

## Research Assistant Opportunity

### Casual Position

#### Research Data Management Project Assistant

### Strategic Capacity Building for Digital Research: A Toolkit for RDM Best Practices in the Cloud

**Start Date:** June 2023

#### Overview

As a leader in open and online education, AU is transforming the future of digital-first university research and spearheading research data management (RDM) best practices for a digital focused future. From this distinct position, AU is uniquely positioned to build connections between researchers, students, and support staff to achieve the overarching goal of advancing RDM best practices through active research that is engineered and executed in the cloud. Specifically, this position (Research Data Management Project Assistant—RDM-PA) will support the creation of an openly licensed Toolkit (open educational resource--OER) to support planning, delivering, and mobilizing research data in cloud computing environments.

The Toolkit will include the following modules with examples of use cases drawn from researchers:

- *Introduction to RDM:* Provides training on the fundamentals of RDM principles, the research data lifecycle, data management plans, ethics and sensitive data, data documentation, data storage, data preservation and deposit. This module will build upon an openly licensed course developed by AU's Library and Faculty of Graduate Studies that targets graduate students.
- *Orientation to the Cloud:* Introduces researchers from all disciplines and across the digital literacy spectrum to key concepts relevant to data storage, location, security, and movement in the cloud.

- *Storage Solutions Navigator*: Provides an interactive decision matrix with contextualized information for researchers to identify and explore the best storage options for the nature of their dataset's size, sovereignty priorities, retention needs, and security requirements. This module will build on the storage finder tool developed by Cornell University Research Data Management Service Group and Cornell Information Technologies Custom Development Group.
- *Understanding Version Control*: Orients researchers to terms and tools for tracking, managing, and documenting changes to their data.
- *Data and Computing Environment Documentation*: Provides introductory guidance on documenting data, software, and computing environments throughout the research lifecycle with case study examples for greater detail (e.g., a “datasheet for datasets” as used in machine learning, codebook documentation for survey data in REDCap).
- *Cloud Data Management Plan Guidance and Exemplars*: Contains examples of data management plan content for cloud-based research, designed for use with existing DMP Assistant templates.

This position will ideally be filled by a graduate student recruited with experience in cloud-first research solutions, but applications from others are welcome.

### **Activities**

The RDM-PA will serve as a proactive partner in project planning for approximately 15 research projects over July 2023 through June 2024. Under the joint direction of the RDM Librarian and Manager Digital Research Initiatives (and in consultation with other members of the applicant team), the RDM Project Assistant (RDM-PA) will also support the development and delivery of the RDM Toolkit. i.e., their activities will focus on: 1) delivering training on cloud-first RDM best-practices; 2) advancing RDM through resource development and researcher engagement; and 3) driving culture change that aligns cloud-based RDM with AU's emerging RDM strategy and data security focus.



The RDM-PA will also further their own skill development in the areas of cloud-based research, project management, and EDI in research design.

The RDM-PA will develop the Toolkit modules sequentially while incorporating feedback loops in a rich evergreening development process. The sequential development and rollout of the Toolkit modules will allow presentations and communications to happen early and often—keeping RDM news and best practices top of mind in the local and external communities. Through the Toolkit development process, the RDM-PA will provide mentorship to those preparing data management plans. This, in turn, affords them unique professional development opportunities. The candidate will also benefit from regular support, guidance, and mentoring from select inter-departmental members of wider project team including the Research Data Management Librarian (Library), Manager Digital Research Initiatives (Research Office), and Manager Cloud Research Architecture (IT).

The number of weekly hours will vary but should be, on average, about 15 hrs/wk. Rate of pay commensurate with experience and collective agreement provisions.

### **Qualifications**

Successful candidates will have the following proficiencies and qualifications:

- Undertaking an AU undergraduate or graduate degree.
- Experience conducting research with cloud-based research tools is an asset.
- 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 research data management concepts and best practices.
- Experience with project management workflows and best practices.



The position is open to applicants in any Canadian location; all activities will be online.

### **How to apply**

Interested 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 the following items as a single PDF:

- A one-page cover letter that summarizes their skills, interests, and experience relevant to this position description.
- 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. (These may be submitted separately, directly from the letter writers.)

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

AU is committed and seeks 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.

