

## **Research Associate for the project “PANCOPop: Pandemic Communication in Times of Populism”**

**The position is fixed term starting 1st April 2023 or as soon as possible thereafter. Full-time for 9 months or part-time with a minimum FTE0.75 for a maximum 12 months.**

**Job Ref: REQ221606**

**As part of the University’s ongoing commitment to redeployment, please note that this vacancy may be withdrawn at any stage of the recruitment process if a suitable redeployee is identified.**

### **Project Description**

The [PANCOPop project](https://www.lboro.ac.uk/subjects/communication-media/) examines the impact of populism on health crisis communication, focusing on the COVID-19 pandemic. It is designed to bring significant advances in knowledge at the intersection of political communication and public health, through studying the interaction between populist politics and different aspects of the pandemic communication circuit, ranging from government-led health crisis communication to media coverage and public opinion. The research focuses on four countries that were led by populist leaders during the pandemic, and which capture different types of populist responses to the pandemic: Brazil, Poland, Serbia, and the USA. This research will inform recommendations aimed at building more resilient media organisations that are better equipped to withstand the challenges of future pandemics in divided societies.

The post holder will work under the supervision of Professor Sabina Mihelj and will be responsible for data collection and analysis in Serbia and for supporting the delivery of impact activities. They will also collaborate with other team members based in the UK, Brazil, USA, and Poland.

The post will be based in the Communication and Media Division, School of Social Sciences and Humanities, and affiliated with the Centre for Research in Communication and Culture.

<https://www.lboro.ac.uk/subjects/communication-media/>

<https://www.lboro.ac.uk/research/crc/>

<https://www.pancopop.net/>

### **Job Description**

**Job Grade:** Specialist and Supporting Academic Grade 6

#### **Job Purpose**

The researcher’s primary responsibilities will be to (1) play a central role in data collection and analysis related to Serbia, in collaboration with researchers responsible for data collection and analysis in Brazil, Poland, and USA; (2) support the delivery of impact activities, including assisting with stakeholder communication, development of recommendations/policy briefs, and event organisation.

#### **Job Duties**

- To play a key role in the design of data collection methods for the media content analysis strand of the project;

- Undertake data collection and analysis in Serbia, with a focus on qualitative media coverage analysis (most likely using framing analysis) and relevant literature review and secondary research related to Serbia;
- Actively participate in the organisation of impact activities, including one general stakeholder meeting (provisionally planned for January-February 2024) and follow-up activities with individual stakeholders;
- Be responsible for the storing of all relevant qualitative data from the project (from all four countries), and for coordinating the process of backing up and long-term storing and archiving of all project data in the UK Data Service, in consultation with Loughborough University's Research Data Manager and other PANCOPOP team members;
- Contribute to the organisation of the conference symposium (June 2023);
- Contribute to the writing of project reports, journal articles, policy recommendations and other outputs, taking on the role of lead, co-author, or assistant as appropriate;
- Attend academic conferences and (co-)present project's findings;
- Contribute to the project's website and social media accounts, and to disseminating project's outcomes via these and other channels, including a project video;
- Contribute ideas for new research and enterprise directions;
- Maintain confidentiality and ensure that intellectual property (IPR) agreements are not violated;
- Engage in training programmes in the University (or elsewhere) that are consistent with the needs and aspirations of the project and those of the Division and School;
- Undertake other duties as may be reasonably requested and that are commensurate with the nature and grade of the post.

### **Points To Note**

The purpose of this job description is to indicate the general level of duties and responsibility of the post. The detailed duties may vary from time to time without changing the general character or level of responsibility entailed.

### **Special Conditions**

All staff have a statutory responsibility to take reasonable care of themselves, others and the environment and to prevent harm by their acts or omissions. All staff are therefore required to adhere to the University's Health, Safety and Environmental Policy & Procedures.

All staff should hold a duty and commitment to observing the University's Equality & Diversity policy and procedures at all times. Duties must be carried out in accordance with relevant Equality & Diversity legislation and University policies/procedures.

Successful completion of probation will be dependent on attendance at the University's mandatory courses which include Respecting Diversity and, where appropriate, Recruitment and Selection.

### **Organisational Responsibility**

Reports to Professor Sabina Mihelj.

### **Person Specification**

Your application will be reviewed with respect to meeting the essential and desirable criteria listed below. Applicants are strongly advised to explicitly state and evidence how they meet each of the essential (and desirable) criteria in their application. Stages of assessment are as follows:

- 1 – Application
- 2 – Test/Assessment Centre/Presentation
- 3 – Interview

## Essential Criteria

| Area                 | Criteria   | Stage |
|----------------------|--|-------|
| Experience           | Background in media/communication studies, political science, sociology, or another related discipline   | 1,3   |
|                      | Demonstrable knowledge of at least one of the following fields and relevant literature: political communication, media sociology, Eastern European politics and society, or a cognate area relevant to the project focus | 1,2,3 |
|                      | Demonstrable knowledge of media, politics, and society in Serbia   | 1,2,3 |
|                      | Experience of qualitative social science methodologies, particularly qualitative analysis of textual data  | 1,2,3 |
| Skills and abilities | Ability to conduct qualitative media content, especially using framing analysis  | 1,3   |
|                      | Ability to conduct secondary research using relevant sources for Serbia  |       |
|                      | Ability to author original research work   | 1,3   |
|                      | Excellent written and spoken English   | 1,2,3 |
|                      | Excellent written and spoken Serbian   | 1,2,3 |
|                      | Excellent time management and ability to complete agreed work commitments on time  | 1,3   |
|                      | Excellent interpersonal and organisational skills  | 1,3   |
|                      | Competence in IT skills, Internet usage and social media (e.g., web site development, social media accounts management)  | 1,3   |
|                      | Interest in engaging in mixed methods research   | 1,3   |
|                      | Ability to engage in impact generation with non-academic stakeholders, for instance through preparing stakeholder reports, presentations and other collaborative activities  | 1,3   |
| Training             | A willingness to undertake further training as appropriate and to adopt new procedures as and when required  | 1,3   |
| Qualifications       | PhD, or very close to completion, in media/communication studies, sociology, political science or another related social science discipline  | 1     |
| Other                | Travel / Able to travel independently  | 1,3   |

## Desirable Criteria

| Area       | Criteria  | Stage |
|------------|---|-------|
| Experience | Research experience with one or more of the project's key research areas, i.e., political communication (especially in relation to populism), political polarization and public attitudes, health communication (especially in relation to health crisis communication) | 1,3   |
|            | Experience of conducting content analysis, including using framing analysis methods   | 1,3   |
|            | Experience of engaging in impact generation with non-academic stakeholders  | 1,3   |
|            | Experience with comparative, cross-country research   | 1,3   |
|            | Experience with mixed methods research  | 1,3   |
|            | Working in a high-quality academic research environment   | 1,3   |

|                      |   |     |
|----------------------|---|-----|
| Skills and abilities | Proven ability to publish in high quality academic journals and present at academic conferences | 1,3 |
|                      | Active knowledge of NVIVO or other comparable qualitative software packages                     | 1,3 |
|                      | Proven ability to use mixed methods or qualitative methodologies                                | 1,3 |

## Conditions of Service

The position is fixed term starting 1st April 2023 or as soon as possible thereafter. Full-time for 9 months or part-time with a minimum FTE0.75 for a maximum 12 months (variations by negotiation). Salary will be on Specialist and Supporting Academic Grade 6, £32,348 to £42,155, at a starting salary to be confirmed on offer of appointment.

The appointment will be subject to the University's Terms and Conditions of Employment for staff grades 6 and above, details of which can be found [here](#).

The University is committed to enabling staff to maintain a healthy work-home balance and has a number of family-friendly policies which can be found [here](#).

The University offers a wide range of employee benefits which can be found [here](#).

We also offer an on-campus nursery with subsidised places, subsidised places at local holiday clubs and a childcare voucher scheme (further details are available at: <http://www.lboro.ac.uk/services/hr/a-z/childcare-information---page.html>)

In addition, the University is supportive, wherever possible, of flexible working arrangements. We also strive to create a culture that supports equality and celebrates diversity throughout the campus. The University holds a Bronze Athena SWAN award which recognises the importance of support for women at all stages of their academic career. For further information on Athena SWAN see <http://www.lboro.ac.uk/services/hr/athena-swan/>