**AAKASH KURIAN THOTTAM**

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# PERSONAL SUMMARY

As a diligent and enthusiastic individual, I possess a strong zeal to excel in any given role or project. With over five years of experience as an accomplished marketing professional in both India and Australia, I have gained invaluable insights into the nuances of fundraising in a highly competitive market. My research interests primarily revolve around understanding donors' motivations for charity selection and exploring the potential of contemporary technologies for fundraising, including non-fungible tokens (NFTs) and cryptocurrency. Currently, I am a PhD candidate at the University of Queensland Business School, focusing on researching donor behavior and understanding the intricacies of their decision-making process.

My interdisciplinary approach to research, combining my expertise in marketing with my passion for philanthropy, has enabled me to develop unique insights into the motivations behind donor behavior. Furthermore, my academic background in marketing has equipped me with a deep understanding of consumer behavior, market research, and brand management, which have been invaluable in my research on donor behavior. As a reliable and trustworthy team player, I am capable of multitasking and ensuring that the assigned responsibilities are completed professionally and promptly to the highest standard. I am committed to exploring new horizons of knowledge and contributing significantly to the field of donor behavior research.

# EDUCATION

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Higher Degree Candidate (Doctor of Philosophy)** | **University of Queensland**  | **2022-26** |
| **Master of Business (MGMT S-6000 Marketing Management)**  | **Harvard University**  | **2021**  |
| **Master of Business (Dual Degree: Marketing, Advertising)**  | **University of Queensland**  | **2020-21**  |
| **Bachelor of Design (Fashion Communication)**  | **National Institute of Fashion Technology**  | **2014-18**  |

# EXPERIENCE

**The University of Queensland March 2023 – Present**

* **Position Title: Research Assistant**
* Assist in conducting research activities such as data collection, analysis, and interpretation
* Conduct literature reviews, summarize research findings, and assist in writing research papers and reports
* Perform other duties as assigned by the research supervisor or project lead

# Nosferatu Distillery/ Bouchon Wines Pty Ltd January 2022 – October 2022

* **Position Title: Marketing Coordinator**
* Assisted in the management of various promotional activities and conducted professional market research to identify market trends and analyze competitors
* Planned and executed the Brand’s Promotional Calendar to meet the Brand’s strategic priorities
* Implemented original marketing campaigns and worked on the improvement of social marketing metrics to increase efficacy increased by +109% for social media (Jul-Oct)
* Executed email marketing campaigns with an average open rate of 66% and an average click-through rate of 43.9%
* Supervised marketing for product launches, including public relations tasks, direct mail pieces, and trade shows
* Developed and implemented favorable pricing structures balancing firm objectives against customer targets

**UQ Carbon Literacy Program October 2021 – January2022**

* **Position Title: Casual Academic General**

* Developed and modified UQ's Carbon Literacy Program to fit the Indian context and align efforts between individuals and organisations by conducting secondary research
* Responsible for fostering collaborative partnerships with the Department of Foreign Affairs (India) and helping out with the climate change training

**Business Economics & Law (BEL) March 2021 – November 2021**

* **Position Title: Casual Staff (Marketing)**

* + Assisted with BEL events and ensured on the day logistics for all major faculty functions
	+ Supported the development of the events strategy and planning of BEL Orientation 2021 for 3000+ in-person and over 1000+ online attendees
	+ Engaged with future students and represented the BEL faculty at recruitment events such as UQ Open Day 2021

(Virtual)

* + Assisted with post-event marketing/communication, reporting & analysis (Achieved 74% post-event survey & NPS = 62 for BEL Social Event 2021)

**BEL Careers First Year Engagement Program March 2021 – November 2021**

* **Position Title: Student Partner (Student-Staff Partnership Project)**

* + Co-created learning prototypes for first-year BEL students
	+ Identified four possible interventions (such as Majors Festival, Podcast episodes targeting first-year issues, 24/7 hub aka Careers Corner & Work Shadowing Program) and tested for their validity through student focus groups and via consultations with various stakeholders at UQ
	+ Undertook social listening and secondary research on student engagement approaches
	+ Directed the first BEL Career and Employability Podcast series centred on the career journey of first-year BEL students
	+ Co-designed a work-shadowing program as part of BEL Careers & Employability Industry Engagement lead for development in 2022

**UQ Business School Postgraduate Association January 2021 – June 2021**

* **Position Title: President**

* + Coordinated the club’s overall functionality, including administration and activities
	+ Demonstrated positive leadership behaviours and effectively managed a diverse team
	+ Increased membership growth and engagement by 40% for the year 2021
	+ Identified new revenue streams and increased funding by 132% for Semester I, 2021
	+ In consultation with the Treasurer, monitored club accounts and finances
	+ Chaired and revived the BSPA star event *Industry Networking Night* after 15 months

**Qlicksmart Pty Ltd December 2020 – February 2021**

* **Position Title: Student – Marketing Intern**

* + Conducted market research and identified potential B2B customers
	+ Planned and executed Digital Marketing campaigns including web, SEO/SEM, Email, social media
	+ Maintained social media presence across all channels and increased traffic organically by 58%
	+ Increased unique page views by 35% for monthly blogposts
	+ Reported on the performance of all digital marketing campaigns during weekly meetings
	+ Assisted in planning a successful Product launch roadmap for *Qlicksmart Evo* Scalpel Blade Remover

**La Polo Publication April 2019 – March 2020**

* **Position Title: Marketing Specialist**

* + Contributed original articles and feature stories for various publication issues
	+ Carried out essential fact-checking duties through extensive research and supervised other content creators
	+ Designed and finalized magazine layouts for September 2019 issue
	+ Designed the strategy involved in expressing information through visual design using Adobe Suite and CorelDraw19
	+ Designed and curated social media content and increased traffic by 65% in 5 months

**Creative Minds Consultancy September 2017 – April 2019**

* **Position Title: Marketing Specialist**

* + Involved in market research analysis using *Attest* & *Google Trends*
	+ Planned an outreach program and designed social media engagement strategies for clients
	+ Offered strategic input for campaign execution and reported on campaign effectiveness
	+ Executed an effective email marketing campaign using Mailchimp with a 38% increase in click through rate

# RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

**Australian & New Zealand Marketing Academy Main Conference 2022**

Thottam, A.K.,Chapman, C.M. &Popkowski Leszczyc, P. (2022, December 5). *Donors’ self- and other-oriented motives for charity selection.*Paper presented at Australian & New Zealand Marketing Academy’s annual conference; Perth, Australia.

**Australian & New Zealand Marketing Academy Doctoral Colloquium 2022**

Thottam, A.K.,Chapman, C.M. &Popkowski Leszczyc, P. (2022, December 2). *Donors’ self- and other-oriented motives for charity selection.*Paper presented at Australian & New Zealand Marketing Academy’s annual doctoral colloquium; Perth, Australia.

**24th BEL HDR Annual Research Colloquium 2022**

Thottam, A.K.,Chapman, C.M. &Popkowski Leszczyc, P. (2022, July 20). *Donors’ self- and other-oriented motives for charity selection.*Paper presented at Business Economics & Law Higher Degree Research doctoral colloquium; Brisbane, Australia.

# ACADEMIC SUPERVISORS

* **Dr Cassandra Chapman**

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* **Professor Peter Popkowski Leszczyc**

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# OTHER ROLES

* UQ Academic Board Member – Coursework Admission Standards Sub-Committee 2022
* UQ Business, Economics, & Law Career Ambassador 2021
* Global Leaders Ambassador 2021
* Vice President of UQ Business School Postgraduate Association 2020
* UQ Peer Writing Mentor 2020
* UQ Get Set Mentor 2020

# AWARDS

* ANZMAC Doctoral Colloquium – Best Paper 2022
* UQ BEL HDR Annual Research Colloquium – People’s Choice Research Presentation 1st Place
* UQ Valedictorian Batch 2020-21
* UQ Employability Award 2021
* UQ Future Leader Award 2021
* Recipient of Dean's Commendation for Academic Excellence (Sem I, Sem II 2020 and Sem I, Sem II 2021)
* Recipient of Paul Crampton Scholarship 2021
* Recipient of UQ Global Leader Award 2020
* NIFT Student of the Year Award 2018
* NIFT Best Academic Performer 2018
* NIFT Best Graduation Project 2018
* Most Innovative Communication Design Award 2018