

RESEARCH ASSISTANT – ('Snacktivity')

Full-time (37 hrs per week); Fixed-term for 12-months

Job Ref: REQ240089

As part of the University's ongoing commitment to redeployment, please note that this vacancy may be withdrawn at any stage of the recruitment process if a suitable redeployee is identified.

Internationally recognised for its contribution to the study of sport, exercise and health, the School has wide-ranging expertise, encompassing such diverse areas as biomechanics, medicine, molecular and cellular biology, nutrition, pedagogy, psychology, physiology, sociology, economics and sport management. The School has an active and ambitious plan to grow capacity and influence through developments as part of the National Centre for Sport and Exercise Medicine, Loughborough in London, and StemLab.

The School is extremely proud to have held an [Athena Swan Silver Award](#) since 2013, recognising the commitment and work of the School in addressing gender inequalities in Science, and to improving career progression for female academics.

The School is committed to ensuring that female students and staff are able to achieve their full potential, and provides a flexible and open working culture to enable staff to maintain a work-life balance.

We support our Athena SWAN initiatives by investing in:

- Bespoke leadership programmes to encourage and build confidence in women to take leadership roles.
- Working lunches, where needed, to enable meetings to be held between 10.00am and 4.00pm (as per our Silver Action Plan).
- Monthly coffee mornings which provide opportunities for networking and develop a sense of community within the School.
- Extra Mile Awards which recognise the 'above and beyond' contributions of staff from all job families and research students.

We also welcome applications from those who are looking to work part-time.

Research and Innovation

Research and Innovation within the School is characterised by excellence and breadth, and its quality was recognised in the 2021 Research Excellence Framework where Loughborough University ranked top for research power (GPA x volume) in Sport and Exercise Sciences, Leisure and Tourism. Loughborough University has also placed Number 1 in the QS world ranking for sport-related subjects for six consecutive years (2017-2022, every year since the category was introduced). A broad range of social and natural sciences contribute to the School's research and innovation activity which is organised within three overlapping themes:

- **Sport performance**, understanding and supporting the enhancement of athletes' performance in competitive sport;
- **Lifestyle for health and well-being**, encompassing research across several disciplines with the common goal of facilitating healthy living and ageing across the lifespan; and
- **Sport, Business and Society**, exploring how individuals, communities and organisations engage with and facilitate sport and exercise opportunities.

The School's research themes articulate in particular with the Sport and Exercise Beacon and the Health and Wellbeing Global Challenge which are key elements of the University's [CALIBRE](#) (Collective Ambition at Loughborough for Building Research Excellence) framework.

Job Description

Job Family & Grade: Specialist & Supporting Academic (Research) Grade 5

Project Summary:

Snacktivity to promote physical activity and reduce future risk of disease in the population

The School of Sport, Exercise and Health Sciences at Loughborough University, in partnership with the Universities of Birmingham, Leicester, Edinburgh, and Birmingham Community Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, have been awarded an NIHR Programme Grant for Applied Research to conduct a series of studies to develop a new approach to promoting physical activity in the population, called Snacktivity.

Public health guidance states that, over a week, adults should achieve at least 150-minutes of at least moderate-vigorous intensity physical activity. Meeting this guidance however means the people who are inactive have to make large changes to their lives to achieve this and very few people currently achieve this level of activity each week. An alternative 'whole day' approach to current physical activity guidance that could engage and motivate the public to be more physically active and less sedentary is a concept we have called Snacktivity. Rather than focusing on encouraging 150-minutes per week of physical activity (~30-mins per day), Snacktivity focuses on promoting small, but frequent, doses of regular moderate to vigorous physical activity throughout the whole day such that at least 150-mins is accumulated weekly.

The research will be conducted remotely across the United Kingdom, and travel across locations may be required. The post-holder will be responsible for delivering the Snacktivity™ intervention to participants and remotely assisting them to set up the study technology (mobile phone application and Fitbit device). The post holder will work closely with colleagues from Loughborough University, Birmingham Clinical Trials Unit, as well as other collaborating universities and NHS partners.

Job Purpose: To deliver the Snacktivity™ intervention and the usual care advice to participants in the Snacktivity™ trial and remotely assist them to set up the study technology (mobile phone application and Fitbit device). Monitoring of the study data from the study technology will also be required.

Project Description:

This work will involve delivering the Snacktivity™ intervention and the usual care advice to participants in the Snacktivity™ trial and remotely assisting them to set up the study technology (mobile phone application and Fitbit device). Monitoring of the study data from the study technology will also be required. There will also be a requirement to liaise with co-investigators to co-create study specific reports/outputs and to attend study meetings.

Job Duties:

To undertake the following research tasks:

- Collect basic data from patients involved in the Snacktivity study following defined protocols
- Delivering the Snacktivity™ intervention and the usual care advice to participants in the Snacktivity™ trial following defined protocols
- Remotely assist participants in the Snacktivity™ group of the trial to set up the study technology (mobile phone application and Fitbit device)
- Liaise with participants during the trial regarding their use of the study technology (where required)
- Monitor the study data from the study technology and follow-up missing data
- Liaise with academic and NHS partners
- Liaise with mobile app developers regarding health app performance
- Work within a team environment
- Interact and work successfully with the Birmingham Clinical Trial Unit and colleagues in the Unit who are managing the trial
- Co-ordinate with the Birmingham Clinical Trial Unit to ensure all regulatory procedures are followed
- Demonstrate a basic knowledge and understanding of the conduct of randomised clinical trials
- Some travel across the region where required
- Presentation of findings to relevant stakeholders
- Assisting with the write-up of reports
- Providing administrative support as required
- To engage in training programmes which are consistent with the needs and aspirations of the individual, the University and regulatory requirements of the funder (eg. GCP training)
- To undertake other duties as may be reasonably requested and that are commensurate with the nature and grade of the post
- Provide a valid DBS check (if required).

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.

This post is based at Loughborough University's East Midlands campus with some travel to study locations required on occasion. The ability to drive and access to a car is required to undertake the duties outlined above.

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 Equity, Diversity and Inclusion policy and procedures at all times. Duties must be carried out in accordance with relevant Equity, Diversity and Inclusion legislation and University policies/procedures.

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

Organisational Responsibility:

Reports to Professor Amanda Daley with a dotted line to Dr James Sanders

Person Specification

Your application will be reviewed against 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

Area	Criteria	Stage
Experience	Knowledge in the area of physical activity and health	1,3
	Experience with wearable technologies and mobile apps in a research setting	1,3
	Experience of data collection in randomised controlled trials/experimental studies	1,3
	Experience of communicating with patient/participants within a randomised control trial.	1,3
	Experience using video conferencing software (MS Teams)	1
	Skills and abilities	Excellent communication and interpersonal skills
	Able to work methodically	1,3
	Good time management	1,3
	Able to work independently when required	1,3
	Able to work as part of a team and to collaborate with others	1,3
	Proven ability and commitment to carry out high quality original research	1,3
Training	A willingness to undertake further training as appropriate and to adopt new procedures as and when required	1
Qualifications	MSc in any sport, physical activity or health discipline area	1
Other	A commitment to observing the University's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion policy at all times	3
	Able to drive, access to a car, and willingness to travel on occasions to study locations	1,3

DESIRABLE

Area	Criteria	Stage
Experience	Experience of preparing research reports	1,3
	Working in a high-quality academic research environment	1,3
	Experience of working with health partners	1,3
Skills and abilities	Knowledge of research in a higher education context	1,3
	Knowledge of coding languages (Python/R)	1,3

Conditions of Service

This full-time post (1.0 FTE) is offered on a fixed-term contract for 12-months (1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025) within the *Specialist & Supporting Academic (Research)* Job Family at Grade 5 (£27,979 to £28,759 per annum); starting salary to be agreed on appointment.

The appointment will be subject to the University's normal Terms and Conditions of Employment for staff employed on Grade 5 and below, 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 are available at <http://www.lboro.ac.uk/services/hr/a-z/family-leave-policy-and-procedure---page.html>.

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/>