**Brief outline of the project to be supported by the Research Assistant**

Made explicit by Immanuel Kant in the 18th century, the idea that ability determines the extent of one’s obligations is widely accepted in contemporary philosophy, often referred to as the principle that ‘ought’ implies ‘can’ (OIC). However, the principle has recently come under empirical attack by studies claiming that the general population does not agree with it (Chituc *et al*., 2016; Buckwalter & Turri, 2015). That is, the general population seems to assign obligations to agents in situations where they are unable to fulfill them.

This project aims to test a question posed by Carl Otto-Frietsch. Will the general public be found to agree with OIC if the principle’s use of ‘can’ and ‘cannot’ is understood in terms of conceivability and inconceivability? If this turns out to be the case, it will show that a number of high-profile studies on the topic are mistaken in their conclusions.

**Description of expected duties of the RA**

The RA will assist in designing and implementing experiments to be carried out as part of the project. The RA will also contribute to any subsequent publications as an author.

**Estimated number of hours per week and total number of weeks to complete the tasks**

The project is estimated to require 3 hours of work per week, over 10 weeks.

**Benefit from having a RA**

Having an RA will enable us to carry out some research to establish whether this project is viable. Depending on the results, the RA’s activities may contribute to a journal article.

**References**

Chituc, Vladimir, Paul Henne, Walter Sinnott-Armstrong, and Felipe De Brigard. “Blame, Not Ability, Impacts Moral ‘ought’ Judgments for Impossible Actions: Toward an Empirical Refutation of ‘ought’ Implies ‘can.’” Cognition 150 (2016): 20–25. doi:10.1016/j.cognition.2016.01.013.

Buckwalter, Wesley, and John Turri. “Inability and Obligation in Moral Judgment.” PLOS ONE 10, no. 8 (2015): e0136589. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0136589.