

Research Assistant Opportunity

Project and Role Description

This Research Assistant (RA) position is part of a SSHRC-funded, Indigenous-led research project titled *Growing Skwxwú7mesh Community Connections and Access to Culturally Important Plant Foods and Medicines*, led by Dr. Leigh Joseph (Department of Geography, Simon Fraser University).

The project supports the early-stage planning and research foundation for the development of a future **Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) Garden site**, with the aim of enhancing community access to culturally important plant foods, medicines, and materials. Grounded in Indigenous worldviews and community priorities, the research takes a decolonial, community-engaged ethnobotanical approach and emphasizes respect, reciprocity, and Indigenous self-determination.

The Research Assistant will work closely with Dr. Joseph to support literature review, research preparation, community engagement activities, and knowledge mobilization. This role is well suited for a **Master's-level graduate student or a community member** with an interest in Indigenous studies, *Skwxwú7mesh* language and plants, geography, ethnobotany, community-engaged research, and/or Indigenous health and food sovereignty.

Research Assistant Responsibilities

Under the supervision of the Principal Investigator, the Research Assistant will:

- Conduct an **initial literature review** (academic and grey literature) related to Indigenous plant knowledge, ethnobotany, Indigenous food sovereignty, and community-engaged research
- Prepare **annotated bibliographies**, research summaries, and background documents
- Assist with the **preparation of research materials** and documents for manuscripts and future external funding applications
- Support **community engagement activities**, including meeting logistics, note-taking, and documentation (e.g., written notes, photographs where appropriate)
- Prepare **research activity reports** and assist with organizing project files and records
- Attend regular research meetings with the Principal Investigator
- Engage in research activities in a manner consistent with **Indigenous research ethics, protocols, and community priorities**

Opportunities for **co-authorship** may be available depending on the Research Assistant's level of contribution to research and writing.

Required Qualifications, Skills, and Experience

- Direct experience working with **Skwxwú7mesh Nation** or other Indigenous communities
- Strong research, reading, and writing skills
- Experience with academic literature review and synthesis
- Excellent organizational skills and attention to detail
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills
- Ability to work respectfully within **Indigenous research contexts** and follow community protocols

- Availability to commit to the project hours over the project period and work in a hybrid way with a requirement to travel to Squamish at times.

Assets (Preferred but Not Required)

- Background or coursework in Indigenous Studies, Geography, Ethnobotany, Environmental Studies, Health, or related fields
- Experience with **community-engaged or Indigenous-led research**
- Familiarity with **Skwxwú7mesh** culture
- Familiarity with concepts such as Indigenous food sovereignty, Indigenous plant knowledge, and decolonial research methodologies
- Familiarity/proficiency with **Skwxwú7mesh sníchim**
- Experience assisting with grant writing or academic publications

Rate of Pay

- **\$30.70/hour** (not including 4% vacation pay in lieu), in accordance with SFU graduate research assistant rates

Duration and Time Commitment

- Total of approximately **135–150 hours**
- Project duration: January–June 2026
- Hours will be scheduled flexibly in consultation with the Principal Investigator

To Apply

Applicants should submit the following **as a single PDF**:

1. A **1–2 page cover letter** outlining relevant qualifications, research interests, and experience
2. A **curriculum vitae (CV)**

Please email applications to **Dr. Leigh Joseph** at ljoseph@sfu.ca Subject line: **Research Assistant Position Application**

Application deadline: 9am on Monday, January 5th

References will be requested if required.

For questions about the position, please contact Dr. Leigh Joseph at ljoseph@sfu.ca

Equity Statement

Simon Fraser University is an institution whose strength is based on shared commitments to diversity, equity, and inclusion. SFU is committed to ensuring no individual is denied access to employment opportunities for reasons unrelated to ability or qualifications. In keeping with this commitment, **Indigenous applicants and members of other underrepresented groups are strongly encouraged to apply.**