

Research Associate for the project “(Mis)Translating Deceit” Full-time and fixed-term for 12 months, starting 1st February 2025 or as soon as possible thereafter.

Job Ref: REQ240760

As part of the University’s ongoing commitment to redeployment, please note that this vacancy may be withdrawn at any stage of the recruitment process if a suitable redeployee is identified.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 (Mis)Translating Deceit project is a major interdisciplinary research project aimed at developing a new, holistic approach to disinformation, funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (UK). Events such as the Russia-Ukraine war and the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the threat disinformation poses to democracy, yet effective responses to this global challenge have been hampered by the persistence of simplistic approaches that pit democratic ‘truth-telling’ against totalitarian ‘deceit’ and overlook the impact of home-grown disinformation. The (Mis)Translating Deceit project interrogates common misconceptions about disinformation, treating it as a transnational, translingual and historically mutating phenomenon. It employs a multi-stage methodological toolset designed to examine how selected cases of historical and contemporary disinformation are produced and disseminated, how they acquire the status of disinformation, and how their reception shifts as they travel across cultural, linguistic and socio-political boundaries.

The post holder will work under the supervision of Professor Sabina Mihelj at Loughborough University and focus on the audience research strand of the project. They will also collaborate with other team members based at the University of Manchester, the University of Leeds, and Chatham House.

The post will be based in the Communication and Media Department, School of Social Sciences and Humanities, and affiliated with the Centre for Research in Communication and Culture. The successful candidate will be based in the UK for the duration of the appointment, with short periods of fieldwork and travel abroad.

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

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

<https://www.mis-translating-deceit.com>

Job Description

Job Grade: Specialist and Supporting Academic Grade 6

Job Purpose

The researcher’s primary responsibilities will be to (1) conduct audience research in one of the following three locations: Poland, Serbia, or Arabic-speaking minorities in the UK; (2) lead on the comparative analysis of audience research data collected in all three locations; (3) contribute to some of the joint project activities, in collaboration with team members based at the University of Manchester, the University of Leeds, and Chatham House.

Job Duties

- To contribute to the design of data collection and analysis methods for the audience research strand of the project;
- To conduct focus groups and collect other relevant contextual data for one of the following three locations: Poland, Serbia, or Arabic-speaking minorities in the UK;

- To coordinate activities with local researchers collecting data in the remaining two locations;
- To conduct comparative analysis of audience research data collected in all three locations, with assistance from other team members where relevant;
- To be responsible for the secure storing and management of all data collected as part of the audience research strand, and lead on the data deposition to the UK Data Service, in consultation with Loughborough University's Research Data Manager and other project team members if relevant;
- To conduct literature searches and collect background information on the research area;
- To be actively involved in the process of co-writing academic publications and other project outputs, taking on the role of lead author, co-author, or writing assistant as appropriate;
- To attend academic conferences and (co-)present project findings;
- To contribute to public engagement and impact activities carried out in co-operation with Chatham House or other stakeholders;
- To contribute to project promotion, including through the project's website and social media accounts.
- To contribute ideas for new research and enterprise directions.
- 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 project and those of the Department.
- 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 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	Demonstrable knowledge of at least one of the following fields and relevant literature: audience research, disinformation/ misinformation, or a cognate area relevant to the project focus	1,2,3
	Demonstrable knowledge of media, culture and society in at least one of the following contexts: Poland, Serbia, or Arabic-speaking minorities in the UK	1,2,3
	Experience of conducting focus groups or interviews	1,2,3
	Experience of conducting qualitative data analysis, such as thematic analysis or discourse analysis	1,2,3
Skills and abilities	Ability to design and conduct focus groups or semi-structured interviews	1,3
	Ability to analyse large data sets of qualitative data	1,3
	Ability to author original research work	1,3
	Excellent written and spoken English	1,2,3
	Excellent written and spoken skills in at least one of the following: Arabic, Serbian or Polish	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
	Ability to write and deliver effective oral presentations of research to different audiences	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, cultural studies, anthropology, sociology, psychology, relevant area studies, modern languages, or another related social sciences or humanities discipline	1
Other	Travel / Able to travel independently	1,3

Desirable Criteria

Area	Criteria	Stage
Experience	Direct research experience with one or more of the project's key research areas, i.e., disinformation/misinformation or audience research	1,3
	Experience in conducting focus groups	1,3
	Experience in conducting qualitative thematic or discourse analysis using large data sets	1,3
	Experience with comparative, multi-country 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
	Excellent written and spoken skills in more than one of the following: Arabic, Serbian or Polish	1,2,3

Conditions of Service

The position is full-time and fixed term for 12 months, starting 1 February 2025 or as soon as possible thereafter. Salary will be on Specialist and Supporting Academic Grade 6, spinal points 27 – 34 (£33,966 - £41,732), 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/>