

Research Associate in Human-Centred Design: Consumer Engagement with Energy Propositions Part-time 0.8FTE for 11 months from May 2024.

Job Ref: REQ240115

This position is conditional on the receipt of a firm contract for funding, which is in progress.

As part of the University's ongoing commitment to redeployment, please note that this vacancy may be withdrawn at any stage of the recruitment process if a suitable redeployee is identified.

Loughborough University is renowned as a research-intensive institution and the School of Design and Creative Arts contributes substantially to this. The activities within our School sit within the areas of creative expression and the design of experiences, within the context of responding to societal change and challenges. Our vision is to harness creative expertise and innovation to benefit future societies across the globe. We strive to create physical and digital experiences and interactions which benefit people, society, the economy and the environment. Our research stretches across a broad spectrum of expertise spanning Design, Creative Arts and Human Factors, and is characterised by transdisciplinary and collaborative working within the School, across the wider University, and alongside industry specialists.

Project Description

The School of Design and Creative Arts is seeking to appoint an experienced researcher in human-centred design. The post-holder will carry out qualitative research on consumer response to novel domestic energy propositions implemented in the real world. The propositions will be offered to householders with the aim of reducing peak energy demand, enabling increased use of renewables, and supporting consumers to reduce their energy bills.

Job Description

Job Grade: Specialist and Supporting Academic Grade 6

Job Purpose

The post-holder will develop, run, and analyse a series of user-engagement activities (predominantly interviews) with the householders using the different energy propositions, to gather qualitative data. The specific objectives of the human-centred design research are: (i) to understand user reaction to the energy propositions in terms of the user experience; specifically, consumer understanding and mental models, fit with lifestyle, information requirements, concerns, and motivations; and (ii) to take the findings elicited from users and communicate these to an interdisciplinary consortium of partners to complement quantitative data collection on energy consumption.

Job Duties

Project-specific duties

- To conduct a small and focused literature review of existing knowledge on the user considerations for new domestic energy propositions in order to guide the qualitative research to be carried out in the project.
- To develop, conduct and analyse a series of interviews using human-centred design methods to identify user responses to new domestic energy propositions and how these change over time.
- To synthesise the findings of the qualitative research and communicate them to industry partners in order to inform future design considerations.

General duties:

- To be responsible for conducting the day to day running of the human-centred design activities of the project.
- To feed back to the project team on progress, to make recommendations for next steps.
- To write up progress reports and present outcomes to investigators and collaborators.
- Travel to attend meetings and make presentations both within the project consortium partners and to external stakeholders.
- To write a research paper suitable for publication in a high-quality academic conference or journal.
- To maintain confidentiality at all times and ensure that intellectual property (IPR) agreements are not violated.
- To engage in training programmes in the University (or elsewhere) that are consistent with the needs and aspirations of the role and the School.
- To 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 Dr Tracy Ross, Principal Investigator

Person Specification

Your application will be reviewed with respect to meeting the essential and desirable criteria listed below. 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 – Presentation
- 3 – Interview

Essential Criteria

Area	Criteria	Stage
Qualifications	A good first degree in a relevant discipline	1
	Holds (or near to completing) a PhD in a relevant human-centred design discipline	1
Experience	Experience of collecting, analysing and presenting qualitative data using design research methods and tools.	1,2,3
	Experience of relevant design research and human-centred design methods and tools (e.g., semi structured interviews, co-creation workshops)	1,2,3
	Experience of interacting with end users and stakeholders in a research context	1,3
	Authoring original work for academic journal papers, conference papers or technical reports	1,3
Skills and abilities	Excellent written, visual and oral communication skills – including writing for, and presenting to, academic and/or professional audiences	1,2,3
	Self-motivated with ability to coordinate project activities, manage project tasks, prioritise and meet deadlines	1,3
	Ability to work independently and as part of a team	1,3
	Excellent interpersonal, and organisational skills	1,3
	Good analytical and IT skills	1,3
Training	Willingness to undertake appropriate further training and to adopt new procedures as and when required.	3
Other	Commitment to observing the University's Equal Opportunities policy at all times.	3
	Willingness and ability to travel	3
	Commitment to maintain confidentiality at all times	3

Desirable Criteria

Area	Criteria	Stage
Experience	Experience of conducting human-centred design research in the transport and/or energy context	1,3
	Experience of developing creative research materials and engaging lay people with these in workshop activities.	1,3
	Experience of cross-disciplinary research	1,3

Skills and abilities	Knowledge of relevant Health & Safety and ethical issues for research.	1,3
Other	Valid licence for driving in the UK	1

Conditions of Service

The position is part-time and fixed term. Salary will be on Specialist and Supporting Academic Grade 6, £33,966 - £44,263 per annum pro rata at a starting salary to be confirmed on offer of appointment and subject to funding.

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. Or as soon as possible thereafter.

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/>