**2022/2023 Summer Research Project Description**

Please use this template to create a description of each research project, eligibility requirements and expected deliverables. Project details can then be uploaded to each faculty, school, institute, and centre webpage prior to the launch of the program.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Project title:** | **Do older adults see illusory faces like younger adults do?**  |
| **Project duration, hours of engagement & delivery mode** | The project will involve 25-30 hours per week for 10 weeks during the summer break. Because the project involves face-to-face data collection at UQ, some on-site attendance is required.  |
| **Description:** | Humans are hardwired to perceive faces and as a result often see illusory faces in everyday objects. This common phenomenon is referred to as face pareidolia, and is consistently observed in younger adults. However, it remains to be seen whether normal adult ageing influences face pareidolia. We know that older adults show difficulties in human face perception, therefore it might be expected that these difficulties also extend to illusory faces, but this is yet to be tested empirically. Older adults also exhibit a robust ‘positivity effect’, whereby they show an attentional preference for positive over negative information. This poses an interesting question – are older adults more likely to see illusory faces that depict positive relative to negative expressions (i.e., happiness)? This summer project will be the first answer these research questions. |
| **Expected outcomes and deliverables:** | This project is a collaboration with Professor Julie Henry and Dr. Jess Taubert. Together, we will work to better understand how normal adult ageing influences face pareidolia. The successful applicant will learn how to run a research project; including how to design an experiment, how to collect behavioural data, and how to analyse and write up the data for publication. We intend on publishing the data generated from this project in a high quality journal and the summer scholar will be given an opportunity to be included as a co-author on the publication. |
| **Suitable for:** | This position will be best suited to a third or fourth year psychology student with a particular interest in ageing and/or social cognition research.  |
| **Primary Supervisor:** | Dr. Sarah Grainger |
| **Further info:** | If you would like to chat further about the project, please get in touch with Sarah via email.  |