

Research assistant needed Neurodiversity Matters project

We are looking for a research assistant to support the multi-disciplinary project “Neurodiversity matters: An ethnographic investigation into discourse, practice, and identity”, funded as a 2-year grant through the Insight Development Grant program at SSHRC. This project has a research team from 4 institutions and a larger team of collaborators, led by principal investigator Dr. Margaret Gibson (Assistant Professor, Renison University College at the University of Waterloo). Proceeding from a community-based, disability studies perspective, “Neurodiversity Matters” will examine how the language and ideas of “neurodiversity” are being used in the current context.

The project will include analyses of written texts such as blogs, academic articles, and organizational statements; observations at public events; and interviews with people who identify as i) neurodiverse or Autistic, ii) as service providers, and/or iii) as family members. The research team consists of researchers and community members who have experience with disability, neurodiversity, and autism, including people who identify as neurodiverse and/or Autistic, as family members, as policy analysts, and as service providers and educators.

The research assistant would support the administrative side of the project and would also be involved in research processes. Administrative work would include organizing and managing project documents (e.g. ethical protocols and reports, grant documentation, and other project documents); scheduling team meetings, initial participant contacts, and interviews; handling and storing confidential data in accordance with research ethics and legal responsibilities; note-taking at meetings; updating and managing the project website; responding to general emails about the project; following up by email or telephone with participants and organizations involved in the project; processing receipts and invoices for payment; providing regular updates to the PI; supporting events for the project; and other administrative tasks as needed.

The research tasks for this role would include adding to and maintaining a database of relevant literatures, including academic, blog, popular, and organizational literatures; contributing to an analysis of different types of writing about neurodiversity across academic and non-academic literature; conducting and documenting initial interviews (by telephone and/or email) with potential participants; co-leading and then conducting individual interviews; verifying and de-identifying interview transcripts; contributing to emerging analyses of textual,



observational, and interview data. There will be opportunities to contribute to the writing and revision of presentations, reports, and other documents on the research findings, as interested.

Qualifications:

We are looking for a responsible, organized individual who has research experience and a solid knowledge of critical theories and disability studies. Administrative work experience, strong technical skills (e.g. Word, Excel, RefWorks, data management, and website management), and communication skills are required. Excellent writing skills are required. Knowledge of neurodiversity and Autistic activism preferred. Research interview skills preferred. Knowledge of critical ethnographic research would be an asset.

Hours: Flexible. Expected to start at 8 hours per week.

Duration: 8 months with the possibility of extension.

Wage: \$25-30 per hour (pay rate dependent on education and experience).

Education: Master's degree in a relevant discipline. A current student may be considered.

Location: Some work would need to be in Waterloo, ON, and some in Toronto, ON. Otherwise flexible.

If interested, please send a letter of interest, a curriculum vitae, and a sample of professional/ academic writing to Meg Gibson at Margaret.gibson@uwaterloo.ca by October 22, 2019.

