

Research Assistant Opportunity Casual Position

Start Date: February 1, 2026 (Toronto)

Overview:

This research examines how various institutions, including schools, families, and communities, create pathways and shape leadership development for racialized immigrant adolescent girls in Toronto and Calgary. The study employs participatory methods to gain insights into the experiences of young women across different institutional contexts. Data for this segment of the research will be collected in an underserved immigrant neighbourhood in Toronto.

Specific activities include, but are not limited to:

The primary job duties for the field research assistant will include three main areas of work:

1. Literature and Documentation Support (60%):

Conduct literature searches on leadership development, immigrant youth, and institutional contexts; maintain a bibliography and reference management system.

2. Fieldwork and Data-Collection Support (20%):

Organize field notes, documents, and data files systematically; support participant scheduling and communication; and assist with some community liaison activities.

3. Data Synthesis and Analysis (20%):

Support data synthesis, including occasional transcription or transcript checking; coding and analyzing qualitative data using qualitative software (NVivo); and contribute to the development of emerging themes.

The RA will be expected to deepen their expertise in the research area and participate in all phases of the project. They will attend monthly research team meetings and regular individual meetings with the supervisor. The GA can expect to co-present at national or international conferences and collaborate on co-authored scholarly publications as part of their professional development.

The successful candidate will work with, and directly report to, Dr. Norin Taj at Athabasca University. Dr. Taj will provide adequate training for conducting literature reviews, reflexive working with underserved communities, and data analysis for qualitative research, which will be required.

This is a casual position with flexible hours. The rate of pay will be commensurate with experience and collective agreement provisions. This position has a maximum of 180 hours (with possibility of extension)



Qualifications:

- Essential: Urdu and English fluency (speaking, reading, and writing); Essential: Experience working with immigrant and underserved communities; Essential: A commitment to challenging their own assumptions in the pursuit of educational equity for youth, including immigrant and underserved communities; Essential: Strong organizational skills and a commitment to confidentiality and research ethics; Essential: Graduate student or recent graduate in sociology, education, migration studies, gender studies, or a related field
- Preferred: Previous work with qualitative/quantitative data analysis software would be an advantage but training will be provided if required. Preferred: Understanding of South Asian communities in Toronto
- We are looking particularly for people who would like to join the research team for a longer period of time.

What You'll Gain

- Training in qualitative research methods and data management
- Experience with community-based participatory research
- Exposure to institutional ethnography and critical sociology approaches
- Mentorship and professional development
- Opportunity to contribute to publications and presentations
- Work contributing to social justice and equity in leadership development

How to apply:

Qualified individuals are encouraged to submit their application by email to Dr. Norin Taj at ntaj@athabascau.ca. Applications should include (as a single PDF file) a brief cover letter (max 1 page) that summarizes your skills, interests and experience; a current resume or curriculum vitae (max 2 pages); an unofficial copy of your transcript; and the contact information for 1-2 references.

Please submit your complete application latest by December 23, 2025, which is the date when we will start to evaluate applications. The call will be kept open until successful candidates are found.

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 letter of application.



For more information on this Research Assistant Opportunity, please contact Dr Norin Taj at the ntaj@athabscau.ca.

Dr. Norin Taj
Assistant Professor, Interdisciplinary Studies
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
Athabasca University