



School of Social Science Undergraduate Field Trip – Solomon Islands July 2023

Call for expressions of interest

Academics from the School of Social Science will lead a field trip to Solomon Islands for 12 students from **5-19 July 2023*** funded by the [Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's New Colombo Plan Mobility Projects](#). This is the first time a group of undergraduate students from the School of Social Science will have the opportunity to study in Solomon Islands, and if eligible, to gain credit from this experience towards your undergraduate degree program.

We'd love to receive an expression of interest from you if this sounds like your kind of educational adventure.

The Program

The purpose of this program is to immerse students in a field study focused on the environmental and social challenges facing Solomon Islands, and to learn firsthand about innovative and resilient local level responses to these challenges. By joining this program, you will have the opportunity to be part of a student group that will embark on a unique transformative learning experience via exposure to multiple perspectives on environmental and social issues in the Pacific context. You will gain new knowledge and understanding on effective governance, responses to climate change, women's involvement in environmental management, and sustainable local livelihoods, amongst other themes and issues.

As part of this experience, you will travel with a group of up to 12 UQ students, and you will be supported in-country by two UQ academics with long term research experience in Solomon Islands, as well as a number of in-country organisations who will host us during our visit. We will also travel with two translators during our time. All this will provide the basis for a rich and meaningful experience, with outcomes that will include your development of new competencies to work effectively in diverse teams, and in cross cultural environments.

The trip will consist of a range of activities in the capital Honiara, as well as in Choiseul Province, where we will be investigating the social political and environmental impacts of climate change prevention and mitigation in a Pacific micro-state. By staying in villages for most of the trip, you will be directly engaged as a participant observer, as well as attending workshops and meetings to enhance your learning. You will also have the opportunity to practice your research skills.

Who Can Apply?

This activity is designed for students taking a major in the social sciences. The field trip is offered as an elective* (#2 Units) which will consist of: (1) a range of preparatory activities (including cross cultural training, as well as curriculum related to Australia/Pacific relations, environmental and resource governance and climate change in the Pacific); (2) 2 weeks in the field; and (3) assessed written and oral work on return to Australia. The field trip will be conducted in July 2020, and students will be expected to engage in preparatory work in the 2 weeks leading up to the field trip, and to complete assessment within 6 weeks of returning to Australia.

To apply for this opportunity, you must meet the following DFAT grant conditions:

1. Be an Australian citizen with an Australian passport;



2. Not a citizen of, and does not have residency rights for, Solomon Islands;
3. Enrolled in an on-shore campus of an Australian University for the duration of the Mobility Project;
4. Undertaking a Bachelor Degree or Bachelor Honours Degree for the duration of the Mobility Project;
5. Between 18 and 28 years of age** at the commencement of the Mobility Project;
6. Not commenced a period of overseas study in the same Host Location as the Mobility Project prior to the Completion Date; and
7. Not previously received a short-term NCP grant.

UQ Requirement

8. Your degree program will need to have remaining space for an elective.

The group will be accompanied in Solomon Islands by Professor Kristen Lyons and Dr Peter Walters from the School of Social Science. Both have extensive experience in Solomon Islands.

Please note that while travel in the Solomon Islands is always rewarding, it can also lack many of the 'creature comforts' we are used to in Australia. You will be out of mobile communications for parts of the trip, and you will be required to share accommodation. Food is good but can be basic. Internal travel also involves flying in small aircraft and travelling in outboard canoes. You will also be required to take appropriate precautions to ensure health and wellbeing, including vaccinations for travel to the Pacific, as well as malaria prevention.

DFAT has provided funding for the field school of AUD3,000 per student. These funds will cover a large portion of your expenses, including airfares and accommodation. However, you will also be required to contribute up to \$1200 of your own funds. This is necessary to cover all costs related to this intensive field based experience. Please note, the cost of flights, accommodation and fuel have all increased considerably in recent years. In the instance where final travel costs are lower than currently estimated, a small refund will be made to all students

Submit an Expression of Interest

We are now taking expressions of interest for this activity. If you are interested, please submit a 500-word proposal by **Friday 10th March, 2023** that details why you would like to join this field trip. You might like to reflect on what you would aspire to learn through this experience, as well as any relevant background study, volunteering or other work that might support your preparedness for this educational experience. Please note, we are not looking for simply high academic achievement (that's the easy stuff)! Rather, we are looking for students who are willing to embrace the opportunity for deep learning about a close Pacific neighbour.

We also require the following details in your application:

- Age on 1 July 2023
- Gender
- Whether you identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
- Any disability that may affect your travel
- Any dietary restrictions

Please send your EOI to student.socsci@uq.edu.au, by **Friday 10 March** or for more information please contact Kristen: kristen.lyons@uq.edu.au or Peter: p.walters@uq.edu.au



Shortlisted applicants will be notified by **Friday 17th March 2023**. Interviews of shortlisted applicants will be conducted the following week 2023.

All applicants will be notified of outcomes by **Friday 24th March**. Please note that selection is dependent on a satisfactory academic progression check by School administration staff.

* To be confirmed depending on flight availability but return dates will ensure all students are available for the beginning of Semester 2 classes.

** There are a limited number of places available for over 28s, so please submit an EOI if you are interested, regardless of your age, as we are committed to ensuring a diverse cohort is included.