



2027 Summer Research Project

Section	Description
Project title	Collaborate with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at UQ to co-create components of Sharper Minds, a preventative, mental health promotion package
Hours & delivery	The project duration for the 2027 Summer program will be between 11 January and 19 February 2027. Expected hours of engagement on this project are 20 hours per week for 6 weeks (Total = 120 hours). It is suggested that this be completed as 4 x 5-hour days per week. We are also open to you breaking up your weekly hour commitment as needed to fit around other commitments you might have during the program period. The work will require in-person or hybrid (once-per-week) group meetings. Remote work is allowed for the rest of the week. Remote work will require you to work both individually and as part of a group. The project includes participating in a one-hour hybrid group orientation in the first week. We will review the overall project goals, and since it is a collaborative project, we will jointly develop specific objectives, identify skills you want to enhance as a student scholar, and specify skills you would like to acquire through this project. Our focus will be on leveraging everyone's strengths to meet the desired outcomes. We will accept up to four Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who may also identify as neurodivergent.
About the project (150–250 words)	Many university students know what helps them feel well, such as getting good sleep, staying hydrated and well nourished, staying connected with others, or managing stress, but this doesn't always translate into everyday habits. This gap can affect both wellbeing and academic success. Sharper Minds is a wellbeing program at UQ that helps students build healthy habits across six areas: <i>sleep, nutrition, exercise, mood, social connection, and study skills</i>. We know that culturally safe and relevant support is important for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Currently, Sharper Minds does not reflect the cultural perspectives and ways of knowing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. This project invites Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, including those who may identify as neurodivergent, to help us co-create components of Sharper Minds, ensuring they reflect your voices, experiences, and cultural knowledge. As a student partner, you'll share your perspective on what wellbeing support should look like when you started university, which would support your academic journey, as well as personal and social wellbeing. We want to co-create resources or components that feel relevant, respectful, and genuinely useful for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at UQ.
What you'll do (100-150 words)	Student partners will participate in a series of co-design workshops to share their perspectives and shape Sharper Minds' components. Activities will include: 1. Group discussions to explore what wellbeing means from your perspective, reviewing and providing feedback on existing components, and contributing ideas for culturally relevant content and resources. 2. Review of literature.



3. Sessions will include opportunities for storytelling, yarning, and collaborative activities in a culturally safe space, with your feedback directly informing the development and refinement of Sharper Minds.

4. It will also involve building resources.

1. Co-design and collaboration skills
2. Research experience
3. Build confidence in sharing your perspective in a professional setting
4. Self-advocacy
5. Critical thinking and creative problem-solving skills
6. Understanding of how participatory action research methodology works
7. Connections with other staff and researchers involved in this project
8. Meaningful contribution to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student wellbeing
9. Valuable experience to add to your CV.

What you'll learn
(100–150 words)

Project outcomes
(75–125 words)

The primary outcome of this project is the partnership itself, building genuine collaboration and helping students strengthen their skills throughout the process. As a secondary outcome, we hope to co-create culturally relevant components of Sharper Minds. While these components may not be ready to launch immediately after the project ends, we would welcome student partners to remain involved as voluntary advisors, continuing to guide the program's future development.

We welcome Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students from any discipline and year level at UQ. No specific coursework or prior research experience is required. What matters most is your willingness to share your perspective and lived experience.

Personal qualities that we are looking for:

Who should apply?
(75–125 words)

- An interest in health, mental health, wellbeing, or community-focused initiatives
- Comfortable working together within a group
- Creative
- Passionate about creating meaningful, culturally relevant support for their peers.

Team & supervision
(75–125 words)

The supervisor is Dr Radhika Tanksale. Radhika is a senior principal psychologist and project manager for Sharper Minds. She works in the School of Psychology. This project involves other staff, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and the Sharper Minds project team. Radhika will be involved in co-design activities and group discussions and will be the primary person to contact.

Additional opportunities
(optional)

This project may help to meet UQ researchers, staff, and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students engaged in health and wellbeing initiatives. For students interested in further study or research careers, this experience provides genuine insight into participatory research methods. We hope to disseminate the project outcomes to the broader UQ community. Student partners who wish to be involved can contribute.

Additional requirements
(if applicable)



Yes, students may contact the supervisor before applying.

Contact

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