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| **Position Description** |

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| **The Olga Tennison Endowed Chair in Autism Research** | |
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| **Position No:** | New |
| **Business Unit:**  **Division:** | Office of the Provost  School of Psychology and Public Health |
| **Department:** | Olga Tennison Autism Research Centre (OTARC) |
| **Classification Level:** | Professor, Research only (Level E) |
| **Employment Type:** | Full Time – Continuing |
| **Campus Location:** | Melbourne (Bundoora) |
| **Position Supervisor:**  **Number:** | Director, Olga Tennison Autism Research Centre |
| **Other Benefits:** | <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/jobs/working/benefits> |

Further information about:

La Trobe University - <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/about>

School of Psychology and Public Health – <http://latrobe.edu.au/school-psychology-and-public-health>

Olga Tennison Autism Research Centre – <https://www.latrobe.edu.au/otarc>

**For enquiries only contact:**

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**The Olga Tennison Autism Research Centre, La Trobe University**

The Olga Tennison Autism Research Centre (OTARC) at La Trobe University was established in 2008 and is the first centre dedicated to autism research in Australia. Since that time, OTARC has grown and established itself as Australia’s leading autism research centre, made possible with the extraordinary generosity of the late Mrs Olga Tennison AO. Through her personal philanthropy, Olga Tennison AO has ensured OTARC will continue and expand upon its work in perpetuity, for the benefit of the Autistic and autism communities.

OTARC is committed to researching topics of the greatest relevance to the Autistic and Autism communities, across the lifespan of Autistic people and across the full spectrum of abilities, to deliver knowledge and tools that have the greatest impact on the lives of Autistic people, their families and carers. The Centre provides a vehicle for research activities, knowledge translation, evidence-based supports and practices, training and collaboration between community services and research centres/universities involved in autism research both in Australia and overseas.

OTARC is committed to implementing and sustaining genuinely neuroinclusive recruitment and retention processes that reflect the neurodivergent identity of the majority of our staff across all areas of the Centre’s operations. We aspire to an organisational culture that is ambitious, creative, collaborative, respectful, and inclusive, and one that strives for excellence.

**OTARC’s strategic direction**

*Creating Knowledge, Creating Impact*, OTARC’s 5-year strategic plan (2023-28), aims to create and translate the highest quality research evidence by teaching, training and delivering supports and practices suitable for Autistic people from infancy and across their lifespan. The key features of OTARC’s Strategic Plan include:

* A focus on four inter-related research program areas which are aligned with the research

priorities identified by national and international Autistic and autism communities – Identification and Diagnosis, Supports and Practices for Daily Living, Educational and Vocational Engagement, and Health and Wellbeing.

* A focus on building our research-to-practice capabilities to create impact, offering exemplar

service programs with reach across metropolitan and rural and regional Victoria and beyond;

* A focus on research that improves outcomes for Autistic people across the whole lifespan, from infancy to adulthood and across the full spectrum of abilities.
* A commitment to ensuring that our work is informed by and involves those with lived experience of autism (Autistic people, their parents and carers).

**The School of Psychology and Public Health**

OTARC is housed in the School of Psychology & Public Health (SPPH). SPPH undertakes teaching and research across a broad range of disciplines, including Family Therapy; Art Therapy; Rehabilitation Counselling; Psychology; Neuroscience; Public Health; Digital Health and Analytics; Health Information Management; and Ergonomics, Safety and Health. One of the larger Schools in La Trobe University, the SPPH currently comprises six academic units: the Department of Public Health, the Department of Psychology, Counselling & Therapy, the Centre for Alcohol Policy Research (CAPR), the Olga Tennison Autism Research Centre (OTARC), the Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society (ARCSHS), and The Bouverie Centre.

**Position Context/Purpose**

The Olga Tennison Endowed Chair in Autism Research is a Level E research-only position developed in recognition of a major benefactor, Mrs Olga Tennison, AO. The Olga Tennison Endowed Chair will be committed to progressing OTARC’s mission to enrich the lives of Autistic people across the lifespan regardless of their level of ability, and those of their families and carers through high quality scientific research, innovation, and translation. The Olga Tennison Endowed Chair is awarded based on international recognition of sustained, distinguished and original contributions to research and scholarship in the field of autism. The incumbent will provide research leadership in this field and foster excellence in participatory inclusive research practice, research translation, research policy and research training within OTARC at La Trobe University and within the scholarly and general community.

The Endowed Chair will contribute to establishing OTARC’s reputation as world leading by conducting autism scholarship and research of the highest quality aligned with one of more of OTARCs research program areas – Identification and Diagnosis, Supports and Practices for Daily Living, Educational and Vocational Engagement, and Health and Wellbeing. The Endowed Chair will also promote the work of the Centre nationally and internationally, establishing OTARC as a research partner of choice by developing and maintaining high-level strategic external partnerships. They will provide national and international leadership in autism research and influence developments relating to autism scholarship and research. The Endowed Chair will act as an ambassador for the Centre and University at the global level. The Endowed Chair will also be a key member of the leadership team at OTARC that advises the Director of OTARC regarding research and strategy for the Centre. The successful candidate will be expected to mentor OTARC researchers across all levels and supervise OTARC research students completing higher degrees.

The Endowed Chair is an academic member of the School of Psychology and Public Health (SPPH). A Level E research-only academic is expected to have achieved international recognition through original, innovative and distinguished contributions to their field of research. They will be expected to provide leadership in their disciplinary field and foster excellence in research, research policy and research training within the institution and within the scholarly and general community. All Professors are members of the University’s Academic Board and are expected to contribute to the leadership not only of their Academic Unit and School, but also of the University as a whole.

**Duties at this level will include:**

* Foster excellence and advancement in autism research by playing a major role in all elements of major research projects including management and leadership.
* Obtain external research funding, produce conference and seminar papers and publications arising from research.
* Build research partnerships and collaboration (including commercial opportunities) with industry and government.
* Provide advice and mentorship in obtaining external funding, and in the preparation of research proposal submissions to external funding bodies, particularly large bids.
* Support the development of researchers across all levels including neurodivergent scholars by taking on a senior mentorship and leadership role in the discipline, centre, school and university.
* Supervise Higher Degree by Research (HDR) students.
* Contribute to high level strategic planning for the Centre and encourage and promote a robust and innovative research culture within the Centre and the University.
* Support fundraising for research conducted by the Centre, capital and operating funds, including working with the Alumni and Advancement Office in fundraising initiatives.
* Provide leadership and foster excellence in research and policy development in the field within La Trobe and the scholarly and/or general community.
* Participate in community and professional activities related to autism, including involvement in commercial sectors where appropriate.
* Promote and represent the University and Centre by participating in appropriate local, national and international organisations and events.
* Undertake other duties commensurate with the classification and scope of the position as required by the Director, Olga Tennison Autism Research Centre.

**Essential Criteria**

**Skills and knowledge required for the position**

* Completion of a PhD or equivalent accreditation and standing, together with substantial research experience.
* Evidence of an international reputation in autism research and demonstrated significant national and international influence on their profession.
* Distinguished record of original, innovative and internationally recognised research in autism, with evidence of its impact and significance.
* Outstanding record of publications, including papers in top-tier and high-impact journals, conference papers, reports and/or professional and/or technical contributions in autism.
* Demonstrated track record in brokering, establishing and maintaining strategic relationships with collaborators and funding sources, including government, community, and industry partners.
* Demonstrated effectiveness in the preparation of research proposal submissions to external funding bodies and a substantial record of external research funding through national and international competitive grants, and/or large industry grants or consultancies.
* A sustained record of successful supervision of Honours, Masters and PhD students to completion.
* Superior analytical skills and a demonstrated ability for strategic thinking at an organisational and community level, with an ability to communicate complex information clearly both orally and in writing.
* Demonstrated ability to work collaboratively and productively with staff and students from a diverse range of backgrounds.
* Lived experience of autism and/or another neurodivergence and/or relevant workplace experience in a neurodiverse workplace would be highly regarded.

**Capabilities required to be successful in the position**

* Uphold a high level of personal commitment, contribution and achievement at an internationally distinguished level in research and scholarship in autism.
* Ability to build unified teams, support others, and gain enjoyment from other’s successes.
* Ability to manage self in complex, high pressure situations, and assist others to do the same.
* Ability to collaborate in creative processes, and to respectfully challenge new ideas or existing practices.
* Ability to recognise and be responsive to customer and stakeholder needs, and to respectfully add value where possible to their vision.

**Essential Compliance Requirements**

To hold this La Trobe University position the occupant must:

* hold, or be willing to undertake and pass, a Victorian Working With Children Check; AND
* take personal accountability to comply with all University policies, procedures and legislative or regulatory obligations; including but not limited to TEQSA and the Higher Education Threshold Standards.

**Other Information**

The position description is indicative of the initial expectation of the role and subject to changes to University goals and priorities, activities or focus of the job.

**Position Flexibility**

We offer flexible work arrangements that can assist you in balancing your work and other responsibilities.

**Why La Trobe:**

* Develop your career at an innovative, global university where you’ll collaborate with community and industry to create impact.
* Enjoy working on our inspiring and stunning campuses – the perfect hub for industry, students and academics
* Help transform the lives of students, partners and communities now and in the future

This is more than just a job. Working at La Trobe offers opportunities to demonstrate excellence and transform lives.

Here, you’ll join exceptional people, partners and communities, who power our operations with ambition and purpose.

Our success can be attributed to its strong sense of community. We have a long-standing commitment to diversity, inclusion and social justice; we are committed to providing a workplace where all staff feel valued, respected and supported to achieve their full potential. We strive to build a workplace where all employees of diverse backgrounds, abilities, experiences, sexuality, gender, religion and age are welcome, valued, respected and one that is representative of our community. We demonstrate our cultural qualities by holding ourselves accountable and creating a culture of trust and innovation while genuinely caring for one another.

**La Trobe’s Cultural Qualities:**

A close-up of a few words

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