



## 1 Advertisement

**Post Title:** ESRC Digit Research Fellow

**School/department:** University of Sussex Business School, Digital Futures at Work ESRC Research Centre (Digit)

**Hours:** Full time or part time hours considered up to a maximum of 1.0 FTE. Requests for [flexible working](#) options will be considered (subject to business need).

**Contract:** fixed term for up to 22 months with the possibility to apply for a lectureship at the Business School when the funding ends

**Reference:** 10218

**Salary:** £35,333 to £42,155 per annum (pro-rata for part-time working)

**Placed on:** 08 November 2022

**Closing date:** 12 December 2023. Applications must be received by midnight of the closing date.

**Expected interview date:** Early January 2023

**Expected start date:** 01 March 2023 or as soon as possible

An exciting opportunity has arisen at the University of Sussex for a high-performing researcher to contribute to the Digital Futures at Work ESRC Research Centre (Digit) – an ambitious and dynamic £8m ESRC funded Research Centre examining the Digital transformation of work. The post is for up to 22 months full time (1 March 2023 – 31 December 2024), with a possibility to apply for a lectureship when the research funding ends in December 2024. Requests for part-time arrangements or job shares for the research fellow during the funding framework will also be considered.

This challenging role sits within the University of Sussex Business School and is line-managed by the Centre's Director, Professor Jacqueline O'Reilly, with one of the Centre's Co-Investigators. The post-holder will work collaboratively with the Centre Management Team (CMT), other Centre researchers, and partners to contribute to the delivery of important elements of the research programme.

For further information or to discuss the role please contact the Centre Director Professor Jacqueline O'Reilly: [j.o-reilly@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:j.o-reilly@sussex.ac.uk)

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.*

## 2 The University of Sussex Business School

The post-holder will support activities across the Digital Futures at Work ESRC Research Centre (Digit), and will be based in the University of Sussex Business School.

### The School

The Business School was formed in 2009 and comprises five departments: Management, Accounting & Finance, Strategy & Marketing, Economics, and SPRU (Science Policy Research Unit). With its home in the Jubilee Building, a state-of-the-art academic building at the heart of the campus, the Business School is a vibrant, ambitious and dynamic School with a strong research focus.

Our work draws on management, economics, science, technology and innovation studies, to make an impact on the future of people and institutions the world over. We study the issues that matter, in order to transform our world and your future.

Our School draws on many of Sussex's intellectual traditions, including a critical perspective on contemporary business, political, economic and social issues and a belief that major societal challenges need expertise across many academic disciplines.

Our **vision** is to be a School that collaborates across disciplines to shape global issues in business, management, and society, making an impact on policy, practice, and people.

Our **mission** to achieve this vision is to:

- carry out high-quality research and develop innovative policy
- develop current and aspiring leaders who will champion critical and original thinking
- work internationally with businesses, governments, and others to deliver innovative approaches to management.

### Digital Futures at Work Research Centre (Digit)

The Digital Futures at Work Research Centre (Digit) launched in January 2020. The aim of the Centre is to establish an interdisciplinary, international collaboration to advance our understanding of how Digital technologies are reshaping work, impacting on employers, employees, job seekers and governments.

The University of Sussex Business School jointly leads the Centre with Leeds University Business School. Additional partners include the Universities of Aberdeen, Cambridge and Manchester in the UK and Monash in Australia.

The objectives of Digit are to:

1. **Generate new knowledge** to inform the development of an analytical framework around the concept of the 'connected worker' and the 'connected economy' by maximising knowledge exchange and co-produced research with relevant communities.
2. **Establish a new Data Observatory** as a one-platform library of national and international resources for decision-makers connecting with UK Industrial Strategy and welfare policy.

3. **Initiate an Innovation Fund** providing financial support for new research initiatives and methodological approaches, enabling international exchanges and extensive dissemination.
4. **Provide a strong career development programme** for mid and early career researchers through mentoring and staff development, internships and summer schools.
5. **Ensure the long-term sustainability of the centre** by developing an **MSc in People Analytics** informed by Digit research.

Sussex will become a clearly identifiable global research hub fostering strategic international partnerships and become a source of advice to governments, funders, industry and non-governmental organisations. The centre will be a flagship initiative promoting Sussex strengths in policy-engaged, academically rigorous, interdisciplinary research.

Digit aims to:

- Establish Sussex firmly as ‘the go-to place’ for interdisciplinary research to understand complex challenges associated with the Digital transformation of work.
- Develop a collective ‘Digital’ identity across the Sussex campus.
- Substantially increase research and ‘soft’ income, and consolidate and maximise the return on recent investments.
- Deliver research output of the highest international quality.
- Enhance the impact of Sussex research for future Research Excellence Framework submissions.
- Provide a focus and drive for the University strategy of embedding Digital transitions at work in teaching.

### 3 Job Description

#### Job Description: **ESRC Digit Research Fellow**

Department: Digital Futures at Work ESRC Research Centre, Department of Management

School: University of Sussex Business School

Location: Jubilee Building

Grade: 7

Responsible to: Principal Investigator through to Head of School

Role Description: The Research Fellow is an early career-grade research position. Post-holder will be expected to contribute to the work of the research team, and to develop their research skills with support from more experienced members of staff.

## **Purpose of the post:**

- The researcher is expected to contribute to sectoral case studies at the Digital Futures at Work ESRC Research Centre. Case studies at Sussex will focus on Business Services (Legal/Financial/HR) and the Retail sector. Additional case studies will also be conducted in cultural industries and the public sector (health and employment services). The research fellow should have an expertise in one of these two areas (Business or Retail) and the ability to work and coordinate with colleagues focused on other sectors working in different locations. Digit is a flagship investment funded by the Economic and Social Research Council.
- Knowledge of quantitative research methods would also be beneficial to provide secondary analysis of relevant existing datasets and contribute to the analysis of a new Employers' Digital Practices at Work Survey.
- The researcher will work collaboratively with the Director, Centre Management Team (CMT) and senior researchers to develop and realise the strategic vision of the Centre, whilst supporting the aims of the University's Strategic Framework. The CMT consists of the Co-Directors at Sussex and Leeds, the Centre Manager, and Impact & Engagement Officer. Together they will be responsible for financial reporting, maintaining a risk register, monitoring progress and the timely delivery of outputs, as well as communicating directly to the ESRC, coordinating activities with the Core Academic Team and Advisory Boards.
- To work with the Director and Centre Manager on internal and external communications and engagement activities, and to play a central role in developing and implementing Impact, Communications, Engagement and External Affairs strategies for the Centre. In doing so to ensure the success and impact of a programme designed to deliver the strategic ambitions of the University.

## **KEY RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **1. Research, Scholarship & Enterprise**

- 1.1 Develop research objectives and proposals for own or joint research, at acceptable levels, with assistance if required.
- 1.2 Conduct research projects individually if appropriate, but typically in collaboration with others.
- 1.3 Analyse and interpret research findings and draw conclusions on the outcomes.
- 1.4 Help produce high-quality research outputs for publication in monographs or recognised high-quality journals, or performance/exhibition, as appropriate, and contribute to the School's REF submission at acceptable levels of volume and academic excellence.
- 1.5 Contribute to the preparation of proposals and applications to external bodies, for example for funding purposes.
- 1.6 Individually or with colleagues, explore opportunities for enterprise activity, knowledge exchange income and/or consultancy, where permissible.

- 1.7 Build internal contacts and participate in internal networks and relevant external networks in order to form relationships and collaborations.
- 1.8 Continually update knowledge and understanding in the field, and engage in continuous professional development.

## **2. Teaching & Student Support**

*If appropriate and in line with the aims of the Centre:*

- 2.1 Undertake teaching duties, if required.
- 2.2 Assist in the assessment of student knowledge and supervision of student projects if required.
- 2.3 Assist in the development of student research skills, for example as part of a postgraduate supervision team.

## **3. Contribution to School & University**

- 3.1 Attend and contribute to relevant School and project meetings.
- 3.2 Undertake additional duties, as required by the Principal Investigator and/or Co-Investigators.

## **4. Role-specific duties**

- 4.1 The research fellow will take responsibility for contributing to the development of the sectoral case studies conducted at the Digital Futures at Work ESRC Research Centre. Case studies at Sussex will focus on Business Services (Legal/Financial/HR) and Retail sector. Additional case studies will also be conducted in cultural industries and the public sector (health and employment services) at other geographical locations. The research fellow should have an expertise in one of these two areas (Business or Retail) and the ability to work and coordinate with colleagues focused on other sectors working in different locations.
- 4.2 To establish contact with relevant firms and help negotiate, in collaboration with the Director, research access.
- 4.3 To develop collaboratively appropriate research tools for interviews with employers, line managers, employees and their representatives.
- 4.4 To draw on quantitative secondary data where appropriate with relevant and up to date quantitative research skills.
- 4.5 The researcher is expected to provide systematic and accessible documentation of their research activities.
- 4.6 To use this information to write high quality academic publications.

- 4.7 To disseminate these findings to a wider public audience in an accessible form.
- 4.8 To work with the Director and Centre Manager on internal and external communications and engagement activities, and to play a central role in developing and implementing Impact, Communications, Engagement and External Affairs strategies for the Centre.
- 4.9 To work to the highest ethical standards.
- 4.10 The researcher will be expected to travel within the UK and abroad to conduct and present this research.

This Job Description sets out current duties of the post that may vary from time to time without changing the general character of the post or level of responsibility entailed.

### **Indicative Performance Criteria**

- A PhD or equivalent scholarly or relevant professional activity.
- Pursuing a line of independent research within a research group.
- Publishing research (either from a recently completed PhD or new original research).
- Other forms of externally recognised professional practice of creative output of a standing equivalent to regular publication of original research.
- Initiating, developing or participating in links between the University and external bodies such as business and industry, the professions, community organisations and policy-makers.

## **4 Person Specification**

### Research Fellow (Grade 7), Digital Futures at Work ESRC Research Centre (Digit)

#### **Essential qualifications, knowledge, skills and experience for the post:**

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. An understanding of some of the issues affecting employers, employees, their representatives and policy makers around the changing use of technological change at work.
2. Experience of conducting firm/sector based qualitative case study research or high-quality quantitative skills.
3. Ability to work with interdisciplinary teams.
4. Ability to coordinate research activities across different geographical locations
5. Ability to work with a diverse range of researchers.

### **Desirable criteria**

1. Experience of generating research or knowledge exchange income.
2. Experience of supervising postgraduate research students.

### **Personal Attributes and Circumstances:**

Flexible and responsive, including a willingness to work flexible hours as necessary to meet deadlines and to travel to project meetings or workshops as required.