



2027 Summer Research Project Template

Help us present your project in a way that connects with the right students. Thoughtful, engaging descriptions tend to attract stronger and more suitable applications. Thank you for putting a project forward - these programs rely on your contribution, and we couldn't do it without you.

Section	Description
Project title	Developing leadership to enhance team functioning and well-being
Hours & delivery	Two positions available 6 weeks: 11 January - 19 February 2027 30 hours per week Hybrid: UQ St Lucia and remote; working arrangements to be agreed with the scholars, with flexibility across the week.
About the project (150–250 words)	Leadership plays a critical role in shaping whether teams thrive or operate poorly. Traditional and popular accounts of leadership are often based on assumptions that leadership is a product of fixed qualities possessed by special individuals, despite substantial evidence challenging these assumptions (for this reason, they have also been referred to as 'zombie leadership' beliefs). The social identity approach provides a fundamentally different perspective: effective leadership is not about individual leaders ('me' or 'you'), but a social group process revolving around creating, representing, advancing, and embedding a sense of 'us'. A growing body of research suggests that this form of identity leadership can support engagement, performance, team functioning, and well-being. This project is part of a larger project examining how leadership can be developed to help teams function well and support the health and well-being of their members. One likely focus of the project will be a systematic review and meta-analysis of leadership development interventions that foster identity leadership and their effects on team functioning and well-being. Summer Scholars will work together as a research team in the process of data collection, curation, and analysis, thereby contributing to a broader program of research advancing understanding of leadership, groups, performance, and well-being.
What you'll do (100-150 words)	You will work collaboratively with another scholar and the broader research team to refine the research questions. Activities include searching and screening the literature, extracting and coding information from studies, evaluating study quality, synthesising findings, and developing reproducible research workflows. Depending on the available evidence and interests, the project may also involve conducting meta-analytic analyses, developing communication outputs (e.g., infographics), and helping design materials for future leadership research and interventions. We will meet regularly to discuss progress, solve problems together, and make decisions about the direction of the project. The work will be structured so that each scholar has meaningful individual responsibilities while also contributing to shared goals.
What you'll learn (100–150 words)	You will gain hands-on experience in how a research question develops into a rigorous research project. You are likely to develop skills in systematic literature searching, screening and coding studies, evaluating research quality, evidence synthesis and reproducible data analysis (where appropriate), and communicating research findings.



	You will also develop a deeper understanding of contemporary leadership research, including the social identity approach to leadership and how leadership can shape team functioning, performance, and well-being. You will also gain experience coordinating research as part of a team, dividing and integrating work, discussing methodological decisions, and communicating research findings clearly to others.
Project outcomes (75–125 words)	By the end of the six-week program, we aim to have developed a clear synthesis of the evidence on how leadership can be developed to enhance team functioning and well-being. Depending on the final focus, outputs may include a systematic review database and coding framework, preliminary meta-analytic results, a research report or manuscript outline, and recommendations for the next stage of the research program. Scholars will also prepare a short presentation or summary of what we have learned on the journey so far.
Who should apply? (75–125 words)	This project would suit students interested in social, organisational, health, or applied psychology and in understanding how research can improve leadership and team life. A good fit would be someone who is highly motivated, curious, and willing to learn, as well as conscientious, reliable, organised, and comfortable working both independently and collaboratively. Some familiarity with research methods and statistics would be useful, but prior experience conducting systematic reviews or meta-analyses is not required. Students who enjoy reading and synthesising research, thinking critically about evidence and research translation, and contributing ideas to a shared project are particularly encouraged to apply.
Team & supervision (75–125 words)	The project will be supervised by Associate Professor Niklas Steffens in UQ's School of Psychology, situated within the Centre for Business and Organisational Psychology (CBOP) and the Social Identity and Groups Network (SIGN). Two Summer Scholars will work together as a small research team, with regular supervision and opportunities to discuss ideas, challenges, and emerging findings. The scholars will also be connected with a broader research program on social identity, leadership, performance, and well-being, and may have opportunities to engage with other researchers working in these areas. The aim is to create a supportive environment in which we can learn from one another while producing useful research together.
Additional opportunities (optional)	Depending on progress, scholars may have opportunities to present findings within CBOP or SIGN, contribute to a future empirical study and other research outputs, and connect with researchers working on identity leadership and leadership development. The project may also provide a useful pathway into later research experience, Honours, Master's, or higher-degree research.
Additional requirements (if applicable)	No additional formal requirements. Scholars should be available across the six-week program and willing to work independently and collaboratively.
Contact	Students can contact the supervisor (n.steffens@uq.edu.au) before applying if they have additional questions.