



## **Supernatural beliefs and the commons: Graduate Student Researcher**

*Fall 2021*

The Environmental Markets Lab ([emLab](#)) is seeking a Fall 2021 graduate student researcher to support an ongoing project that explores whether, and under what conditions, superstition, religious beliefs, or motivated beliefs can support the management of common pool resources. The resource management application is Rahui, or traditional fisheries management schemes rooted in spiritual beliefs and community, in the French Polynesia. In the coming months, the project team, led by Chris Costello and Kelsey Jack, will identify and summarize the relevant economics and other literature in this area, identify and track down data, and develop the analytical model. The motivation is to understand how motivated beliefs (i.e., religion, superstition, belief in the afterlife) might affect incentives and behavior for common pool resource extraction, which in turn might affect equilibrium outcomes in a common-pool resource setting. Examples of the types of models can be found in [this paper](#) on magic and the persistence of false beliefs and [this paper](#) on beliefs as assets.

This graduate internship will be a 50% appointment for the duration of the fall quarter 2021 (late-September to mid-December 2021), with the possibility of extension.

### **Internship Responsibilities:**

An ideal candidate for this position would be a graduate student with an interest in information, belief formation, motivated beliefs, learning, and/or game theory, with experience in applied theory, literature review, and data organization.

Responsibilities may include, but are not limited to:

- Conduct a literature review of motivated beliefs, the economics and psychology of religion, and/or cultural evolution and cultural norms
- Support the development of a model of Rahui, drawing on models of learning, strategic behavior and common pool resources
- Aggregate and clean datasets based on anthropological narratives of Rahui and/or fish ecology
- Participate in meetings with external project partners

### **Minimum Qualifications:**

- Enrolled in a Masters or PhD program
- Experience with literature review, applied microeconomic theory and/or quantitative anthropology

### **Preferred Qualifications:**

- Experience identifying and synthesizing data, literature, and information from many sources
- Expertise in applied microeconomic theory
- Excellent scientific writing skills

emLab is committed to sustaining an equitable and inclusive workplace and to the goal of reflecting the rich diversity of our campus community within our staff. We encourage applications from students of all backgrounds and majors. We strive to create an adaptive, supportive environment, especially during circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. As such, independent work will be remote; meetings will either be in-person or remote, pending UCSB guidelines and team availability.

To apply, please send Jen Bone ([jebone@ucsb.edu](mailto:jebone@ucsb.edu)) a resume and an email describing your interest in this position and outlining your relevant expertise. In the subject line of the email, please put "Supernatural beliefs and the commons GSR position". The application deadline is August 31, 2021.