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THE POST

College: College of Life and Environmental Sciences (<http://lifesciences.exeter.ac.uk>)

Post: Associate Research Fellow
(Infection in dynamic social networks of a wild mammal)

Reference No: P47581

Grade: E

HERA: ARF

Reporting To: Prof Robbie McDonald

The above full-time post is available for three years from 1st October 2014, or as soon as possible thereafter, in the College of Life and Environmental Sciences. This post will be based at the University of Exeter Penryn Campus within the Environment and Sustainability Institute with periods of fieldwork away from Cornwall. The ESI is funded with a £22.9 million investment from the European Regional Development Fund and £6.6 million from the South West of England Regional Development Agency.

The post is funded by a NERC grant “Infection in dynamic social networks of a wild mammal” to a University of Exeter and National Wildlife Management Centre (part of the Animal Health and Veterinary Laboratories Agency) team, comprising Robbie McDonald (PI), Mike Boots, Darren Croft and David Hodgson (Co-Is) and Dez Delahay (Project Partner at NWMC). The aim of the project is to investigate disease transmission in dynamic social networks, using wild badgers as a model host and a range of model pathogens, including bovine tuberculosis. The project will entail empirical studies of badger social behaviour and disease transmission.

This post is one of three project appointments. This Associate Research Fellow will lead work on conducting field studies of social networks and infection, analysis of data from the long-term study at Woodchester Park relating badger behaviour to disease and for preparing these studies for publication.. A second postdoctoral position (already appointed) will focus on modelling disease transmission in dynamic networks. A technician will be appointed to support fieldwork.

Job Description

Main purpose of the job:

To conduct analytical and field research on the NERC grant “Infection in dynamic social networks of a wild mammal”, involving analysis of the long term Woodchester Park database and field research on the ecology and behaviour of badgers in relation to disease. Analytical work will entail analyses of demography, social behaviour and infection from longitudinal data (e.g. [McDonald et al 2014 Proc R Soc B 281, 20140526](#)) and from primary field studies (e.g. [Weber et al 2013 Curr Biol 23, 915-916](#)). The successful candidate will be a proven ecologist or epidemiologist with demonstrable ability to publish relevant research, an ability to conduct field research and highly quantitative analysis and a good understanding of social networks, demography and disease.

Main duties and accountabilities:

1. To undertake research as appropriate to the field of study including:
 - Writing up research work for publication;
 - Developing research objectives and proposals for own or joint research;
 - Making presentations at national and international conferences and similar events;
 - Dealing with problems which may affect the achievement of research objectives and deadlines;

- Analysing and interpreting the results of own research and generating original ideas based on outcomes;
 - Using new research techniques and methods;
 - Using initiative and creativity to identify areas for research, developing new research methods and extending the research portfolio;
 - Using creativity to analyse and interpret research data and draw conclusions on the outcomes.
2. To contribute to teaching and to be involved in the assessment of student knowledge including assisting in the supervision of student projects and in the development of student research skills.
 3. To work in collaboration with colleagues as appropriate to the field of study including:
 - Contributing to collaborative decision making within the research group;
 - Contributing to the production of collaborative research reports and publications.
 - Preparing papers and presenting information on research progress and outcomes to bodies supervising research, e.g. steering groups.
 4. To communicate complex information, orally, in writing and electronically.
 5. To prepare proposals and applications to external bodies, e.g. for funding and contractual purposes
 6. To contribute to the planning of research projects.
 7. To use research resources, laboratories and workshops as appropriate and to take responsibility for conducting risk assessments, reducing hazards and for the health and safety of others.
 8. To monitor research budgets as appropriate.
 9. To engage in continuous professional development and to be responsible for continually updating knowledge and understanding in field of study or specialism and for developing skills.

This job description summarises the main duties and accountabilities of the post and is not comprehensive: the post-holder may be required to undertake other duties of similar level and responsibility. Please visit the Human Resources website to view the Research Fellow role profiles.

Person Specification

Competency	Essential	Desirable
Attainments/Qualifications	PhD in ecology, epidemiology, behaviour (or similar) or equivalent in a related field of study.	
Skills and Understanding	Sufficient knowledge in the discipline and of research methods and techniques to work within established research programmes.	Evidence of research activity and published research.
Prior Experience	Experience of conducting risk assessments and understanding of health and safety legislation.	Experience of undergraduate teaching.
	<p>Excellent written and verbal communication skills.</p> <p>Able to communicate material of a specialist or highly technical nature.</p> <p>Able to manage research and administrative activities and to balance the competing pressures of research and administrative demands and deadlines.</p> <p>Able to liaise with colleagues and students.</p> <p>Able to build contacts and participate in internal and external networks for the exchange of information and collaboration.</p> <p>Able to identify potential sources of funding.</p> <p>Actively participate as a member of a research team.</p> <p>Engage in continuous professional development.</p> <p>Understand equal opportunity issues as they may impact on areas of research content.</p>	
Additional Skills	Demonstrable experience of analysing and publishing the results of ecological studies.	Demonstrable experience of analysing and publishing the results of ecological studies of disease transmission, social networks or behaviour, ideally in wild animals.
Circumstances	Be flexible for periods of fieldwork away from Cornwall.	

Informal Enquiries

Before submitting an application you may wish to discuss the post further by contacting Prof Robbie McDonald, telephone (01326 255720) and email r.mcdonald@exeter.ac.uk.

Additional Information Relating to the Post

Salary

Salary will be circa £25,513 up to £28,695 per annum on Grade E subject to knowledge, skills and experience.

An increment will be payable on 1 August each year until the top of the scale is reached (subject to being in post for 6 months and satisfactory performance). The scale will be subject to a cost of living review each year.

Hours of work

Hours of work will be 36.5 hours per week (full-time) but staff at this level may be required to work additional hours to meet the requirements of the role.

Annual Leave

The annual leave entitlement for full-time appointments is 41 days per calendar year (pro rata for part-time appointments). For further information see our website <http://www.admin.ex.ac.uk/personnel/leave.shtml>.

Probationary Period

The appointment will normally be subject to a probationary period of one year.

References & Medical Clearance

All appointments are subject to satisfactory reference and medical checks and individuals will be required to complete a medical assessment form before appointment is confirmed. Applicants should note that the University normally contacts referees for short-listed applicants without further advice to applicants. When advising of referees, if they are resident overseas, please ensure you supply fax numbers and/or email addresses enabling us to contact them (if necessary) without delay.

Right to Work in the United Kingdom

If you do not have the right to work in the UK, this appointment will be subject to the University successfully obtaining a Certificate of Sponsorship under the UK's Points Based System for migrant workers and to you obtaining Entry Clearance/Leave to Remain.

For further information, see the Home Office website at <http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/>. In particular you are encouraged to undertake a self assessment of your eligibility to work in the UK using the link to www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/pointscalculator.

Terms & Conditions

The Terms and Conditions of Employment can be viewed on line by visiting <http://www.exeter.ac.uk/staff/employment/conditions/terms/>

Pensions

Membership of the Universities' Superannuation Scheme (USS) is automatic provided that you meet the qualifying criteria for membership. The USS is a contracted-out scheme. USS scheme has two sections: Final Salary and Career Revalued Benefits; which section you will be eligible for will depend on any previous membership of USS. An information leaflet concerning the qualification rules for both the sections is enclosed; more detailed information about the USS scheme structure can be found at www.uss.co.uk. **IF you have been in USS before, you are strongly requested to contact the Pay and Benefits Office as soon as you can so that possible membership of the Final Salary benefits section can be investigated.** The University, as your employer, contributes such sums as will be required to maintain the full benefits of the scheme. You may opt out of the scheme; if you wish to do so, you should contact the Pay and Benefits Manager, Mrs Alison Rose (01392 263088/email a.j.rose@exeter.ac.uk) for further information. Further information about Pension Salary Exchange is available from the Human Resources website www.admin.exeter.ac.uk/personnel or from the Pensions Office.

Relocation

You may be able to claim relocation expenses in accordance with the University's Relocation Assistance Scheme. The maximum allowance that you can reclaim under the Relocation Assistance Scheme, if eligible, is 10% of salary.

Short-listing Information

We will acknowledge your application by email. The University of Exeter recognises the time and effort taken to apply for a position and will contact you by email to inform you of results of shortlisting

Application Procedure and Interview Information

The closing date for completed applications is **23 September 2014**.

Data Protection Act (1998)

The information contained within your application is being requested to enable the University to make employment decisions and meet statutory obligations. Any information provided to the University in this context will be treated confidentially and used only by manager(s), member of the University, Human Resources, Superannuation and Payroll during the course of your employment. Where the application relates to a post which is externally funded this information may be passed onto the relevant funding body.