



## 1 Advertisement

**Post Title:** Research Fellow

**School/department:** School of Psychology

**Hours:** Full time hours up to 1 FTE. Requests for flexible working options will be considered (subject to business need).

**Location:** Brighton, United Kingdom

**Contract:** fixed term for 2 years

**Reference:** 10212

**Salary:** starting at £35,333 to £42,155 per annum, pro rata if part time.

**Placed on:** 15 November 2022 To be confirmed.

**Closing date:** 21 December 2022. Applications must be received by midnight of the closing date.

**Expected Interview date:** January 2023.

**Expected start date:** 01 March 2023

Applications are invited for the post of postdoctoral Research Fellow in the School of Psychology to work on a project investigating the role of early motor development in emerging social and communication skills from birth to 18 months. We are investigating how different motor trajectories unfold; how motor trajectories interact with social and communication abilities; and whether the variation in developmental trajectories is discernible between groups of infants at low- or high-risk for neurodevelopmental disorders.

The postholder will be based at the School of Psychology at the University of Sussex and also work with collaborators at Birkbeck, University of London. This is a full-time post, from 1st March 2023, on a fixed-term contract of 2 years. We are happy to consider requests for flexible working.

This Research Fellow position is in the Comparative Cognition Group, directed by Professor Gillian Forrester. The postholder will be a member of this lab with responsibility for the provision of research support for a Simons Foundation funded project, "Identifying Early Markers of Autistic Spectrum Disorder in Naturalistic Motor Behavior using High-Frequency Sampling".

The project team will consist of a dedicated postdoctoral researcher, research assistant, and PhD student. The project will be overseen by the PI (Professor Gillian Forrester) and two Co-Investigators, Dr Ori Ossmy (Birkbeck) and Dr Georgina Donati (Birkbeck). The team will also benefit from a collaboration with the NHS Royal Free paediatric high risk infant clinic.

The role will involve collecting and analysing infant motor measures (using wearable technology and intelligent toys with embedded sensors and clinical tests) and cognitive measures using standardised test batteries (e.g., Bayley Scales of Infant Development (III) and Vineland Adaptive Behaviour Scales) via online and in person methods.

The successful candidate should hold or be very close to holding a PhD in a discipline such as cognitive neuroscience, psychology or similar. Ease with technology and proficiency using statistical packages with proficient programming skills (e.g. MATLAB, R) is essential. Applicants must also possess excellent written and spoken communication skills to facilitate work with families of infants with caregivers, practitioners and academics. The position involves working with vulnerable infants, therefore the successful candidate requires a standard DBS check

Experience of working with high-risk or neurodiverse children and their families is desirable. Knowledge of motor development and naturalistic experimentation is beneficial. Previous experience in conducting cognitive assessments with young children or infants is desirable.

It is desirable for the postholder to have a track record of publications. There will be opportunities for the postholder to continue to develop their academic career, contribute to manuscript development and submissions as an author. We will mentor and support the postholder's career progression throughout the appointment.

Please contact Professor Gillian Forrester ([g.forrester@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:g.forrester@sussex.ac.uk)) for informal enquiries.

The University is committed to equality and valuing diversity, and applications are particularly welcomed from women and black and minority ethnic candidates, who are under-represented in academic posts in Science, Technology, Engineering, Medicine and Mathematics (STEMM) at Sussex.

*"Please note that this position may be subject to [ATAS clearance](#) if you require visa sponsorship."*

For full details and how to apply see our [vacancies page](#)

*The University of Sussex values the diversity of its staff and students and we welcome applicants from all backgrounds.*

**Please note: The University requires that work undertaken for the University is performed from the UK.**

## **2. The School / Division**

Please find further information regarding the school/division at <https://www.sussex.ac.uk/schools/psychology/>

## **3. Job Description**

Job Description for the post of: Research Fellow

**Department:** Psychology

**Section/Unit/School:** School of Psychology

**Location:** Brighton, United Kingdom

**Grade: 7**

**Responsible to:** Professor Gillian Forrester

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## **4. Person Specification**

### **ESSENTIAL CRITERIA**

1. Normally educated to doctoral level, or other equivalent qualification, or appropriate level of experience, as appropriate to the discipline (see role-specific criteria below).
2. Evidence of engagement in high-quality research activity.
3. Excellent presentation skills, with the ability to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing, with students, colleagues and external audiences.
4. Ability to work individually on own initiative and without close supervision, and as part of a team.
5. Ability to exercise a degree of innovation and creative problem-solving.
6. Excellent organisational and administrative skills.
7. Ability to prioritise and meet deadlines.
8. Excellent IT skills.

### **ESSENTIAL ROLE-SPECIFIC CRITERIA**

1.
  - A PhD in psychology, cognitive neuroscience or similar (we may consider candidates in the final year of their PhD, close to submission)
  - Enthusiasm for and dedication to research on motor and cognitive development in infants at high and low risk of neurodevelopmental disorders
  - High level of efficiency and good attention to detail in data handling (e.g. GDPRP)
  - The ability to work independently as well as collegiately with team members
  - Excellent communication skills, in both writing and speaking (online and in-person). The researcher must be able to present information effectively to academics, practitioners and parents alike.
  - A satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Service check

### **DESIRABLE CRITERIA**

1. Emerging track record of high-quality publications in reputable journals and other appropriate media of similar standing.
2. Experience of generating research or knowledge exchange income.