Research Assistant Opportunity
Casual Position
Developing and Testing a Model of Leader and Inclusion for the Security Sector

Start Date: As soon as possible

Overview:

The death of George Floyd in May of 2020 ignited fierce debate in Canada and the United States about the role of the police. In addition to calls for major structural reforms, advocates stipulate that the police must better represent the communities they serve. While diversity is an important goal it is not enough. Extensive reports document the harmful outcomes when organizations do not do enough to include individuals from traditionally marginalized groups.

To date, 2,304 active and former female members of the RCMP have been compensated for poor treatment (Bastarache, 2020). In early 2020, the Federal Court certified a $1.1 billion bullying and harassment class action (Gerster, 2020) and a proposed class action application for systemic racism is proceeding before the same court (Owen, 2020). Externally, a $600 million class action alleging abuse of Indigenous people by the RCMP was certified in June of 2021 (Kirkup, 2021). These outcomes illustrate the costly ramifications for the RCMP as well as the potential trickle-down effect when frontline employees take out their frustrations on members of the public.

Yet, the RCMP is not alone. More than 7,300 victims of sexual misconduct have submitted claims as part of a $900 million class action settlement with Canada's military (Connolly, 2021). Various police organizations have also come under fire for internal issues of race or gender-based discrimination and harassment (Bueckert, 2017; Prowse, 2013; Trinh, 2020). Thus, there is an urgent need to illuminate what these organizations can do to create more inclusive workplaces. Unfortunately, the research is just scratching the surface on how or why inclusion occurs and has been largely focused on the education, healthcare, and social work sectors. It is unknown if these frameworks are sufficiently applicable to a policing context. Focusing on the context of a large Canadian police organization, the proposed research will address this challenge by:

1. Extending our knowledge of workplace inclusion, how it occurs, and its potential benefits by testing the relationships between specific variables through survey methodology.
2. Interviewing police leaders and their followers to explore the situational and personal factors that contribute to leader inclusiveness, experiences of inclusion/exclusion, and other potential outcomes.

Primary Requirements:

The primary requirements for the research assistant (RA1) include, but are not limited to:

- Becoming familiar with the goals of the research project
- Participating in regular team meetings (virtual)
- Conducting focus group interviews

- Scale development and testing
- Administration of surveys in two large police organizations
- Conducting individual interviews
- Coaching junior research assistants
- Conducting data analysis
- Assisting with writing up results

The successful candidate will gain additional research expertise from working on a multi-year, mixed methods research project involving the public safety sector. The candidate will also gain additional knowledge of innovative data analysis techniques using innovative tools as well as experience supporting the work of junior research assistants.

The successful candidate will directly report to, Dr. Angela Workman-Stark at Athabasca University. Where applicable, Dr. Workman-Stark will provide adequate training for each of the tasks that are required.

Qualifications:
- Prior experience with quantitative and qualitative data analysis
- Prior experience working on a research team
- Familiarity with analytical software such as NVivo and SPSS
- Very good communication and analytical skills
- Ability to work independently and with a team
- Good coaching skills
- Spending an average of 5 hours per week working on the project with some weeks potentially higher

Number of hours: An average of 160 hours per year for two years
Location: The position can be undertaken remotely from anywhere in Canada with a requirement to travel to two site locations for data collection in year two.

How to apply:
Qualified individuals are encouraged to submit their application by email to Dr. Angela Workman-Stark at angela.workman-stark@athabascau.ca. Applications should include (as a single PDF file) a brief cover letter that summarizes individual skills, interests, and experience; a current resume or curriculum vitae; an unofficial copy of relevant transcripts; and the contact information for 1-2 references.

Evaluation of applications will begin immediately and will continue until a suitable candidate is found. All applicants are thanked for their interest in this position; however, only candidates selected for an interview will be contacted.

We are committed to employment equity and encourage applications from women, Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, and members of visible minorities.

For more information on this Research Assistant Opportunity, please contact Dr. Angela Workman-Stark at angela.workman-stark@athabascau.ca.