

JOB DESCRIPTION

Vacancy reference:	SRF37072
Post Title:	Post-Doctoral Research Assistant (PDRA)
Grade:	Grade 6
School/Department:	PCLS
Reports to:	Prof Ciara McCabe
Responsible for:	N/A

Purpose

This is a post-doctoral research role to contribute to and develop the research work on an industry-funded project led by PI: Ciara McCabe at the University of Reading <https://www.mccabe-nrq-lab.com/> and <https://www.reading.ac.uk/Psychology/About/staff/c-mccabe.aspx>. The post holder will specifically perform a neuroimaging project to examine the reward response in the human brain to sugar compared to sweeteners combined with modifiers.

Main duties and responsibilities

Research:

- Undertake research under the supervision of the PI Ciara McCabe
- Assist the programming of fMRI experiments and collect and maintain the data produced under the supervision of the PI
- Contribute to the writing of papers for publication in leading academic journals and other relevant media
- Disseminate research findings and establish a national reputation through participation in national conferences, exhibitions etc.
- Help with Ph. D. projects on relevant topics examining reward processing.
- Implement research methodologies that add to knowledge and understanding appropriate to the discipline
- Collaborate with colleagues within the University and with external stakeholders in the development of original research
- Provide specialist advice to other staff within the University on fMRI analysis skills
- Use initiative and creativity to synthesise, analyse and interpret fMRI research data
- Carry out independent research and supervise the work of other researchers in the group

Leadership & Management:

- Work closely with and ensure good communication between colleagues within the University and among project partners more broadly.
- Participate in project group meetings
- Contribute to departmental presentations or seminars

Enterprise & Outreach:

- Liaise with industry partners and clients external to the University
- Attend relevant seminars, conferences, exhibitions, and other events

- Contribute to writing and presenting client reports

Supervision received

The post holder will be supervised by Professor Ciara McCabe. Guidance and training will be provided at every stage. Post-doctoral researchers in the School receive mentoring from senior academic staff. Additional training and supervision will be provided from other members of the research team and/or School as required. Training and experience through the attendance of international meetings and workshops will be encouraged.

Contact

It is expected that the post holder will liaise with other academics and researchers within and beyond the lab. There will also be contact with people who participate in our project-related experiments.

Terms and conditions

The post is available for at 0.6 FTE or 3 days/week, fixed term for up to 18 months. There are no specified hours of work, but you will be required to work such hours as are necessary to carry out the duties associated with the post. Overtime is not payable.

This document outlines the duties required for the time being of the post to indicate the level of responsibility. It is not a comprehensive or exhaustive list and the line manager may vary duties from time to time which do not change the general character of the job or the level of responsibility entailed.

Date assessed: 29/09/2021

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Job Title	School/Department
Post-Doctoral Research Assistant (PDRA)	School of Psychology & Clinical Language Sciences

Criteria	Essential	Desirable
Skills Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good standard fMRI analysis skills with SPM or FSL. • Ability to work to deadlines • Ability to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good experimental programming skills* <p>(* In the application, please specify the programming languages and type of analysis you feel comfortable with.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research and project-related administrative skills.
Attainment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PhD in Psychology, Neuroscience, or other related discipline (or working towards completion) • A good honours degree in relevant subject • Evidence of having published peer-reviewed papers on the relevant topics or using the required methods 	
Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic knowledge about reward processing in psychology and cognitive neuroscience. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific knowledge about reward processing and/or motivation in cognitive neuroscience
Relevant Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of running human participants with functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI). • Experience of analysing fMRI data. • Experience of doing research on reward-related topics • Experience of presenting research projects at academic conference • Experience of public speaking at events/exhibitions etc. • Experience of managing a project • Experience of building and maintaining external contacts/partners in order to drive mutual interests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working in multidisciplinary environments • Experience of managing a project
Disposition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hard working and autonomous. • Good organisational and interpersonal skills 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ability to work both within a team as well as independently 	
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Completed by: Ciara McCabe	Date: 29/09/21
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