



## 1 Advertisement

**Post Title:** Postdoctoral Research Fellow

**School/department:** School of Psychology

**Hours:** full time or part time hours considered up to a maximum of 1 FTE

Requests for flexible working options will be considered (subject to business need).

**Contract:** fixed term for 11 months

**Reference:** 20426

**Salary:** starting at £36,333 to £43,155 per annum, pro rata if part time

**Placed on:** 05 April 2023

**Closing date:** 25 April 2023. Applications must be received by midnight of the closing date.

**Expected interview date:** To be confirmed

**Expected start date:** 01 June 2023

This postdoctoral researcher opportunity is ideal for a candidate with a PhD in psychology or cognitive neuroscience, with a strong academic track record in experimental methods, and an interest in individual differences in perceptual experience.

Misophonia is a strong aversive reaction to particular sounds (e.g. chewing, tapping) that can often impact negatively on quality of life. The overall aim of this research is to transform our understanding of misophonia by revealing the cognitive, perceptual, and neural pre-requisites that might allow misophonia to develop.

You would take responsibility for an ongoing project involving in-person data collection for two studies comparing misophonics and non-misophonics. Another researcher will also be involved with data collection and you will work as a team. We have a database of research volunteers with misophonia and you would be required to proactively recruit control samples.

One study explores the neurochemistry of misophonia using magnetic resonance spectroscopy (collected in an MRI scanner). You would be responsible for the data analysis (we have a protocol set-up) and write-up, with data collection shared with the research assistant. A second study explores the extent to which misophonics are distracted by sounds when they are not the focus of attention. The study will be run in matlab and we will collect psychophysiological data (heart rate, skin conductance) and response times. A preliminary version of the study would need piloting before data collection and would ideally be pre-registered.

This research is funded by the Ream Foundation (<https://misophoniaresearchfund.org/>)

Please contact Prof. Jamie Ward ([jamiew@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:jamiew@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.

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 [www.sussex.ac.uk/psychology](http://www.sussex.ac.uk/psychology)

## **3. Job Description**

Job Description for the post of: Postdoctoral Research Fellow

**Department: Psychology**

**Section/Unit/School: Psychology**

**Location: Pevensey (I and II)**

**Grade: 7**

**Responsible to:** Prof. Jamie Ward

**Responsible for:** Not applicable

### **KEY RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **Specific Responsibilities:**

- Be responsible for recruiting participants from a variety of sources (e.g. online, our database) and keeping participant records (e.g. to create matched groups).
- Alongside a trained radiographer, assist in the MRI scanning of participants.
- Run the MRI results through an established pipeline and engage in regular quality control of that data.
- Ensure that the attention/psychophysiological study is set-up correctly in Matlab (via piloting), assist in data collection for that study, and be responsible for data analysis.
- Upskill yourself (if necessary) in best practices for recording and analysing skin conductance and heart-rate data.
- Lead on all aspects of manuscript writing (we anticipate that you would be lead author on two publications)

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.

### **General responsibilities:**

- Develop research objectives and proposals for own or joint research, at acceptable levels, with assistance if required.
- Conduct research projects individually and in collaboration with others.
- Analyse and interpret research findings and draw conclusions on the outcomes.
- 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.
- Contribute to the preparation of proposals and applications to external bodies, for example for funding purposes.
- Individually or with colleagues, explore opportunities for enterprise activity, knowledge exchange income and/or consultancy, where permissible.
- Build internal contacts and participate in internal networks and relevant external networks in order to form relationships and collaborations.
- Continually update knowledge and understanding in field or specialism, and engage in continuous professional development.
- Assist in the assessment of student knowledge and supervision of student projects if required.
- Assist in the development of student research skills, for example as part of a postgraduate supervision team.
- Attend and contribute to relevant School and project meetings.
- Undertake additional duties, as required by the Principal Investigator and/or Head of School

### **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.
- Evidence of successful engagement in teaching or supervision.



## PERSON SPECIFICATION

### SKILLS / ABILITIES

	Essential	Desirable
Good organisational skills to manage a project with multiple elements	X	
Ability to program in Matlab for the purposes of data collection (e.g., adapting other people's scripts)	X	
Able to use R software to manipulate data, and perform descriptive and inferential statistics (e.g. t-tests, regression, ANOVA)	X	
Excellent oral and written English communication skills.	X	
Ability to exercise a degree of innovation and creative problem-solving.	X	

### KNOWLEDGE

	Essential	Desirable
Excellent knowledge of cognitive psychology and cognitive neuroscience (as demonstrated through university grades)	X	
Knowledge of the literature on misophonia		X
Knowledge of current rules for data management and good practice for open science	X	

### EXPERIENCE

	Essential	Desirable
Experience of collecting psychophysiological data (heart rate variability, skin conductance)		X
Experience of conducting MRI or other neuroimaging research		X
Experience of conducting in-person research on human participants	X	

### QUALIFICATIONS

	Essential	Desirable
A PhD in psychology or a relevant discipline (neuroscience) that is either awarded or the thesis is substantially complete	X	

### PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES AND CIRCUMSTANCES

	Essential	Desirable
Dependable and reliable.	X	
Willingness to work as part of a team, providing support as needed	X	
Resilience and pragmatism to overcome challenges in the research process	X	
Ability to start the post on (or very soon after) 1 <sup>st</sup> June 2023	X	