

Fully Funded Riddet Institute Master's Scholarship Opportunity in Sensory and Consumer Science For New Zealand/Australian Resident

Location: BSI, Mount Albert, Auckland

1 Years Full-time Fees and \$30K Stipend (awarded by the [Riddet Institute](#))

Measuring Consumer response to Dairy and Plant-based products

[The Sensory & Consumer Science Team](#) of the Bioeconomy Science Institute (BSI) in conjunction with [Feast](#), the Food experience and sensory testing Lab, is inviting applications for a fully funded one-year Master's researcher to carry out a research project to understand consumer response to Dairy and Plant-based dairy analogues under the supervision of Prof Joanne Hort (Feast), Dr Roger Harker and Christina Roigard (BSI). The research will be undertaken with the BSI team in their advanced sensory laboratory in Auckland which includes 18 state-of-the-art booths, 2 training and focus group rooms and an extensive sample preparation area. BSI is a new organisation that brings together AgResearch, Manaaki Whenua – Landcare Research, Plant & Food Research, and Scion (<https://www.bioeconomyscience.co.nz/>).

This project aims to understand the relative impact of texture manipulation (both thickness and mouthfeel modifications) and flavour (sweetness, sourness, and aromatics) on the perception of dairy yogurt and plant-based yogurt alternatives. Initially applying methods developed in BSI low alcohol wine research, the successful applicant will develop their own programme of research within a team that has experience in dairy and plant-based products (milks, cheeses, and yoghurts) to improve sensory characterisation and understanding of how the complexity of different consumption situations distracts from that precision.

We are seeking a graduate with a BFoodtech Honours degree at a minimum achievement of 2.1, or an equivalent degree in Food Science or other similar/relevant discipline, e.g. Psychology who meets Massey's [Master of Food Technology](#) entry [requirements](#). This includes English language proficiency at IELTS 6.5 overall or equivalent if English is not your native language. Ideally you will have studied sensory science or perception as part of your undergraduate degree, have carried out projects with human participants and have an interest in food choice behaviour. You should demonstrate excellent organisational, communication and interpersonal skills. In return, you will benefit from the support of the broader Feast and BSI research teams. The Riddet Institute scholarship will give you an opportunity to benefit from being part of a wider research community that is a National Centre of Research Excellence for New Zealand, as well as a vibrant sensory research community in BSI and its collaborator Feast.

Only applicants with New Zealand/Australian permanent residency will be considered. The successful applicant is expected to start early in 2026. Applicants must submit a cover letter clearly indicating why they would be the right candidate for this scholarship and their CV to J.larking1@massey.ac.nz. **Applicants are encouraged to contact Dr Harker roger.harker@plantandfood.co.nz or Professor Hort j.hort@massey.ac.nz to discuss the scholarship before applying.** The final **closing date is 12 Jan, 2026**, but applications will be considered as they are received, and the scholarship may be awarded sooner.