

**Research Assistant Opportunity**  
**Casual Position**  
**IDEA Lab Research Assistant Cohort**

**Tentative Start Date: March 1, 2022**

**Overview:**

As a leader in open and online education, AU is transforming the future of digital-first university research by developing and launching IDEA Lab. IDEA is a cloud-based virtual research domain (VRD) developed in partnership with [Amazon Web Services](#) (AWS) and [Ronin](#). As both a strategic and signature digital research asset, IDEA will enable AU researchers and students to innovate, discover, explore, and accelerate their work using existing and emerging tools, processes, and data in the cloud for maximum impact.

The IDEA Academy program will recruit up to fifteen Research Assistants who will receive training on cloud technologies and tools enabling them to support, advance, and contribute to projects developed and supervised by AU faculty researchers. AU program students will be prioritized in this intake. The opportunity is open to undergraduate or graduate learners with varying levels of digital literacies. The present call for applications will develop a pool of candidates that may also be considered for future opportunities.

**Training:**

IDEA Academy will provide forward-thinking training including: self-paced AWS courses leading to a certification as an [AWS Cloud Practitioner](#) (conferred by exam, fees for successful exams covered by AU), other training on specialized AWS tools and technologies, research data management, knowledge mobilization, research project management fundamentals, and training on launching and managing data storage and computational tools through the Ronin interface. Participation in a developing schedule of training and professional development opportunities will be required. Obtaining the AWS Cloud Practitioner certification within two months of the start date will be required.

Members of the cohort will receive a co-curricular letter that captures the technical skills and research proficiencies acquired through IDEA's specialized training and project involvement. An AU IDEA Lab badge will also be issued to communicate success upon completion of the research program.



## **Activities:**

Research Assistants will partner and participate in delivering research within a virtual research domain—using the skills, knowledge, and experience gained through the above specialized training—in support of a diverse scope of faculty research projects. The scope, nature, and focus of research projects will be confirmed in April 2022.

Access to digital tools and cloud storage in the virtual research domain will be coordinated with joint support of the Manager, Digital Research Initiatives and Cloud Business Office. The primary duties of individual Research Assistants will be to support faculty researchers in developing, delivering, and disseminating their projects within the virtual research domain using AWS tools and assets.

In the initial intake, the IDEA Lab research assistant cohort will be coordinated by the Manager, Digital Research Initiatives who will provide information on project priorities and training schedules. Upon completion of core training, Research Assistants will transition to direct supervision by a faculty researcher of one of the research projects supported through IDEA.

Research Assistants will also complete a series of periodic reflections and a summative report on their experiences.

## **Qualifications:**

The number of weekly hours will vary but should not exceed more than 8 hours per week. Rate of pay commensurate with experience and collective agreement provisions. Activities will conclude by December 2022. The potential of ongoing opportunities is contingent on ongoing funding and individual project needs.

Successful candidates will have the following proficiencies and qualifications:

- Undertaking an AU undergraduate or graduate degree.
- Experienced or inclined towards digital approaches to research.
- Embraces, learns, and applies new technologies quickly.
- Collaborative and takes direction well.
- Able to prioritize tasks and manage deadlines.
- Previous experience in undertaking or supporting research.
- Familiarity with cloud computing or AWS would be an asset
- Experience with Python, or other programming languages, would be an asset

The position is open to applicants in any location as all training and activities will be conducted online.



## How to apply:

Qualified individuals are encouraged to submit their application by email to Dr. Paul Daniels (Manager, Digital Research Initiatives): [pdaniels@athabascau.ca](mailto:pdaniels@athabascau.ca). Applications should include all of the following items as a single PDF:

- A one-page cover letter that summarizes their skills, interests, and experience relevant to the position description and comments on proficiencies related to applying technologies for research.
- A current resume or curriculum vitae.
- An unofficial transcript
- Two letters of reference commenting on the fit and potential of the applicant with the present opportunity. At least one letter should be written by a recent or present academic supervisor or professor.

All applicants are thanked for their interest in this position; however, only candidates selected for an interview will be contacted.

Athabasca University and the researchers are committed and seek to support equity in employment and research opportunities. We strongly encourage applications from Indigenous people, people of colour, people with disabilities, 2SLGBTQ+ people, women, and other historically marginalized groups. Applicants are welcome, but not required, to self-identify in their application.

For more information on this Research Assistant Opportunity, please contact Dr. Paul Daniels at the coordinates below. Applications will be accepted until a suitable candidate pool is established with review of applications beginning mid-January 2022.

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