RMIT UNIVERSITY

Position Description – First Nations Principal Research Fellow

Position Details

Position Title: First Nations Principal Research Fellow (Identified) –
Digital Inclusion Research Projects

College/Portfolio: College of Design and Social Context

School/Group: School of Media and Communication

Campus Location: Primarily based at Melbourne City campus, and the potential to work across other RMIT campuses as required.

Classification: Academic Level D   **Time Fraction:** 1.0

Employment Type: Fixed Term

Fixed Term Reason: Research

Reporting Line: Chief Investigator

No. of Direct reports: Nil

RMIT University

RMIT is a global university of technology, design and enterprise, committed to creating transformative experiences for students and making a meaningful impact through research, innovation, and engagement. For more information on RMIT University follow the links below.

https://www.rmit.edu.au/about
https://www.universitiesaustralia.edu.au/university/rmit-university/
https://www.rmit.edu.au/about/facts-figures

Our campuses in Melbourne (City, Brunswick, Bundoora, and Point Cook) are complemented by international campuses in Vietnam and a centre in Barcelona, Spain. We proudly acknowledge the Woi Wurrung and Boon Wurrung peoples of the eastern Kulin Nation on whose unceded lands our campuses are located.

We are deeply committed to reconciliation and Indigenous self-determination, embedding these values throughout our policies, culture and structures.

https://www.rmit.edu.au/about/our-locations-and-facilities

Why Join RMIT?

Our people are at the heart of everything we do. At RMIT, we value innovation, collaboration and impact. Our values are the heart (durrung) of who we are and what we stand for at RMIT. They guide what we do, how we make decisions, and how we treat each other.

Inclusion   **Imagination**   **Integrity**   **Courage**   **Passion**   **Impact**

Learn more about our values: https://www.rmit.edu.au/about/our-strategy/values

Organisational Accountabilities

RMIT is committed to the safety, wellbeing and inclusion of all staff and students. As a staff member, you are expected to comply with all relevant legislation and RMIT policies, including those related to: Equal opportunity, Occupational health and safety, Privacy and trade practices & Child safety standards:

Appointees are responsible for completing all required training and ensuring that they and their team members remain up to date on relevant compliance obligations.

Staff are expected to understand and support RMIT's child safe practices as part of their professional responsibilities. More about our child safety commitment: https://www.rmit.edu.au/about/our-locations-and-facilities/facilities/safety-security/child-safety.

Leadership at RMIT

At RMIT, leadership is not defined by position or hierarchy—it is a shared responsibility demonstrated by all staff, regardless of role or title. Leadership is grounded in our six core values, which guide and shape how we work together, make decisions, and create impact.

Effective leadership means consistently integrating these values into everyday actions and interactions, whether influencing a project outcome, supporting a colleague, or leading a team. All staff are expected to embody the principles of the *Be–Know–Do* Leadership Model:

Be – We are open and authentic, inclusive and empowering. We are purpose driven role models and communicators.
Know – We are self-aware, and understand our stakeholders, our sector and priorities.
Do – We set clear direction and expectations, we develop ourselves and others and promote mutual accountability to deliver results.

At every level, leadership at RMIT is about influence, contribution, and mindset. It is reflected in how we empower others, foster collaboration, and drive positive change through capability-building and alignment to strategic goals.

The College of Vocational Education

The College of Design and Social Context encompasses RMIT University's renowned art, architecture, design, built environment, communication, and social science disciplines. The college has 24,500 students and over 1,000 staff located in 8 schools.

The College's academic programs are generally market leaders and in high demand. Based on a strong foundation of practise led, industry partnered teaching and research, we aim to deliver skilled graduates with a deep sense of purpose, and high impact research and innovation.

For more information visit www.rmit.edu.au/dsc

School of Media and Communication

The School of Media and Communication pushes the boundaries of digital knowledge creation and future-focused practice. The School has a deep engagement with industry and the community that allows research and teaching to respond creatively and innovatively to global conditions.

In the most recent *QS Rankings by Subject*, RMIT was ranked 37th in the world for *Communications and Media Studies*.

The School is home to a vibrant community of practitioners, theorists and thinkers in communication, creative writing and publishing, screen, culture, digital ethnography, new media, journalism, public relations, advertising and music industry. The School has a strong international focus set to drive careers to succeed in the global context with programs and courses offered in Melbourne, Vietnam and Singapore.

The School embraces agility and flexibility to drive a field that is always evolving with emerging specialisations and new roles in an increasingly changing world. Extending the reach for excellence, teaching spaces have been adapted to meet world-class standards.

Partnership with industry and the community ensures we keep abreast of changing industry needs and new technologies of teaching and learning, supporting students in moving fluently between the classroom, the studio and the workplace. Work integrated learning is just one way of many in which the mutual benefits of industry and community partnerships are realised, connecting students directly to real-world projects that result in tangible outcomes.

A multidisciplinary network of research endeavour brings together experts across disciplines. Adopting a creative, critical and playful attitude to research, celebrating disciplinary diversity and leading in the development of practice-led approaches.

In the most recent Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) ranking, RMIT was judged to be well above world standard (5) for the field of *Communication and Media studies* and above world standard (4) for the field of *Cultural Studies and Design Practice and Management*, reinforcing the dedication and expertise in these areas. RMIT was also judged to be at world standard (3) for the fields of *Film, Television, and Performing Arts and Creative Writing*.

For more information, visit www.rmit.edu.au/about/our-education/academic-schools/media-and-communication

ADM+S

The ARC Centre of Excellence for Automated Decision-Making and Society (ADM+S) is a cross-disciplinary, national research centre, which aims to create the knowledge and strategies necessary for responsible, ethical, and inclusive automated decision-making. Funded by the Australian Research Council from 2020 to 2026, ADM+S is hosted at RMIT in Melbourne, Australia, with nodes in seven other Australian universities. The Centre brings together leading researchers in the humanities, social and technological sciences in an international industry, research and civil society network. Its priority domains for public engagement are news and media, transport, social services and health. Learn more about the ADM+S Centre here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AkyZpYjxNBc

ADM+S Commitment to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Equity, diversity, and inclusion are integral to the ADM+S Centre's mission: to create knowledge and strategies for responsible, ethical, and inclusive automated decision-making (ADM). The Centre recognises that racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, and ableism are principal obstacles to equity, diversity and inclusion, and remain primary causes of injustice and inequality. We believe that responsible, ethical, and inclusive ADM can deliver broad social benefits, including reducing inequalities for disadvantaged and vulnerable groups.

Position Summary

The Principal Research Fellow is expected to provide leadership and foster excellence in teaching and research efforts of the School, within the University, and with the community, professional, commercial and industrial sectors. More specifically, the Principal Research Fellow is responsible for providing original, innovative and distinguished contributions to the School's programs for maintaining and advancing their scholarly, research and/or professional capabilities relevant to this discipline at a national and international level.

Position Purpose

The First Nations Principal Research Fellow will play a leading role in the development, delivery, data governance, reporting and presentation of research findings for a new project 'Measuring Digital Inclusion for First Nations Australians', funded by the Australian Government. This three-year project will measure digital inclusion for First Nations people nationally and track changes in the scale and nature of the digital gap relative to non-First Nations Australians. By expanding on the Australian Digital Inclusion Index, this will enable detailed measurement of progress towards Closing the Gap Target 17 (CTG 17): 'By 2026, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have equal levels of digital inclusion'.

The First Nations Principal Research Fellow will also contribute to planning and delivery of the Mapping the Digital Gap Phase 2 project, which is measuring digital inclusion in 8-10 remote First Nations communities across Australia. This project is closely aligned with the national project, which will include co-delivering data collection with First Nations organisations in 10 target sites in regional Australia.

These projects are being undertaken by the Australian Digital Inclusion Index (ADII) and Mapping the Digital Gap research team within ARC Centre of Excellence for Automated Decision-Making and Society (ADM+S). The ADII is a biennial study of digital inclusion across Australia, using the Australian Internet Usage Survey to measure three dimensions of digital inclusion - Access, Affordability and Digital Ability.

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*Special Measures

This is an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Designated Position, classified under 'special measures' of section 12 of the Equal Employment Opportunity Act 2010. Only Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are eligible to apply.

Key Accountabilities

- **Project Management and Leadership:** Contributing to the project design and delivery to ensure alignment with First Nations research methodology and data governance principles, Closing the Gap Priority Reforms, as well as RMIT and ARC research ethics and integrity requirements. Supporting the timely delivery of research milestones and allocation of resources. Providing

leadership, guidance and cultural awareness support to team members and co-researchers involved in fieldwork and analysis across the ADII projects.

- **Stakeholder Engagement and Communication:** Engaging with stakeholders, including establishing and maintaining strong connections with government, industry and First Nations communities, organisations and peak bodies. Facilitating workshops and meetings, and communicating research progress to stakeholders, including expectation management.
- **Survey and Interview Data Collection:** Contributing to survey design and implementation, administering surveys and interviews (structured, semi-structured, and open ended), and managing data quality by ensuring the integrity and accuracy of collected data (including by community researchers) through quality checks and validation processes.
- **Fieldwork Coordination and Execution:** Contributing to planning and conducting of fieldwork in regional and remote sites, including engagement with partner organisations, scheduling and organising travel and accommodation in line with RMIT policies and ethics requirements.
- **Data Analysis and Interpretation:** Contributing to quantitative and qualitative analysis of survey data and other research material through a First Nations lens of strengths-based outcomes. Ensuring data is accessible and usable by First Nations communities and organisations in accordance with Indigenous data sovereignty principles. Interpreting results to uncover key themes, patterns, and relationships, including data from different sources to enable comprehensive conclusions.
- **Reporting, Publication and Presenting:** Preparing and publishing research outcomes including writing detailed reports for internal and external audiences, and preparing outputs for publication in relevant high-quality refereed journals, reports and/or books. Presenting research outcomes at seminars, conferences and meetings, and contributing to public understanding and debate through media, industry and/or policy engagement.
- **Collaboration and Teamwork:** Working with other researchers, statisticians, and subject matter experts to enrich the research process, and coordinating engagement of external consultants or specialists when needed to enrich the research process.
- Contributing actively to the ARC Centre's research culture, including participation in research collaboration and community-building within the Centre's research programmes and focus areas.
- Compliance with University health and safety policies, procedures, hazard reporting and safe work practices.

Key Selection Criteria

1. Completion of a PhD in a relevant discipline area.
2. Demonstrated experience leading large/complex research projects, including overseeing the timely delivery of research milestones, coordinating fieldwork, budget management, and overseeing junior staff on the project team.
3. Demonstrated experience in appropriate qualitative and quantitative research methods, software and tools in a relevant research context.
4. Demonstrated experience of working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and organisations in the design, co-ordination and co-delivery of complex research projects.
5. Proven scholarly writing skills and experience in preparing publications for a variety of audiences, including detailed project reports for internal and external audiences, and scholarly articles in high-quality refereed journals, book chapters, and/or books.
6. Proven ability to work independently to generate distinctive contributions to scholarly knowledge and/or create real world outcomes.
7. Demonstrated ability to work effectively and collaboratively as part of a high-achieving and collegial research culture.
8. Well-developed oral and interpersonal skills with demonstrated ability to communicate effectively with a wide range of stakeholders and research collaborators, including presentations at seminars, conferences and industry events.
9. Willingness to travel to regional and remote Australia to conduct fieldwork.
10. Demonstrated history of behaviour aligned to the RMIT values (inclusion, imagination, agility, courage, passion and impact) and RMIT's Leadership and Educator & Researcher frameworks.

Note: For guidance on interview questions, please contact the Talent Acquisition team.

Qualifications

Mandatory: PhD or equivalent in relevant field

Working with Children Check

Appointment to this position is subject to holding a valid Victorian Working with Children Check and other checks as required by the specific role. Maintaining a valid Working With Children Check is a condition of employment at RMIT.