

Research Associate in Political Theory

Project title: The Right to Liveability: An Ethical Assessment

Job Ref: REQ260178

Project Description

The Research Associate (RA) will join a three-year research project in political theory (political philosophy), *The Right to Liveability: An Ethical Assessment*, funded by the Leverhulme Trust. The project examines the issues of social and democratic justice raised by the unequal distribution of suicide and mental distress between social groups. The project uses an interdisciplinary approach that combines philosophical analysis of moral issues with interviews with individuals with lived experience of mental distress and suicidality and professional stakeholders. It considers arguments for a 'right to liveability' - a moral right to be protected from social conditions that elevate mental distress and suicide – and explains how this can shape just policy-making and successful prevention. Core research areas include: theories of human rights; theories of social justice; theories of democratic justice; mental distress, suicide and social disadvantage; the ethics of suicide and assisted dying.

The RA will work closely with the Principal Investigator (PI), Dr. Guy Aitchison. The RA will undertake their own independent research in support of the project, as well as supporting the research and publication activities of the PI with opportunities for co-authorship. They will write and contribute to peer-reviewed publications, support data collection and analysis, organise meetings and a conference, manage the project website and social media, coordinate dissemination of research, including presenting at workshops and conferences. The post is based in the vibrant research environment of the International Relations, Politics and History within the School of Social Sciences and Humanities at Loughborough University, which includes relevant centres of expertise, such as the Ethics in Public Life group, Health and the Humanities and the Centre for Research in Social Policy.

Recognising that a diverse workplace is a better, more successful workplace, applications are especially welcome from underrepresented groups including women and people of colour, people with disabilities, and LGBT candidates.

Job Description

Job Grade: Specialist and Supporting Academic Grade 6

Job Purpose:

The Research Associate will work in close collaboration with the Project Lead (PL). The RA will take responsibility for an independent sub-project of research; support the PI with their research and co-author outputs; organise and conduct interviews in the UK and conduct data analysis; organise and facilitate project meetings and a conference; disseminate findings both independently and in collaboration with the PI through a podcast, blogs and other media; manage the project website and social media and grow internal and external networks for sharing information and ideas.

Job Duties

- To be responsible for conducting the day-to-day running of the project, including carrying out independent research
- To take responsibility for preparing research work for peer-reviewed publication in high quality journals.
- To organise and conduct interviews in the UK and data analysis as appropriate.
- To feed back to the PI and advisory board on progress, to make recommendations for next steps

- To contribute to the organisation of project meetings and a conference as appropriate.
- To publish analysis of the research undertaken in print and at conferences, independently and in collaboration with the PI.
- To travel to conduct research, attend meetings (as appropriate) and make presentations both within the team and advisory group, at academic conferences and (where applicable) to external stakeholders.
- To contribute to project promotion and public engagement activities.
- To support the implementation of the data management plan and to ensure compliance with Loughborough, UKRI, and GDPR data management requirements and with all other ethical requirements.
- 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 the Project Lead (PL

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 philosophy, political theory, political science or health.	1, 3
	Authoring original work for academic journal articles, book chapters and/or conference papers.	1, 3
Skills and abilities	Excellent written and oral communication skills in English.	1, 3
	Ability to conduct interviews	1, 3
	Excellent time management skills and ability to complete agreed work commitments on time.	1, 3
	Excellent interpersonal and organisational skills.	1, 3
	Ability to work independently <u>and</u> as part of a team and to collaborate with others.	1, 3
	Knowledge of relevant ethical issues.	1, 3
Training	Willingness to undertake further training, such as mandatory training.	1,3
Qualifications	PhD in a relevant area, such as Philosophy, Political Theory, Ethics, Public Health.	1, 3
Other	Commitment to observing the University's Equal Opportunities policy at all times.	1, 3
	Willingness to travel nationally and internationally.	1, 3

Desirable Criteria

Area	Criteria	Stage
Experience	Working in a high-quality academic research environment.	1, 3
	Experience of conducting qualitative research, especially interviews	1, 3
	Dissemination of research at high-profile conferences and workshops.	1, 3
	Experience of writing for or otherwise communicating with non-academic audiences.	1, 3
	Experience of managing project websites and/or social media pages	1, 3
Skills and abilities	Ability to travel independently.	1, 3

Conditions of Service

The appointment will be subject to the [University's Terms and Conditions of Employment](#) relevant to the job grade.

Shared University Responsibilities

As a member of the Loughborough community, you are expected to:

- Take reasonable care of yourself, others and the environment, and to prevent harm by your acts or omissions. All staff are therefore required to adhere to the University's Health, Safety and Environmental Sustainability Policies & Procedures.
- Uphold and actively contribute to the [University's commitment to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion](#), ensuring that all duties are carried out in alignment with this.

Our Purpose, Vision, and Values

Our purpose, Vision and Values underpin all that we do and shape how we work together at Loughborough.

We're proud to promote our values: **Adventurous, Collaborative, Creative, Authentic** and **Responsible**. Our people bring these values to life every day, and they are central to the positive and supportive culture that makes Loughborough unique.

If you join us, you'll be encouraged to bring these values to life in your own work and contribute to the positive, supportive culture that makes Loughborough unique.

Read more about our [vision and values](#).

Our Accreditations



We strive to create a culture that supports equity 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 career.



We are proud to be a [Race Equality Charter Member](#). The Charter aims to improve the representation, progression and success of all minority ethnic staff and students within higher education and address issues of racism within higher education institutions (HEIs).



We are proud to be a Disability Confident Employer and have adopted a proactive approach to employing disabled people and to creating a more diverse workforce. We ensure that our recruitment processes are inclusive and accessible. We guarantee to offer an interview to all applicants who have declared a disability, provided that the essential criteria for the role are met. We proactively anticipate and provide reasonable adjustments and support existing employees who acquire a disability or long-term condition to thrive in the workplace.



We are a real living wage employer, and our Living Wage Employer Mark shows our commitment to paying our staff according to the cost of living.



We are proud supporters of the [City of Sanctuary movement](#) and delighted to be recognised as a University of Sanctuary. This national network brings together, university staff, lecturers, academics, and students, who together work to make Higher Education institutions places of safety, solidarity and empowerment for people seeking sanctuary.

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 found.