



Melissa Salmon is a **Senior Researcher** with the **Centre for the Advancement of Best Practices (CABP)** at RGC, as well as a PhD Candidate at Carleton University (to be defended September, 2022). She has specialized in the field of gambling studies for eight years, with a background in psychological research and knowledge mobilization to guide her work. At RGC, Melissa leads primary research initiatives to promote safer gambling practices and reduce gambling-related harm, as well as program evaluations with community partners.

We asked Melissa some questions about what drew her to the gambling field and the research she hopes to accomplish at RGC.

## Get to know Melissa Salmon

### Q. What drew you to the gambling field?

A: I have always been interested in the study of addictions, but it wasn't until I began working at the Carleton University Gambling Lab (now the Betterment Labs) with Dr. Michael Wohl that I became drawn to the gambling field. As one of my first projects, I interviewed people living with problem gambling and was fascinated by their stories. So many people experience such severe gambling-related harms, and yet so few people enter treatment. I wanted to understand how and why some people are able to quit or cut down on gambling without professional help, and how to better help those who may be struggling or resistant to change.

### Q. What kind of research do you hope to accomplish at RGC?

A: I am looking forward to exploring more opportunities in prevention research. With so many recent changes to the gambling landscape both nationally and internationally, it is important to establish and normalize safer gambling practices early on. I was drawn to RGC because of its history of excellence in gambling harm prevention research and programming that have demonstrated valuable real-world impact. I aim to conduct timely and relevant research to inform best practices both within the organization and in the gambling field more broadly to prevent and minimize gambling-related harm—particularly among vulnerable and at-risk groups.

### View some of Melissa's published works:

- *Frontiers in Psychology* (2020)
- *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology* (2018)
- *Addictive Behaviours* (2016)