Department of Materials
School of Aeronautical, Automotive, Chemical and Materials Engineering

Research Associate in Commercialisation of Functional Textiles

Job Ref: REQ260806

School/Department summary: Applications are invited for a post-doctoral research associate (PDRA) to join the HAPY-Tex project based in Department of Materials, part of the School of Aeronautical, Automotive, Chemical and Materials Engineering (AACME) at Loughborough University. The Department of Materials is recognised for combining excellent teaching, strong employability outcomes, world-leading research, and modern facilities. Its research and education are particularly focused on sustainability, advanced materials, energy technologies, healthcare applications, and manufacturing innovation.

Project Description: The Branched Hydrocarbon Acrylic Polymer coatings for Textiles (HAPY-Tex) project is funded by the UKRI Proof-of-Concept Scheme and focuses on the development of new PFAS free coatings for waterproofing textiles. The multi-disciplinary HAPY-Tex project team is led by Dr Fiona Hatton (Materials) working closely with project co-leads Prof. Anna Croft (Chemical Engineering) and Dr Chetna Prajapati (School of Design and Creative Arts), supported by Dr Roshna Mistry (IP Commercialisation Manager). You will join the project as a Research Associate leading on the commercialisation aspects of the project alongside another Research Associate whose role is to address technical deliverables.

Job Description

Job Family and Grade: Specialist and Supporting Academic Grade 6

Job Purpose

The purpose of this role is to accelerate the commercialisation and translation of the HAPY-Tex technology through activities such as customer discovery, market validation, value proposition development, business model development, techno-economic assessment, intellectual property evaluation, and route-to-market analysis. Working within a UKRI Proof of Concept project, you will engage with prospective customers, industry stakeholders and partners to better understand market needs, validate commercial opportunities, and inform the future development, adoption and exploitation of the technology.

The role will involve conducting customer discovery interviews, developing and testing value propositions, creating and refining Business Model Canvases, developing verbal business cards and other commercial messaging, undertaking market and competitor analysis, mapping supply chains, reviewing the intellectual property landscape, engaging with key stakeholders, and evaluating potential commercialisation pathways including licensing, spin-out formation and collaborative development opportunities. The postholder will work closely with the project team and be supported by an experienced IP Commercialisation Manager.
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Job Duties

- Lead commercialisation and market validation activities to support the adoption of HAPY-Tex.
- Engage with customers, industry partners and stakeholders to identify market needs and opportunities.
- Develop and test value propositions, business models and routes to market.
- Conduct market research, competitor analysis and technology landscape assessments.
- Evaluate commercial potential, market readiness and commercialisation pathways, including licensing, partnerships and spin-outs.
- Support techno-economic analysis, business case development and intellectual property reviews.

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- Build and maintain strategic stakeholder relationships to facilitate commercialisation.
- Deliver project pitches, presentations, reports and business development materials.
- Provide evidence-based recommendations, risk assessments and commercialisation strategies to the project team.
- Represent the project at meetings, industry events, conferences and investor engagement activities.
- Identify future innovation, translational research and investment opportunities.
- Ensure compliance with confidentiality, contractual, data protection and intellectual property requirements.
- Contribute to the long-term exploitation and impact strategy for project outcomes.
- Undertake professional development and training aligned with project and departmental objectives.

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 outlined in the document.

Organisational Responsibility

Reports to the: Dr Fiona Hatton – Senior Lecturer in Polymer Chemistry
Direct Reports: N/A
Budget Responsibilities: N/A
Structure Chart: N/A

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Person Specification

Your application will be assessed based on the essential and desirable criteria listed below.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to explicitly demonstrate how they meet each essential (and desirable) criteria at the application stage. The criteria that you need to demonstrate in your application will be listed as Stage 1 in the table below.

Stages of assessment are as follows:

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

Essential Criteria:

Area	Criteria	Stage
Experience	Current or recent relevant work experience in an academic or industrial environment	1, 3
	Experience in one of more of the following areas: chemistry, polymer science, materials science, textiles, or related disciplines.	1, 3
	Authoring original work for academic journal papers, conference papers, technical reports or patent applications	1
Skills and abilities	Entrepreneurial with commercial awareness and strong networking and stakeholder engagement skills	3
	Excellent written and oral communication skills	1, 3
	Self-motivated with ability to meet deadlines	3
	Able to manage time and task effectively to meet project deadline and prioritise workload with minimum supervision	3
	Able to build and maintain effective working relationships with academic colleagues, students, and external partners to support collaborative research and communication of findings.	3
	Ability to write project reports and make technical presentations to industrial and academic research groups	1, 3
	Knowledge of relevant Health & Safety issues	3
Training	Willingness to undertake appropriate further training and to adopt new procedures as and when required	1, 3
Qualifications	PhD (or near completion) to Doctorate level, or significant experience at a senior level	1
Other	Demonstrate an ability to behave in a way that adheres to equitable and inclusive working practices, while respecting diversity of thought and supporting freedom of speech and expression.	1,3
	Willingness to Travel	1, 3

Desirable Criteria: These are skills, experience and competencies that are additional extras that may be used to narrow the pool down if we receive a high volume of applications all meeting the essential criteria.

Area	Criteria	Stage
Experience	Commercialisation of research (e.g., customer discovery, market validation)	1, 3
	Drafting of materials for Patent applications	1, 3

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	Experience of working in or collaborating closely with industry	1, 3
	Knowledge of functional/performance textiles and related industries	1, 3
Skills and abilities	Authoring original work, in the highest quality refereed academic journals	1
	A strong publication track record.	1

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.
- Support and contribute to the University's commitment to principles of equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) while carrying out all duties, behaving in a manner that treats others with dignity and respect and upholds every persons right to lawful freedom of expression, freedom of speech and academic freedom. Further information about EDI at Loughborough and our strategic aims is available on our website.

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 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.

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).

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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 themselves with a disability, provided they meet the essential criteria for a role. 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 place 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 identified.

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