

**PhD Research Scholarship in Computer Gaming –
Child Sexual Abuse Prevention
Call for Expressions of Interest**

The University of the Sunshine Coast is seeking applications for a PhD Scholarship commencing 2009 to **research, design, implement and evaluate the success of a computer game to teach safety awareness skills and strategies to children to prevent them from becoming victims of child sexual abuse.**

The scholarship is funded as part of the Telstra Foundation / Queensland Police Service / Daniel Morcombe Foundation project in partnership with Education Queensland, Sunshine Cooloola Services Against Sexual Violence Inc (SCSASV), Laurel House, and the Department of Child Safety.

Background:

The aim of the project is to determine how best to engage and educate children aged 8 to 10 around issues of sexual abuse using contemporary computer games and technology, to create professional computer gaming environments, to evaluate the affect of these games on child engagement, learning, behaviour and wellbeing, and to deploy the games into schools across Australia.

The PhD student will work closely with the project team on the larger FeelingSafe project, which aims to reduce the incidence of child sexual abuse by increasing children's awareness of situations that might impact upon their personal safety and empowering them with the ability to act, while cultivating stronger community knowledge and support for and about child sexual abuse prevention.

Role of the PhD Candidate:

Under supervision and with guidance from the researchers, the student will:

- Undertake and contribute to research publications, on-going progress reports and project reports;
- Undertake literature search and review;
- Build and maintain strong links with the partners, communities and key local government areas associated with this project;
- Work closely with the University of the Sunshine Coast researchers and the project steering group;
- Work closely with schools, principals, teachers, parents and children to develop engaging and educational gaming resources
- Research, design, implement and evaluate one or more computer games / computer game environments including a range of platforms and game play
- Attend and present research findings at conferences (national/international);
- Thesis production;
- *Time Commitment: 3 years full time, can commence immediately*

Remuneration:

This is a three year full-time scholarship. The tax-free stipend is \$25,000 per annum. Relocation assistance is also available.

The scholarship will be awarded on the basis of academic excellence and demonstrated research potential. The scholarship will be available for immediate commencement.

Key Selection Criteria:

Applicants from a variety of creative and user-focused computing backgrounds including Computer Science, Computer Game Design, Human-Computer Interaction, Interactive Multimedia, Mobile Gaming, Graphic Artists and Animators. Applications should have an interest in community-based research, education, and computer gaming, and strong programming qualifications, skills and experience.

In addition, the successful applicant will be expected to have:

- Strong academic/research track record with either a first class or second class A honours degree, a research Masters degree or a coursework Masters degree with 25% research training minimum;
- Excellent computer programming skills including C++, .NET, Java, and Macromedia and Adobe products
- Experience of developing computer games
- Excellent organisational, time keeping, and problem solving skills; The ability to work independently in the research environment;
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills;
- Willingness to work full-time on this project;
- Capacity to be based at the University of the Sunshine Coast campus, Sippy Downs, Queensland

The project will be supervised by Dr Christian Jones at USC. Dr Jones has worked with commercial games developers including Sony Computer Entertainment Europe and has developed automotive Serious Games with Stanford University (US), Ford (US) and Toyota (Japan).

For more information please contact Dr Jones on cmjones@usc.edu.au or telephone on +61 7 5459 4849 or mobile +61 (0)4243 58195