

\$10,000 Travel Fellowship to study sustainable irrigation

Applications close at the end of this month for the 2008 National Program for Sustainable Irrigation/IAL Travel Fellowship Award.

The award is valued at \$10,000 for a 12 month fellowship and is open to any scientific achiever under 40 years of age working in irrigation research or development.

“The Fellowship provides for overseas travel to study issues related to sustainable irrigation, giving the winner an opportunity to develop their knowledge and industry networks and bring their findings back to Australia,” says Acting CEO of Irrigation Australia Ltd, Ms Alison Carmichael.

The sponsor for the \$10,000 travel fellowship is the National Program for Sustainable Irrigation with Irrigation Australia Ltd providing mentoring and support for the winner during their 12 month Fellowship.

The winner of the Award in 2007 was Kimberley Graham, a first class Honours student from the University of Melbourne, who toured Brazil and China to examine two diverse approaches to water policy development, implementation and practice.

Kimberley, a project manager with WSP Environmental, an environmental consulting company, said the tour was far beyond her expectations.

“In China I studied the interactions between the provincial level and federal governments in irrigation policy development. I was lucky enough to speak to ministers involved in the development of irrigation policy at the federal level,” said Kimberley.

“In Brazil, I met and talked to so many incredible people, from almost every organization that is somehow involved in water. Highlights included meeting the Director of the World Bank in Brazil and visiting the city of Petrolina where the scale of irrigation projects, in an area that receives so little rain, is unbelievable.”

Kimberley was also invited to a conference in Sao Paulo by the Nature Conservancy and IBM, which included a field trip to understand the complexity and conflicts associated with Sao Paulo's water supply, as well as visiting the first farm in Brazil to receive payments from the government for 'ecological services' to improve water quality.

The National Program for Sustainable Irrigation/IAL Travel Fellowship Award will provide similar opportunities for this year's successful applicant.

For further information contact IAL on (02) 94760142 or visit the IAL website, www.irrigation.org.au under "News", to download a copy of the award guidelines. Applications close on Friday 29 August 2008.

The travel fellowship award will be presented soon after in Canberra on 15 September 2008. ON their return, the winner will be required to report on their findings at water forums in Australia including the IAL conference to be held in Swan Hill, Victoria in October 2009.

Photo caption: *Kimberley Graham standing in front of the artificial Lake Sobradinho in the state of Pernambuco in Brazil. The lake enables significant irrigated agriculture to occur as well as providing 60% of the hydroenergy for north east of Brazil. It is 320km long and has a surface area of over 4,200 square kilometres.*

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