Paid and voluntary positions
for research candidates

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Introduction

Many candidates would like to boost their CV and extend their skills as well as receive a range of other provisions and rewards. This document presents two avenues that research candidates could explore to achieve these goals.

Voluntary roles at CDU

Some HDR candidates could assume a role or position at CDU in which they assist other colleagues. For example, they might assume a position in which you support the wellbeing, induction, administration, finances, research methods, or writing of other HDR candidates or liaise with other stakeholders. This document presents information on

- the benefits of these roles or positions
- how to apply if you would like to secure one of these roles or positions
- the training you will receive

Paid roles in the community

In addition, or alternatively, some HDR candidates might complete short paid roles in the community. They could, for example, utilise the website Airtasker to achieve this goal. This document also presents information on how candidates can utilise this website

Step 1 to seek voluntary roles: Decide whether you would like one of these roles or positions

First, you need to decide whether the benefits of these roles or positions outweigh the effort. To decide, you need to be informed of the benefits you will enjoy. These benefits can be divided into two clusters: the experiences you accrue from these roles and the rewards that CDU can deliver.

Experiences

If you assume one of these roles or positions, you will obviously accrue a range of skills and experiences that could benefit your CV and future career. To illustrate,

- when HDR graduates complete job applications—and need to demonstrate key selection criteria such as leadership, communication, and teamwork—their answers are not always convincing
- instead, you could refer to your roles and positions at CDU to answer these questions more convincingly
- you will also receive training before you start these positions, extending your skills
- you will report will to a specific line manager, such as the Dean of Graduate Studies; this person can be a future referee

CDU rewards

In addition, CDU has introduced a scheme in which HDR candidates who complete specific activities, such as assist their peers, can receive rewards. This scheme is embryonic at this time but will gradually evolve and improve over time. Regardless of the details, HDR candidates who assume these roles or positions may be more likely to receive scarce rewards such as

- digital badges to verify the capabilities they have acquired
- a private office with a large window for a few months
- the opportunity to attend training programs that only 10 or so individuals can attend
- internships at a company
- international exchanges

Other benefits

Besides extending your CV and attracting rewards, HDR candidates who assume these roles or positions could enjoy some other benefits. For example

- these individuals meet other stakeholders, extending their networks, and potentially increasing their exposure to other opportunities
- these individuals may be able to improve the satisfaction of peers, the practices of this university, and hence the reputation of their degree

Step 2 to seek voluntary roles: Decide which roles or positions you would like to assume

Some HDR candidates would like to secure one of the pre-existing roles or positions. The following table describes these roles. Specifically

- the first column in the following table lists these opportunities
- he second column indicates whether these roles or positions are vacant
- the third column outlines the responsibilities of each role or position
- the final column summarizes the training that precedes these roles or positions.

Position	Is this position vacant?	Responsibilities	Training
HDR Representative and Liaison Officer	No	- Represents HDR candidates in relevant committees, such as the Board of Graduate Studies - Seeks the opinions and suggestions of HDR candidates - May liaise with other stakeholders, such as the NT Government	•
HDR Wellbeing Officer	Yes	- Help HDR candidates seek appropriate services and provisions to address mental health issues - Offers emotional support to HDR candidates	- Training in counselling - Training in mental health first aid - Liaise with SEW, CDU counselling, and CDU careers and employment
HDR Induction and Administration Officer	Yes	- Offer assistance to HDR candidates during their first month - Support HDR candidates with administrative procedures, such as	Liaise with a HDR college administrator, the HDR manager, and Dean of Graduate Studies

		helping individuals locate and complete the relevant forms • Offer suggestions on potential improvements in administrative procedures	
HDR Finance Officer	Yes	• Help HDR candidates seek appropriate support on financial matters • Provide guidance to HDR candidates on budgeting and funding for their research projects	• Training in budgets and funding, supported by Learnline • Liaise with a HDR college administrator, Equity Services, and the Scholarships manager at ORI
HDR Research Methods Advisor	Yes; multiple positions available	• Assist HDR candidates ascertain which research methodologies and methods may be suited to their projects • Assist HDR candidates conduct or apply these methods • Help HDR candidates seek appropriate support on research methods • Contribute to existing resources on research methods	• Training in resources available from Learnline • ORI can also support additional training in Udemy, Udacity, or other sites
HDR Writing Advisor	Yes; multiple positions available	• Offer assistance to HDR candidates on their writing • Organize relevant events, such as writing retreats • Help HDR candidates seek appropriate support on writing • Contribute to existing resources on writing	• Training with Dean of Graduate Studies and ALLSP
HDR Networking Officer		• Help HDR candidates meet relevant stakeholders—at the	• NA

		university and outside the university • Help HDR candidates extend their social and career networks • Organize events to help achieve these goals	

Other HDR candidates might like to assume a role or position that was not delineated in the previous table. For example, they might like

- a role that blends two or more of these positions
- a role that is a subset of one or more of these positions
- a role that includes responsibilities that did not appear in this table.

Step 3 to seek voluntary roles: Apply to secure a role or position

To apply, you can email the Dean of Graduate Studies simon.moss@cdu.edu.au or research.degrees@cdu.edu.au. This email should include

- the position you would like to assume; if the position is not one of the pre-existing options, specify the responsibilities
- why you might be suited to this role, such as relevant interests, experiences, aspirations, or skills
- when you would like to begin this role
- how long you plan to maintain this role—ideally 6 months or longer
- an indication of whether you have discussed this opportunity with your supervisor
- any other information you feel is relevant

 To streamline this application, your email could resemble the following example as a template.

Hello

- I am interested in the role of HDR Research Methods Advisor—but would like to restrict this role to qualitative research methods
- I have recently completed a one-month course on these research methods and have developed expertise in several constructivist methodologies.
- I would like to begin this role in June 2020 and maintain this role for 1 year
- My supervisor believes this experience could be helpful to my career

Kind regards

Sam

Step 4 to seek voluntary roles: Meet with the Dean of Graduate Studies

The Dean of Graduate Studies or a delegate will meet every applicant. The Dean of Graduate Studies or delegate will then

- ascertain whether the applicant is suited to this position—or consider whether the position should be modified to suit the preferences, capabilities, and availability of this applicant
- plan, in consultation with the applicant, the training and development opportunities
- discuss, in consultation with the applicant, possible rewards

Over time, CDU will seek feedback from HDR candidates, supervisors, and other stakeholders to

- update the suite of positions,
- improve the procedures, and
- update the rewards

Airtasker

To develop your career skills, while you also earn money, you could also consider Air Tasker. Air Tasker is an Australian website in which

- some individuals post jobs and specify the amount of money they are willing to pay
- other individuals, such as research candidates, might then complete these jobs.

Research candidates might want to use the website to complete jobs that attract a small income, improve their skills, and extend the CV. To illustrate, some of the jobs you might be able to complete appear in the following table

Category and subcategory of job	Examples of tasks
Writing: academic writing or proof reading	- help students improve their writing skills - help international students improve their assignments

Writing: resume writing, cover letters, and key selection criteria	• help someone construct and format a resume
Tutoring	• offer tutoring on a range of topics
Data analysis	• conduct statistical tests • conduct thematic analysis • provide advice on statistical tests
Administration: Document formatting and word processing	• create appropriate templates or styles in Microsoft Word
Administration: Research assistant or Online research	• conduct interviews • search the internet • data entry

Depending on your field of expertise, other jobs might be available too. For example, you might be able to offer legal advice, IT support, translation services, or physical training

How to utilise Airtasker

Airtasker is quite intuitive to use. Visit https://www.airtasker.com/. Then

- press "Sign up" to join
- click "Categories". A series of options will appear. You can choose the last option "View all"
- on the left side, a series of categories will appear. Choose a relevant category, such as "Writing".
- usually, a series of subcategories will then appear. Choose a subcategory, such as "Academic writing"
- on this page, you might locate an option called "Browse all tasks"; this option will then display a series of jobs you might consider.
- you can then click the jobs in which you might be interested and press "Make an offer" if interested

Upwork

Upwork is similar to Airtasker but is a global website that enables you to develop your profile and reputation over time. Users can be paid to write documents, to edit documents, to conduct data analysis, or to offer services in IT, design, marketing, accounting, sales, law, or other professions. In essence, to utilize Upwork, you merely need to

- sign in to open an account
- construct a profile that promotes your capabilities and interests
- contact some clients—that is, individuals who pay users to complete a particular task—or wait until clients approaches you
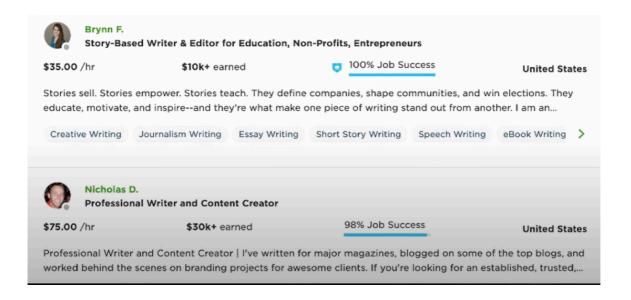
Sign up

To sign up, you should

- visit https://www.upwork.com/
- then follow instructions to sign up—although the precise sequence of procedures will depend on how your computer is configured
- you should sign up as a freelancer rather than client initially

Construct your profile

After you sign up, you will be granted an opportunity to construct a profile, similar to the following two examples. To construct a profile, you should
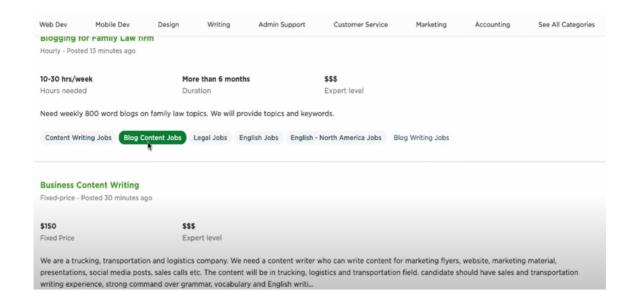
- outline your key skills in 5 to 10 words, such as "Business researcher, academic writer, and data analyst"
- then write a few sentences that depict your distinct capabilities, qualities, and interests, such as "My passion is to convert academic writing in business to a language that everyone understands…."—similar to a typical elevator pitch
- specify the fee you charge every hour; commence with a low rate, such as $25 an hour, to attract clients. As your reputation improves, gradually increase this rate.

Locate relevant jobs

Occasionally, if your fees are reasonable, clients might read your profile and then organize a Zoom interview to discuss a possible task. However, if clients do not contact you, you could instead locate potential tasks and then the approach clients. Specifically,

- if you scroll to the bottom of this webpage, you might be able to locate, and then to click, an option called "Find jobs"
- you can then enter relevant terms in a search box, such as "writing" or "data analysis"
- this search will generate a range of potential tasks that you could perhaps complete—similar to the two examples in the following screen
- you can then click the relevant option; instructions on how to proceed will then appear

Modify your practices as your reputation improves

Your clients will tend to indicate whether they were satisfied with your services as well as rate your performance. The percentage of satisfied clients will appear on your profile. As your profile improves, you might

- increase your hourly fee
- outsource a portion of this work to other freelancers on the site, often at a lower cost, to satisfy more customers; you would still check and refine the work they complete.
- complete tasks for a broader range of clients, partly to develop networks and partly to learn from a diversity of entrepreneurs.

Assistance

CDU, including the Dean of Graduate Studies, can help you utilise this website. For example, we can

- offer you advice, such as how to assist someone on their CV
- check your work
- help you navigate the site—such as promote yourself more effectively

Upwork encompasses a broad range of jobs, from accounting to writing. However, if you are interested only in jobs that are relevant to academia, you could use another website called **kolabtree** instead.