Position title: Research Assistant

Position Classification: Project Assistant

Job Description:

POSITION SUMMARY:
The Centre for Collaborative Research on Hoarding at the University of British Columbia is a psychology research lab interested in the phenomenon of hoarding disorder. The Centre is seeking an undergraduate student to join our research team as a project assistant. The undergraduate student will work closely with faculty members and graduate students to contribute to studies examining cognitive functioning in relation to hoarding disorder.

Research in the area of hoarding disorder is relatively new and not clearly understood. The current projects seek to examine the relationship between cognitive functioning and different aspects associated with hoarding disorder, such as saving behaviours, severe clutter in the home, and emotion and empathy for objects.

Volunteer, paid, or Honour’s/Directed Study positions are available in the lab based on interest and experience.

DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES:

• Recruit potential participants using posters and online websites.
• Complete a multi-week training provided by the lab on conducting telephone screening for research participants, including learning to conduct the MINI-H (an assessment of hoarding disorder).
• Contact and determine eligibility of potential participants by administering the MINI-H over the phone.
• Schedule and follow-up with participants about their study appointments.
• Set up experimental equipment and administer study measures according to lab protocols.
• Enter and double check data using Microsoft Excel according to established protocols.
• Assist with validating and cleaning of data.
• Position may include assisting with data analysis.

These duties and responsibilities will be performed under the direct supervision of the principal investigator and senior lab staff. The student will attend weekly lab meetings to ensure effective communication. In addition, the student will engage in regular meetings with graduate students to receive feedback and ensure optimal performance is being achieved. The student will be encouraged to ask questions and suggest ways in which their learning experience could be improved. These tasks will require a strong commitment in time and effort. The tasks also require that the student acknowledge the sensitive and confidential nature of the lab’s work. As such, the student must adhere to strict ethical standards and confidentiality, as well as maintain rapport with potential participants and individuals in contact with the lab.

Qualifications:

• Undergraduate student enrolled in the UBC Psychology program.
• Must be able to work up to 10 hours/week. This position may require work on some weekends.
• Students able to join our team during summer 2019 and continuing through the next winter 2019/20 academic terms are preferred.
• Previous experience in psychology research strongly preferred.
• Previous experience with individuals from a vulnerable population preferred.
• Knowledge of Microsoft Excel is preferred.
• Excellent interpersonal skills; ability to work with a diversity of people in a calm, courteous, and effective manner.
• Excellent oral and written communication skills.
• Excellent organization and time management skills.
• Ability to work both independently and as a group with other lab members.
• High level of accuracy and attention to detail.
• Experience with communicating with individuals of various backgrounds in a professional setting.
• Completion of the Tri-Council Policy Statement (TCPS 2) online tutorial.

Student Learning Components:

Orientation and Training:
• An orientation to the lab and an overview of psychology research on hoarding disorder
• Introductions to the principal investigator, collaborators, graduate students, and research assistants at the Centre for Collaborative Research on Hoarding
• Introductions to past and on-going research projects in the lab
• Overview of tasks and duties
• Review of lab policies, protocols, and procedures
• Job-specific orientation and training as required for the projects
• In-person training from the principal investigator, graduate students, lab manager, and senior RAs

Feedback, Ongoing support and Reflection:
• The supervisor and other lab members are always available to offer assistance and answer questions
• Continuous positive and constructive feedback as well as transparent, open communication
• Specific feedback provided after completing daily tasks
• Frequent opportunity for reflection through positive feedback and open communication

Mentorship, Encouragement, Support, and Networking Opportunities:
• Individual mentorship offered by the principal investigator, grad students, lab manager, and senior RAs
• The student will be supported by lab manager and peer research assistants
• Opportunity to connect and network with other undergraduate and graduate students working at the Centre for Collaborative Research on Hoarding, as well as collaborators of the lab working in Psychology and other departments such as UBC’s School of Social Work.

Personal, Professional, and Academic Development:
• The student will be encouraged to provide new ideas and introduce efficiencies to research paradigms and procedures. The student will gain insight into psychology research design and administration.
• The student will contact potential participants to assess for eligibility and schedule research appointments while maintaining good rapport. The student will develop strong communication, organization, and time management skills.
• The student will conduct various assessments and psychological measures to assess the participant’s eligibility, emotional state, or neural activity. The student will learn to transition knowledge from theory into real world practice and gain basic clinical experience interacting with adults who may have mental disorders.
• The student will be responsible for assisting with data entry, and possibly data cleaning and analysis. The student will have the opportunity to gain hands-on experience with research tools such as Microsoft Excel or SPSS.