**2020 Summer Winter Research Project Description**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Project title:** | Episodic foresight and emotion regulation flexibility |
| **Positions available:** | **1** |
| **Project duration and delivery** | Duration:   * 25-30 hours week * 10 weeks * On-site attendance is required for face-to-face participant data collection. Other components can be done remotely. |
| **Description:** | There are 2 components to this project.  Episodic foresight (EF): EF allows us to mentally project ourselves into the future, to act in adaptive future-oriented ways in the present; it is thought to be a uniquely human ability. However, research has found that this essential ability declines as we age. Given how critical episodic foresight is in our day-to-day lives (think planning dinner, managing finances, taking medications), any decline in our ability may have important implications for our capacity to function autonomously, as well as broader implications for our quality of life. EF has been shown to decline with age. The goal of this project is to examine how emotion impacts EF using a behavioural, the Virtual Week- Foresight. This is a computer game where participants identify and solve common daily problems as they move around an online board. Our longer-term goal is to establish whether the presence or absence of emotional content is an important determinant of episodic foresight capacity at different stages of the adult lifespan. This project will involve a) recruiting adult participants who are 65+ years from the community, b) recruiting adult participants aged 25-65 from the community, c) conducting face-to-face research sessions with these participants, c) cleaning and preparing data for analysis. This project is run in collaboration with Professor Julie Henry and Ms Shalini Gautam.  Emotion regulation flexibility (ER): Our ability to regulate our emotions in response to daily life hassles and major life events is critical to adaptive functioning. Three components are thought to be important in facilitating regulation – the ability to identify when emotion regulation is required (context sensitivity, including episodic foresight), the ability to apply the best strategy for the situation (repertoire flexibility), and the ability to evaluate the effectiveness of regulation attempts (feedback sensitivity). This project will involve assisting with online data collection and preparing data for analysis from 2 longitudinal studies including an ecological momentary assessment study and coding content about emotional and potentially stressful events. The aim is to test theoretical propositions regarding emotion regulation across different populations. These tasks can largely be completed remotely. |
| **Expected outcomes and deliverables:** | Scholars will gain skills in conducting face-to-face research and online data collection methods for longitudinal studies. They will also be introduced to longitudinal data analysis methods. |
| **Suitable for:** | We are looking for one highly motivated student to assist with this project over the summer. Although this project is open to all students, it would be most suited to a 3rd or 4th year student who is interested in ageing, and/or prospection and emotion research. All necessary training will be provided.  Applicants must have an excellent attention to detail, be able to work individually but also receptive and able to appropriately seek guidance from others. They must also have a reasonably high level of technical skills or be receptive to learning new technical skills. |
| **Primary Supervisor:** | Dr Fiona Maccallum,  Dr Julie Henry, Ms Shalini Gautam |
| **Further info:** | If you have any questions about the project, please feel free to email Dr Fiona Maccallum or Prof Julie Henry. |
| **Will you be collaborating with an external organisation on this project (for example NGO, government agency or private industry)?** | NA |