

Candidate Information

Position:	Research Assistant
School/Department:	Centre for Public Health
Reference:	18/106763
Closing Date:	Wednesday 3 October 2018
Salary:	£27,831 - £32,236 per annum (potential to progress to £35,210 per annum through sustained exceptional contribution)
Anticipated Interview Date:	Monday 22 October 2018
Duration:	12 Months

JOB PURPOSE:

The post will entail assisting in the planning and delivery of research as part of a MRC funded study designed to examine, through Game Theory experiments, the mechanisms of action of two smoking prevention programmes in schools in Belfast, Northern Ireland and Bogota, Colombia.

The post will entail working with others in the Centre for Public Health, the Centre for Evidence and Social Innovation and the Queen's Management School. In particular, we are interested in better understanding how social networks and norms influence smoking behaviour and behaviour change.

As well as helping to conduct the field experiments in Northern Ireland where the position is based, it will also involve conducting post-intervention focus groups and interviews with pupils and teachers in schools receiving each programme and with trainers delivering the programme(s), and involve travel to Bogota with other members of the research team.

MAJOR DUTIES:

1. Support the Project Manager in the conduct of the research, including developing protocols, recruitment, execution of study protocol, data collection, data entry, data management and data analysis.
2. Assist the development, recruitment and conduct of Focus Groups with pupils and teachers to explore the possible mechanisms of action of smoking prevention intervention programmes in schools.
3. Assist with data collection, input and analysis of quantitative data.
4. To work with other members of the research team and assist in conducting the behavioural economic field experiments (based on Coordination and Dictator Games) before and after the smoking prevention programmes implemented in a sample of schools in Northern Ireland and Bogota.
5. To work with other members of the research team and assist in the coordination of the activities of the project research team, with representation from key stakeholders, including Cancer Focus NI, DECIPHer Impact and other academics from the UK, Colombia and the US.
6. Assist with ethical and research governance procedures in relation to this trial.
7. Assist with drafting and presenting regular progress reports on research for research team or to external audiences to disseminate and publicise research findings.
8. Assist with preparation, in consultation with research team, material for publication in national and international journals and presentations at national and international conferences.
9. Carry out routine administrative tasks associated with the research project to ensure that the work is completed on time. These might include organisation of project meetings and documentation, risk assessment of research activities.
10. Read academic papers, journals and textbooks to keep abreast of developments in own specialism and related disciplines
11. Contribute to the production of News-Sheets and E-zines about the project's progress for wide circulation around stakeholders.

Planning and Organising:

1. Assist with the development of a Gantt chart and plan for specific deliverables of the research programme.

2. Plan for the use of research resources where appropriate.
3. Plan own day-to-day activity, in consultation with the Project Manager, within framework of the agreed research programme.
4. Plan to meet recruitment and data collection deadlines.
5. Plan to meet deadlines for journal publications and to prepare presentations and papers for conferences.
6. Coordinate and liaise with other members of the research group regarding progress.

Resource Management Responsibilities:

1. Coordinate and liaise with other members of the research group regarding progress.
2. To provide guidance as required to support staff and any students who may be assisting with research.

Internal and External Relationships:

1. To liaise on a regular basis with the research team, colleagues and students.
2. To build internal contacts and participate in internal networks for the exchange of information and to form relationships for future collaboration.
3. To join external networks to share information and ideas.

ESSENTIAL CRITERIA:

1. A relevant primary degree (1st or 2:1 classification) related to the duties of the post such as public health, psychology, or epidemiology.
2. At least 2 year's recent research experience which includes:
 - Management, co-ordination and analysis of qualitative research of health behaviours.
 - Conducting research in the school-based setting involving adolescents.
 - public health intervention research, participant recruitment, data collection, data entry, statistical analysis.
3. At least two years experience of using data analysis packages such as SPSS.
4. Excellent IT skills e.g. Microsoft Office suite.
5. Excellent organisational skills.
6. Excellent inter-personal skills.
7. Excellent oral and written communication skills.
8. Evidence of ability to write reports and meet deadlines.
9. Evidence of ability to deal competently with administrative tasks.
10. Clear and confident communicator.
11. Ability to interact with research colleagues and support staff
12. Ability to give formal presentations.
13. Ability to work independently and on own initiative.
14. Access to transport or ability to meet the mobility requirements of the post
15. Ability to work outside normal hours when necessary.
16. Willingness to travel to Bogota to assist with the research.
17. Appointment to this post is subject to the successful candidate's Enhanced Criminal Record Check.

DESIRABLE CRITERIA:

1. About to complete a PhD (expected submission within 3 months of advert) in a public health related subject such as public health, psychology, or epidemiology.
2. Proven ability to work in a multi-disciplinary environment as part of a research team
3. Experience of conducting research in social networks and/or social norms
4. Proven ability to participate in collaborative research.
5. Experience of public engagement activities and disseminating research to non-academic audiences.
6. Strong commitment to a career in research.