**2023 Winter 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.

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| **Project title:** | Brain aberrations associated with childhood adversity and complex trauma |
| **Project duration is 4 weeks, what are the expected hours of engagement & delivery mode** | 20 – 36 hours per week  Part of this project can be completed remotely, but brief weekly update and progress meetings will be required. |
| **Description:** | Complex post-traumatic stress disorder (complex PTSD) is a severe mental illness that develops in response to prolonged or repeated traumatic life events (Maercker et al. 2022). It has recently been adopted as a new diagnosis in the ICD-11 (World Health Organisation, 2018). Complex PTSD is distinct from PTSD in that it recognises the differential effects of chronic as opposed to situational trauma. Survivors of childhood adversity are particularly vulnerable to develop complex PTSD (McLaughlin et al. 2017). To date, it is poorly understood whether aberrant brain development during early childhood and young adulthood in response to chronic trauma is an underlying factor in the susceptibility to complex PTSD and other mental illnesses later in life.  This project involves conducting a literature review on structural, functional and connectivity brain changes reported in childhood adversity and complex trauma. The student will receive guidance and training on performing the literature review. There will be an opportunity to be added as co-author to a publication upon successful completion of the literature review. |
| **Expected outcomes and deliverables:** | Students will work on a literature review for a meta-analysis. Detailed record keeping and populating of an excel spreadsheet with data from reviewed articles will be expected. |
| **Suitable for:** | Someone with a keen interest in trauma-related disorders and psychopathology. Someone who is interested in learning how to do literature reviews and meta-analysis and is open for a challenge.  Ideally someone in 3rd year or honours who might be interested in a PhD program after completing their undergraduate training. |
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