



## 1 Advertisement

**Post Title: Research Assistant**

**School/department:** School of Psychology

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

**Contract:** fixed term for 12 months.

**Reference:** 20424

**Salary:** starting at £32,411 to £36,333 per annum, pro rata if part time

**Placed on:** 17 April 2023

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

**Expected interview date:** To be confirmed

**Expected start date:** From 01 October 2023

We are seeking applications from a highly motivated research assistant to join an exciting one year research project using electroencephalography (EEG) to examine the extent to which our brains process the external environment changes when we are 'lost in thought'.

The project is funded by a BIAL Foundation grant awarded to [Dr Sophie Forster](#). The post-holder will join the [Sussex Attention Lab](#), which uses cognitive psychology and cognitive neuroscience techniques to study attention, with a particular focus on involuntary attentional phenomena common to daily life (e.g. distraction from our own irrelevant thoughts).

The project will take place at the University of Sussex, using the on campus EEG facilities within the School of Psychology. The post-holder will join the highly collaborative and interdisciplinary Sussex Neuroscience research community, which includes over 50 research groups, forming one of the highest densities of Neuroscience faculty in any UK University.

The post-holder will support Dr Forster in the day-to-day running of the project, including participant recruitment, data collection and management, and analysis.

The post is likely to be of most interest to applicants with research interests in the related fields of attention, mind wandering and perception (particularly vision). The post-holder should have experience in the acquisition and analysis of experimental data in neuroscience or psychology. Experience of EEG data acquisition is essential.

Please contact Dr Sophie Forster ([s.forster@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:s.forster@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.*

## **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 Assistant

**Department:** Psychology

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

**Location:** University of Sussex, Falmer, Brighton, BN1 9QH

**Grade:** 6

**Responsible to:** Principal investigator through to Head of School

**Responsible for:** n/a

**Role description:** Research Assistant is a pre-Doctoral career-grade research position. Post-holders will be expected to contribute to the work of the research team, and also to develop their research skills with support from more experienced members of staff.

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## **PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITIES**

1. To observe and assist with individual and/or collaborative research activity and contribute to the production of research outputs for publications.

## **KEY RESPONSIBILITIES**

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

- 1.1 With support from the Principal Investigator, develop research objectives and contribute to the planning of the research project
- 1.2 Conduct research activity under supervision of the Principal Investigator, and in collaboration with others.
- 1.3 Assist with the analysis and interpretation of research findings and contribute to discussions on conclusions and outcomes.
- 1.4 Contribute to the writing of reports and other dissemination activities under the supervision of experienced researchers.
- 1.5 Contribute to the preparation of research ethics and data management strategies, under guidance from the Principal Investigator to ensure compliance with ethical approval and data protection legislation.
- 1.6 Present information on research progress and outcomes to relevant bodies under the supervision of the Principal Investigator.
- 1.7 Plan own day-to-day research activity within the framework of the agreed programme.
- 1.8 Learn about the publication process and contribute to research outputs for publication in monographs or recognised high-quality journals, or performance/exhibition, as appropriate.
- 1.9 Continually update knowledge and understanding in field or specialism, and engage in professional development.

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

- 2.1 Assist in the supervision of student projects and provide guidance to those assisting in the research.

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

- 2.1 Attend and contribute to relevant School and project meetings.
- 2.2 Undertake additional duties, as required by the Principal Investigator and/or Head of School.

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

- 4.1 Hold primary responsibility for participant recruitment and EEG data collection, and data management, under the supervision of the Principal Investigator
- 4.2 Assist with the preparation of experimental tasks
- 4.3 Carry out analyses of behavioural and EEG datasets under supervision, including analysis of steady state visually evoked potentials.
- 4.4 Contribute to the writing and preparation of manuscripts for publication of the project findings
- 4.5 Undertake training and skill development activities to enhance research skills (as needed).
- 4.6 Carry out any other duties commensurate with the grade and purpose of the post

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**

- Under the supervision of the Principal Investigator, conduct experiments/research to assist with project aims, with emphasis on training.
- Undertake research by preparing, setting up, conducting and recording the outcomes.
- Manage and analyse data, and prepare written reports and summaries.
- Maintain and store project files and equipment as per health and safety and data regulations.
- As part of career development, contribute to the preparation of journal articles based on the research with support from the Principal Investigator.



#### **4. Person Specification**

##### **ESSENTIAL CRITERIA**

1. Normally educated to degree level, or other equivalent qualification, or relevant level of experience, as appropriate to the discipline (see role-specific criteria below).
2. Good presentation skills, with the ability to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing, with colleagues and external audiences.
3. Ability to work independently (under supervision by the Principal Investigator), and as part of a team.
4. Ability to exercise a degree of innovation and creative problem-solving.
5. Excellent organisational and administrative skills.
6. Ability to prioritise and meet deadlines.
7. Excellent IT skills.
8. Ability to follow guidance of team leaders.

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

1. Have a degree level in a relevant area, such as Neuroscience or Psychology
2. Knowledge of relevant research techniques and scientific literature.
3. Experience of collecting experimental data in neuroscience or psychology involving electroencephalography (EEG)
4. Excellent skills in statistical analysis and coding (e.g. in MATLAB, R or Python)
5. Excellent interpersonal skills and the ability to give clear and consistent task instructions, following a detailed experimental protocol.
6. Excellent organisational and administrative skills
7. Ability to work to deadlines imposed by the larger remit of the project.

##### **DESIRABLE CRITERIA**

## **DESIRABLE ROLE-SPECIFIC CRITERIA**

1. Experience of EEG data analysis, with experience of steady state visually evoked potential (SSVEP) analysis particularly desirable.
2. Experience of conducting research in a relevant field, such as attention, mind wandering, visual perception
3. Experience of preparing data for publication