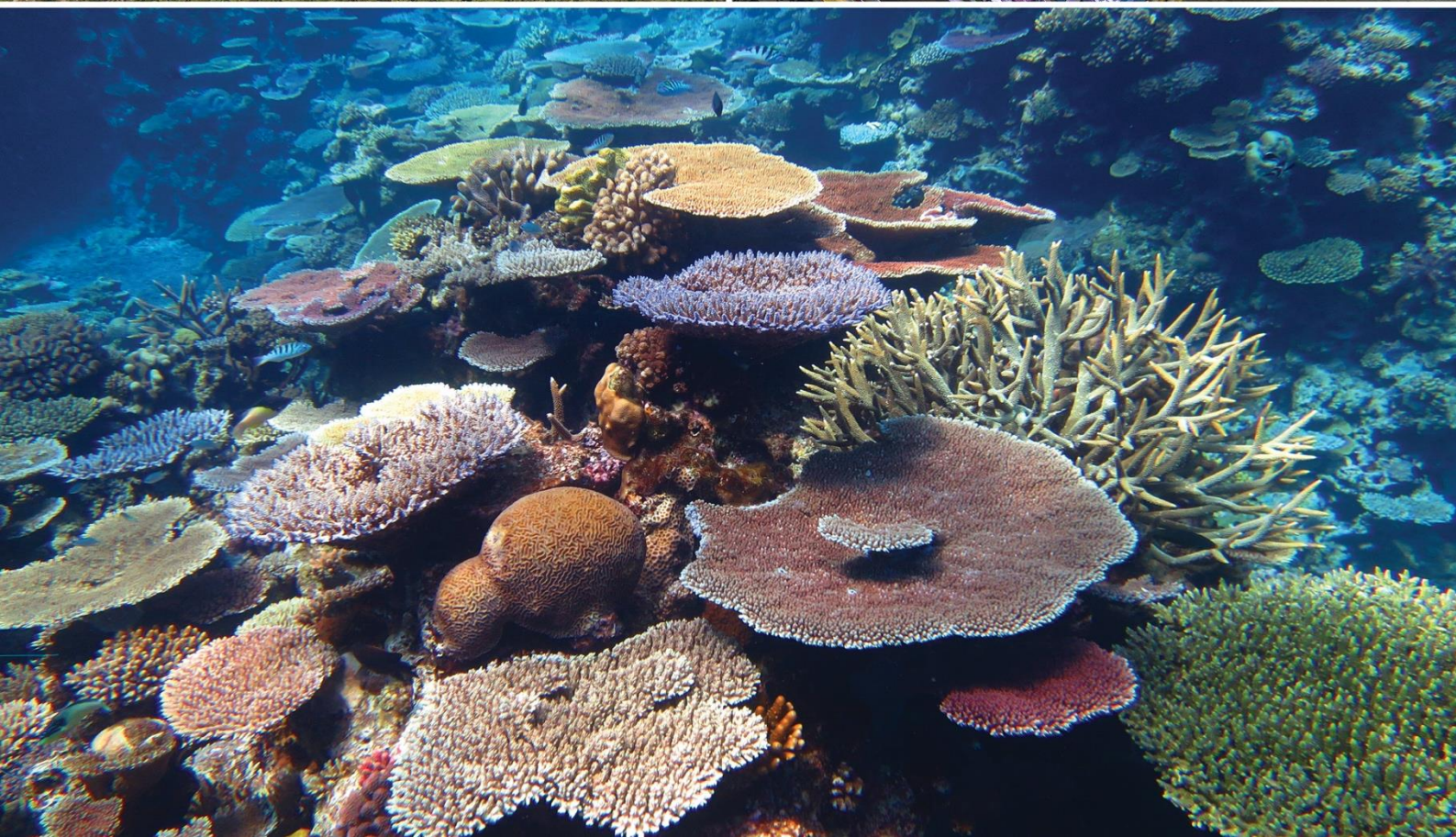Australian Government

AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE
OF MARINE SCIENCE

RESEARCH SCIENTIST – MEGAFAUNA AND
THREATENED SPECIES ECOLOGY

MARINE FAUNA ECOLOGY AND
PRESSURES

CANDIDATE INFORMATION PACK

# CONTENTS

*AIMS was awarded Athena Swan Bronze status in 2020 by the Science in Australia Gender Equity (SAGE) program. This award recognises AIMS' commitment to improving gender equity, diversity and inclusion in STEMM disciplines.*

*The Australian Institute of Marine Science acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land and sea on which we work. We recognise the unique relationships and enduring cultural and spiritual connection that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have to land and sea, and pay our respects to Elders past, present and future.*

*Photographic credit: Shaun Hahn, Joe Gioffre, Christian Miller, Steve Clarke, Christian Miller, Chris Brunner, Nick Thake, David Deeley*

The Australian Institute of Marine Science is a corporate Commonwealth entity established under the *Australian Institute of Marine Science Act 1972* (AIMS Act). As Australia's tropical marine research agency, it is our mission to provide the research and knowledge of Australia's tropical marine estate required to support growth in its sustainable use, effective environmental management and protection of its unique ecosystems.

To accomplish our mission, AIMS delivers independent science to help realise three key long-term impacts for the nation:
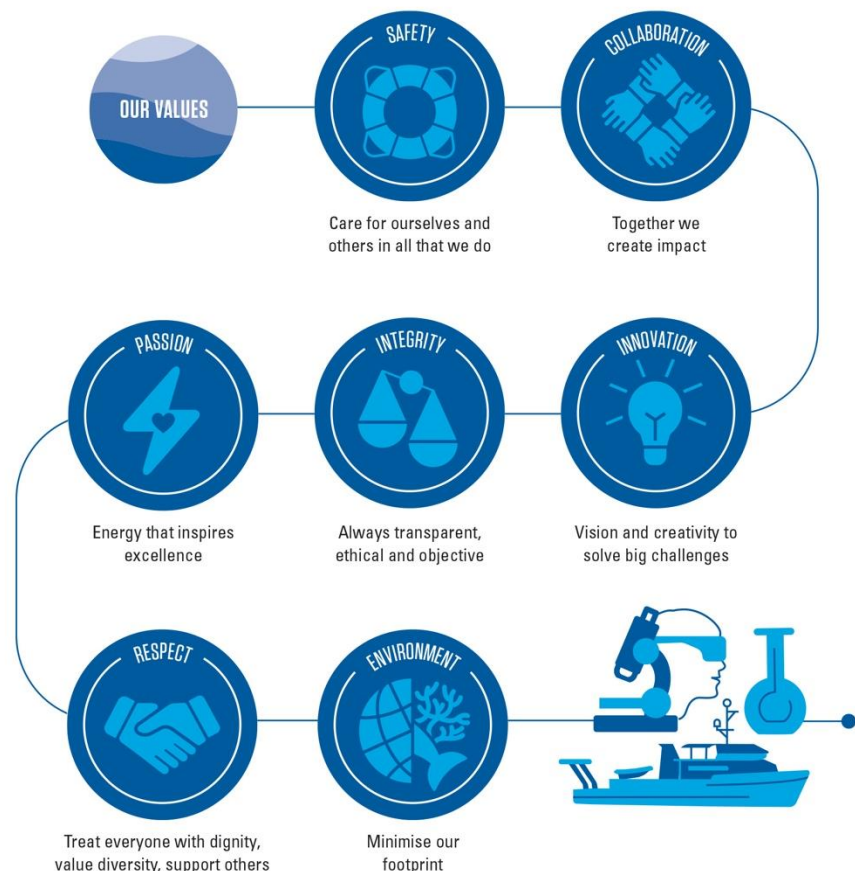
- Improve the health and resilience of marine and coastal ecosystems across northern Australia.
- Create economic, social and environmental net benefits for marine industries and coastal communities.
- Protect coral reefs and other tropical marine environments from the effects of climate change.

Our research is focused on the priorities of our stakeholders, including Commonwealth, state and territory governments, industry and Traditional Owners. Our research continues to:

- Underpin Australia's environmental management of the Great Barrier Reef (GBR) to ensure that this World Heritage Area remains healthy and resilient.
- Support the sustainable development of coastal industries and ports across northern Australia.
- Provide the environmental baselines and condition and risk assessments required for current and future resource and industrial developments in Northern Australia.

At AIMS, the way we work guides our team members' on their collective journey towards the successful delivery of our AIMS Strategy 2030 targets.

## THE WAY WE WORK

OUR VALUES

**SAFETY**
Care for ourselves and others in all that we do

**COLLABORATION**
Together we create impact

**PASSION**
Energy that inspires excellence

**INTEGRITY**
Always transparent, ethical and objective

**INNOVATION**
Vision and creativity to solve big challenges

**RESPECT**
Treat everyone with dignity, value diversity, support others

**ENVIRONMENT**
Minimise our footprint

**Sustainable Use of North-West Marine Ecosystems Program**

AIMS established a presence in Western Australia over twenty-five years ago to address the emerging requirements of the offshore oil and gas industry for tropical marine environmental baseline information, but also in recognition of the unique and poorly understood marine systems in North-West Australia.

The mission of the Sustainable Use of North-West Marine Ecosystems Program is to undertake science and deliver knowledge to provide a comprehensive understanding of Australia's northern and north-western marine ecosystems and inform sustainable use and management of marine resources in the region.

Our Sustainable Use of North-West Marine Ecosystems Research Program focuses on five key challenges for sustainable resource management: climate change, pressures on marine ecosystems, opportunities in blue carbon, documenting and conserving biodiversity, and monitoring ecosystem change. These challenges shape the strategic objectives of the Research Program that align with AIMS Strategy 2030:

• Design of regional assessment and monitoring plan and gap analysis tool for North-West Australia.
• Develop and test a predictive model of benthic communities on reefs and shoals.
• Region-wide analysis of fauna abundance, distribution and critical areas with a focus on reproduction areas, foraging grounds and migratory routes of key threatened and endangered marine species.

Our success within each of these challenges is underpinned by science to understand the biology and ecology of key species and ecosystems, efficient and effective data acquisition and interpretation using the latest technology, and right-way research undertaken with acknowledgment and in collaboration with Traditional Owners to benefit from the integration of Traditional Ecological Knowledge with Western science. Outcomes from our science address the specific needs of key stakeholders, resource managers and policy makers, and we aim to deliver positive impacts to people, industry and ecosystems through facilitating long-term engagement with our stakeholders upon delivery of our research outputs.

Our Perth Research Facility operates out of the Indian Ocean Marine Research Centre at the University of Western Australia and is located at the hub of marine-based industries on the Western Australian coast. Research delivery within Program 3 is via three Research Teams spread across our Perth and Darwin Research Facilities. These teams include Ecological and Biological Monitoring, Marine Megafauna, and Spatial Ecology and Environmental Data Science. Capability within Program 3 is diverse and key strengths include coral and fish ecology, benthic ecology, habitat mapping and predictive modelling, remote sensing, long-term monitoring, Traditional Owner engagement, effects of marine noise, animal tracking, threatened species/marine fauna, and machine learning.

The **Marine Fauna Ecology & Pressures Team** delivers high quality research outputs that incorporate innovation and partnerships with research end-users, to understand and manage the ecology and biology of marine fauna, and pressures on them.

The research of this team addresses knowledge gaps to inform the sustainable management and use of west, north-west and northern regions in a setting of multiple competing stakeholder interests and pressures. Their primary research goal is to monitor and provide research outputs to understand and mitigate key anthropogenic impacts with a strong (but not exclusive) focus on marine fish and megafauna, particularly species of conservation (listed threatened species), commercial and recreational interest.

**About this opportunity**

AIMS studies and monitors a large number of Australia's marine species that are identified as threatened or endangered species. Many of these species are iconic megafauna – such as whales, dugongs, sea turtles, and large sharks and rays – and their status often reflects the health and diversity of marine habitats. Reporting to the Senior Research Scientist (Megafauna), your research will focus on enhancing AIMS' capacity to deliver relevant products to government, industry clients and stakeholders to improve the management of megafauna and threatened species across northern Australia. Success in this role will require you to apply your advanced ecological and quantitative skills in the analysis and interpretation of megafauna and threatened species data. Including advanced quantitative modelling of population distribution and status, analysis of movement data and development of innovative research projects to better understand marine megafauna and threatened species and their responses to potential disturbances. Your research will focus on a range of species from fish and sharks through to marine reptiles and mammals.

**About you**

An experienced research scientist, you will have achieved your PhD in a relevant discipline and have postdoctoral experience and publications that demonstrate substantive and impactful work on the ecology of marine megafauna and threatened species. You will have a good understanding of issues facing megafauna and threatened species including interactions with industry and implications for management and conservation and be able to demonstrate your:

- Strong quantitative skills and demonstrated experience in marine ecology, especially movement and spatial ecology and experience with spatial analysis and modelling using R, GIS or similar (Python, Matlab),
- Experience in leading field programs that include sampling of multiple marine megafauna, especially marine turtles,
- Success in business development to attract external research funding and project management, and
- Previous experience with marine turtle research and Coxswain certificate would be highly desirable.

*NB: Non-Australian Citizens must hold an appropriate Visa with working entitlements that allows paid employment with AIMS for the term of the appointment, depending on the Department of Home Affairs current policies.*

If, after reviewing the position description (refer pages 8 - 11), you believe that your qualifications, experience and professional capabilities will enable you to successfully deliver the position responsibilities, we would be very interested in hearing from you.

**Apply now** and join a world leading organisation with attractive working conditions which are detailed in our Enterprise Agreement. The successful candidate for this exciting opportunity will be rewarded with:

- AIMS AOF Level 5 salary ($113,275 to $124,181 per annum) plus 15.4% superannuation
- Full-time, Permanent opportunity
- Located in Darwin (NT)
- 9-day fortnight
- Flexible Work Arrangements considered (including tele-working where possible)
- Generous leave provisions
- Optional Fitness passport
- Relocation assistance available

Your application submission for this opportunity should include the following documentation:

- Current Resume (including the contact details for two current referees);
- Document addressing the Key Selection Criteria (refer to page 7) within the scope of the position description (refer to page 8-11); and
- A short cover letter.

**NB:** Our preference is that you include a list of your qualifications, publications, certificates and/or licences in your resume. Do not attach these documents to your application as these will not be provided to the selection panel.

**Shortlisted applicants** may be asked to complete a Personal Outlook Analysis Questionnaire using the Birkman Method.

**How to apply:** Please submit your application via our website (aims.gov.au).

Further information on the application process and tips for addressing Selection Criteria is available in our Recruitment Application Guide.

**Recruitment contact:** Position enquiries can be directed to Michele Thums, Research Scientist - Quantitative Ecologist at m.thums@aims.gov.au. *Applications must be made through our website per above.*

**Closing date:** SUNDAY, 19 NOVEMBER 2023 (midnight, AEST).

**NB:** *Applicant survey: All applicants will be invited to complete a voluntary survey after the vacancy closing date. Your responses to this survey do not form part of your application for this position. Further information about the purpose of this survey will be provided to you in the invitation.*

# KEY SELECTION CRITERIA

Your application submission should address the following Selection Criteria. Please address each Selection Criteria in a separate paragraph (maximum 250 words per criteria) and in a single document. The selection criteria and your CV are the documents against which we assess your suitability for the position.

Your responses to the following Key Selection Criteria must evidence your suitability for this exciting opportunity within the scope of the position description (pages 8-11).

**Essential**
- PhD in a relevant discipline and appropriate postdoctoral experience and publications demonstrating substantive and impactful work on the ecology of marine megafauna and threatened species.
- Strong quantitative skills in marine ecology, especially movement and spatial ecology and demonstrated experience in spatial analysis and modelling using R, GIS or similar (e.g. Python, Matlab).
- Demonstrated experience leading field programs that include sampling of marine megafauna, especially marine turtles.
- Demonstrated success in attracting external research funding and project management.
- Current C Class Open Drivers Licence (or equivalent) or the willingness to obtain.

**Desirable**
- Demonstrated experience with marine turtle research.
- Coxswains certificate.
- Demonstrated ability and motivation to engage and collaborate with a range of government, scientific, industry and community-based organisations including First Nations people and Aboriginal Rangers.

| Position Description | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Position Title:** | Research Scientist –Megafauna and Threatened Species Ecology | | |
| **Position Number**: | 21351 | | |
| **Organisational Unit Name and Number:** | Marine Fauna Ecology and Pressures (7307) | **Program:** | Sustainable Use of NW Marine Ecosystem (Program 3) |
| **Salary cost centre:** | 7307 | | |
| **Primary Location:** | Darwin | | |
| **Agreement:** | **AIMS Enterprise Agreement 2020 – 2023** (and any subsequent agreement) | | |
| **Position Classification:** | AOF Level 5 | **FTE Status:** | Full-time (1.0 FTE) |
| **First Level Supervisor:** | Research Scientist – Quantitative Ecologist (21151) | | |
| **Positions under Direct Supervision:** | Nil | | |
| **Functional Area:** | Research Scientist | | |

### AIMS Strategy 2030

**Our Mission**
To provide the research and knowledge of Australia's tropical marine estate required to support growth in its sustainable use, effective environmental management, and protection of its unique ecosystems.

**The Way We Work**
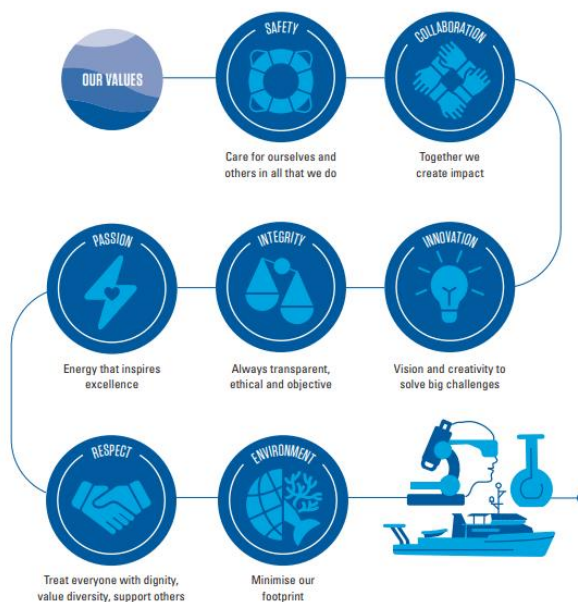


| | |
|---|---|
| **Position Summary:** | This position will enhance AIMS' capacity in megafauna and threatened species in northern Australia. Research will focus on delivery of relevant products to government and industry clients and stakeholders to improve the management and sustainable use of tropical marine species and ecosystems. |
| | The successful candidate will apply advanced ecological and quantitative skills in the analysis and interpretation of megafauna and threatened species data. This will include advanced quantitative modelling of population distribution and status, analysis of movement data and development of innovative research projects to better understand marine megafauna and threatened species and their responses to potential pressures and disturbances. Research will focus on a range of species from fish and sharks |

| | |
|---|---|
| | through to marine reptiles and marine mammals with marine turtles likely to be the main focus. |
| **Position Responsibilities:** | • Undertake independent research on an array of marine megafauna and threatened species including field work, data collection, data synthesis and advanced data analysis.<br>• Contribute to established research projects on marine megafauna and threatened species, and establish new projects, approaches and analyses to advance the applicability and outputs of this research.<br>• Lead statistical analysis, interpretation and reporting of data, including extensive data sets owned by AIMS and collaborators, to understand marine megafauna and threatened species populations in collaboration with other AIMS Research scientists, and external clients/stakeholders.<br>• Allocates activities, directs tasks and manages resources to meet objectives<br>• Lead and assist in the planning and preparation of research proposals<br>• Build and maintain relationships with stakeholders including government and industry end-users of research outputs.<br>• Plan and execute major fieldwork campaigns, including in remote locations.<br>• Communicate results and outcomes of research to clients and the scientific community through high quality oral and written reports and publications.<br>• Participate as a member of a team and contribute to team goals and project outcomes.<br>**AIMS Core:**<br>• Comply with AIMS' Code of Conduct ensuring the standards of conduct required of an AIMS staff member are upheld.<br>• Be an active and contributing employee dedicated to upholding and promoting AIMS' Strategy 2030 and acting accordance with our Values. |

| **Key Responsibilities and Performance Standards** | |
|---|---|
| **Science Outputs:** | **Milestones:** Ensure the successful completion of specific scientific activities as outlined within the Research Team Plan.<br><br>**Publications:** Lead and contribute to scientific papers for national/international refereed scientific journals.<br><br>**Presentations:** Present work progress and new relevant techniques at research team meetings and national/international conferences.<br><br>**Participation:** in seminars, and national/international conferences.<br><br>**Intellectual Assets**: Identify emerging intellectual property resulting from AIMS research and initiate appropriate actions to protect AIMS IP Assets.<br><br>**Reports:** Lead data analysis and writing of reports to meet contractual deadlines.<br><br>• **Clients:** Liaise with stakeholders, industry clients and ensure client satisfaction with reports and research results. |
| **Work Health and Safety (For All Staff)** | • Comply with AIMS' WHS policies and procedures to ensure a safe workplace.<br>• Identify workplace hazards and take corrective action with your supervisor's guidance.<br>• Take reasonable care to ensure your own safety and health at work.<br>• Avoid adversely affecting the safety and physical or psychological health of any other person.<br>• Identify and report health and safety hazards, incidents, injuries or property damage at the workplace.<br>• Comply with health and safety instructions as indicated.<br>• Ensure correct Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is used for the task or activity as applicable. Take care to follow signage and direction as indicated.<br>• Complete WHS Inductions as directed.<br>• Strong commitment to and sound knowledge of principles and practices of Work Health and Safety and Workplace Diversity and Inclusion. |

| | |
|---|---|
| | • Ensure early reporting of physical or psychological factors that may impact on the completion of your daily position responsibilities so that reasonable adjustments may be considered.<br>• Comply with Visitor Registration procedures and ensure visitors that you sponsor complete the relevant WHS inductions prior to attendance at the applicable AIMS site. |
| **Work Health & Safety – Minimum Functional Requirements** | Participate in Manual Task (Functional) Assessments and Fit for Work medical assessments as required.<br><br>Minimum functional requirements*:<br><br>{{TABLE1}}<br><br>*AIMS is an inclusive employer and will assess if modifications to the above work requirements can be made if provided with Reasonable Adjustment criteria from your Treating Doctor or other suitably qualified medical professional. Please consider the inherent physical requirements of the Position when making your request for Reasonable Adjustment.*<br><br>• Willingness and ability to participate in fieldwork activities at remote, off-shore locations, for extended periods of time.<br>• It is a requirement of this role that you are and remain fully vaccinated against COVID-19. Please note the sighting of proof of vaccination will be required as a pre commencement requirement. |
| **Intellectual Assets:** | • Ensure compliance with AIMS' Intellectual Property policies, procedures and guidelines to ensure AIMS' intellectual assets are appropriately protected and managed. |
| **Financial responsibilities and accountabilities and delegations:** | • Delegations are in line with Financial and Contract Delegation Policy, which includes authorisation levels for Financial, Enterprise Agreement (supervisory), HS&E and General Administrative activities.<br>• Contribute to positional budget requirements.<br>• Manage AIMS funds and resources in a responsible manner and within delegation.<br>• Comply with AIMS' Fraud Prevention Plan ensuring the standards of conduct and ethical behaviour required of an AIMS staff member are upheld and that suspected fraudulent activity is prevented and/or reported. |
| **Working as a team:** | • To work constructively as a member of a multi-disciplinary team that values diversity while ensuring the achievement of AIMS' goals and objectives.<br>• Perform the role of Cruise Leader (lead field trips) as required.<br>• Well-developed interpersonal and communication skills including the capabilities to effectively consult, collaborate and liaise with other team members on science/technical and non-science/technical issues for the purpose of achieving team objectives and maintaining a positive team environment. |
| **External Customer, Partner, Collaborator and Stakeholder Requirements:** | • Nurture existing relationships and initiate new ones in consultation with the CEO and other ALT members.<br>• Take an active role in engaging with external partners, collaborators and stakeholders in promoting AIMS research capabilities. |
| **Innovation, problem solving and continuous improvement responsibilities:** | • Assist in the improvement of the day-to-day operations, systems and processes associated with AIMS.<br>• Support team members to review and analyse processes to identify improvements and celebrate efforts towards continuous improvement.<br>• Approach all tasks and activities from a risk management prospective. |

Table embedded above (Minimum functional requirements):

| | |
|---|---|
| Maximum lift expected (5kg, 10kg, 25 kg) | 25kg |
| % role mobilising | 10% |
| % role sitting | 85% |
| % role standing/static positions | 5% |
| % role diving | 0% |
| Work in offshore or remote locations for extended periods of time | 15% |

| | |
|---|---|
| | • Apply critical thinking to provide solutions to scientific problems. Initiate and progress the research project by showing innovation in data management, data analysis ("R" univariate and multivariate statistics) and interpretation.<br>• Continually consider ways to improve project design or outputs to improve the research program<br>• Assist in the improvement of daily operations, systems and processes associated with AIMS research. |
| **Performance management and planning responsibilities:** | • Plan work activities to ensure the achievement of timelines.<br>• Ensure timely and accurate completion of required tasks.<br>• Actively participate in own personal performance planning and evaluation.<br>• Successfully participate in the AIMS annual Performance and Development program.<br>• Contribute to positional requirements to operational planning. Identify recruitment needs and recommend to supervisor. |
| **Communication responsibilities:** | • Comply with AIMS' Social Media policy.<br>• Ensure use of private Social Media accounts and other e-communication platforms are in compliance with AIMS policies and procedures, as amended from time to time.<br>• Refer to Corporate Style Guide for the production of documents, procedures, presentations and other communication material.<br>• Communicate diplomatically and effectively with personnel from AIMS and a variety of external organisations and stakeholder groups at different levels.<br>• Interact with Supervisor, Team and Program members and collaborators to facilitate the achievement of team goals and objectives. |
| **Technology and Equipment:** | Utilise AIMS Technology and Equipment as required and directed such as:<br>• Networked personal computer and general office equipment.<br>• EDMS – TechOne ECM, Procurement, P&C, Finance modules<br>• Microsoft Project, Microsoft 365 applications<br>• AIMS Fleet Vehicles (including Commuter Car Arrangements) |
| **Selection Criteria**<br>**Qualifications, Skills and Experience** | |
| **Essential Qualifications and Experience:** | • PhD in a relevant discipline and appropriate postdoctoral experience and publications demonstrating substantive and impactful work on the ecology of marine megafauna and threatened species.<br>• Strong quantitative skills in marine ecology, especially movement and spatial ecology and demonstrated experience in spatial analysis and modelling using R, GIS or similar (e.g. Python, Matlab).<br>• Demonstrated experience leading field programs that include sampling of marine megafauna, especially marine turtles.<br>• Demonstrated success in attracting external research funding and project management.<br>• Current C Class Open Drivers Licence (or equivalent) or the willingness to obtain. |
| **Desirable Qualifications and Experience:** | • Demonstrated experience with marine turtle research.<br>• Coxswains certificate.<br>• Demonstrated ability and motivation to engage and collaborate with a range of government, scientific, industry and community-based organisations including First Nations people and Aboriginal Rangers. |

**Darwin (NT) Facility**

Our research in Darwin takes place at the Arafura Timor Research Facility (ATRF), only 15 minutes' drive from the city centre, within the boundaries of the North Australia campus of the Australian National University and adjacent to the Charles Darwin University.

The Arafura–Timor region, in which Darwin is a scientific and commercial hub, is linguistically, culturally and biologically diverse, which provides valuable links between the biophysical and social sciences..

**Finding us** (view more on our website):

From the Darwin CBD, follow the Stuart Highway for several kilometres, then turn left onto Bagot Road and head towards Casuarina. Stay on Bagot Road until it becomes Trower Road, turn left onto Dripstone Road, and then right into Ellengowan Road at the roundabout in front of Charles Darwin University.

The sign at the front of the complex reads: 'North Australia Research Unit and Arafura Timor Research Facility'. There is reserved car parking within. There is no direct public transport to the office.

**Darwin Traditional Owner Group**

Darwin is treasured country to its traditional owners, the Larrakia people, who are prominent and active members of the local community.

The traditional owners of Darwin are the Larrakia (saltwater) people. Larrakia country runs far beyond the municipal boundaries of Darwin, covering the area from the Cox Peninsula in the west to Adelaide River in the east. The Larrakia people established the first trade routes in the region, trading with the Tiwi, Wagait and Wulna people as well as with Indonesian fishermen. Their stories, songs and ceremonies echo the strong connection and understanding they have with the saltwater country.

**Living in Darwin**

Darwin is a modern capital city highly valued by its diverse and highly multicultural population, with a strong position in business and industry. Darwin has evolved from its days as a laid-back frontier town and while it still retains its relaxed charm, it has become a sophisticated city. Many visitors are surprised to find that it has accommodation, eateries, clubs, pubs, museums and other amenities that are equal to what you'll find in the southern cities.

Our city is both modern and multicultural, boasting a population made up of people from more than 60 nationalities and 70 different ethnic backgrounds. The city is characterised by its many exciting cultural festivals and weekly food and craft markets.

For further information visit **City of Darwin Website**.