

## Longitudinal predictors of cognitive impairment in bipolar disorder

We are seeking an academically high-performing student with a background in psychology, psychophysiology and/or neuroscience to be involved in new PhD project aimed at identifying longitudinal predictors of cognitive performance in bipolar disorder.

Cognitive impairment is increasingly recognized as a disabling feature of bipolar disorder, with some studies indicating that progressive cognitive decline may occur with the progression of the illness. However, as the majority of work on cognition in bipolar disorder is cross-sectional, inferences that can be made about longitudinal cognitive outcomes in the illness are limited. The aim of this project is to examine whether there are changes in cognitive performance over a 2-3 year period in people with bipolar disorder, determine whether these changes deviate from that of a control group, and identify which clinical, biological and psychological factors predict these changes.

A large battery of neuroimaging (fMRI, sMRI, rsfMRI, DTI), neurophysiological (MEG, eye-tracking), cognitive, mood, clinical, physical health and lifestyle data is already collected as part of a baseline assessment in the cohort. The candidate will be involved in the collection and analysis of the follow-up cognitive data. The candidate will have the opportunity to craft a specific research question aligned to their interests utilizing the available data.

The successful applicant should have an undergraduate and/or honours degree in a relevant field and have good results (first or upper second class honours or equivalent). Prospective PhD and combined PhD/Masters students are encouraged to apply. Students with their own scholarship funding are welcomed. The project is situated within the Melbourne Neuropsychiatry Centre (MNC) at the University of Melbourne. Research at MNC focuses on improving our understanding of the neurobiological processes involved in disorders of the brain and mind.

If you are interested in this opportunity, please contact **Dr Tamsyn Van Rheenen**: [tamsyn.van@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:tamsyn.van@unimelb.edu.au); [www.tamsynvanrheenen.com](http://www.tamsynvanrheenen.com)

