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| **Job Description & Person Specification** | |
| **Post title:** Research Fellow in Psychology | **Post No:** **XXXXX** |
| **School or Department:** School of Social Sciences | **Date created:** 05 **March 2024** |
| **Grade:** G | **Hours per week:** Full time |
| **Fixed term end date** (if applicable)**: September 2026 or 2027** | |
| **Other requirements of the role:** | |
| **Immediate line manager:** Dr Tom R. Kupfer | |
| **Title & Grade of posts line managed by postholder: XXXXX** | |

**Job purpose: The principal purpose of the job will be conducting research, and producing subsequent publications, on the psychology of trust and morality in connection with U.S. Air Force Office of Scientific Research (AFOSR) Project ‘Mind-blind morality: A route to trust in high-stakes conditions’.**

We are seeking applications for two full-time post-doctoral research fellows (one 3-year and one 2-year post) to work on the psychology of trust and morality, based at Nottingham Trent University under the supervision of Dr Tom R. Kupfer, with additional external supervision by Professor Daniel M.T. Fessler (UCLA). The research is part of a large project funded by the U.S. Air Force Office of Scientific Research (AFOSR), titled ‘Mind-blind morality: A route to trust in high-stakes conditions’.

According to standard accounts, both trust and moral judgement are contingent on inferences made about an actor’s momentary intentions or enduring dispositions. However, these accounts have overlooked that trust and cooperation are often necessary in situations in which it is either impractical or impossible to obtain such person-based information. We propose that rules and judgments that ignore the actor’s mind enhance situational trust by inducing people to carefully monitor and control their own actions. Mind-blind judgments and parallel rules should therefore emerge when trust is crucial, yet opportunities for mind-inference are limited – a configuration characteristic of many high-stakes situations. Shedding light on an important but largely overlooked category of norms and the psychology that underlies it, this project aims to make a fundamental contribution to basic research—spanning multiple disciplines—on trust research and morality.

The project will employ a diverse array of methods, drawn from a wide variety of fields, including studies of legal codes; ethnographic semi-structured interviews with participants recruited from selected groups; vignette studies using richly described hypothetical situations; decision tasks involving interactions with computer-based simulations of high-threat environments; experimental economic games; and cross-cultural surveys. **Candidates with prior experience in one or more of these areas, and those with a strong interest in social, behavioural, legal, economic, cultural, or evolutionary psychology, are preferred.**

The research fellows will work within a larger interdisciplinary team with an overarching plan to investigate the psychology underpinning mind-blind trust and morality, and how this psychology shapes, and is shaped by, local conditions, including cultural norms and laws.

**Principal duties and responsibilities:** The role will encompass all of the following, but the balance of duties and responsibilities will be determined in discussion with the post holder’s line manager:

1. **Subject Area** [Retain for Academic and Research staff only]
2. Develop research objectives and proposals in line with the hypotheses outlined in AFOSR funded project ‘Mind-blind morality: A route to trust in high-stakes conditions’.
3. This will involve developing, in discussion with the PIs, new lines of enquiry (e.g., new experimental designs) to complement the existing planned projects.
4. This will most likely involve use of studies using behavioural economic games, vignette studies, qualitative interview-based studies, cross-cultural comparisons, and behavioural experiments.
5. **Principal Duties**
6. Develop research methods for individual or joint research connected to AFOSR Project Mind-blind morality.
7. This may involve, for example, planning and conducting experiments, carrying out interviews, developing questionnaires and devising experimental materials.
8. Analyse and interpret the results of this research and generate original ideas based on these outcomes.
9. Review and interpret results, produce research reports for publications, and present relevant information at conferences and to stakeholders.
10. Prepare, and assist with the preparation of, proposals and funding applications for external bodies with the support of more senior colleagues.
11. Keep knowledge and skills up to the required level by engaging in internal and externally based CPD, seeking ways of improving performance by reflecting on research design and delivery, and continue to develop skills in, and knowledge of, research methods and techniques.
12. Ensure that all resources used are correctly recorded and documented, files are kept up to date, and data accuracy is maintained.
13. Attend and contribute to meetings, with an involvement in decision making regarding research plans, and research seminars as appropriate.
14. Could be expected to undertake direct supervision of PhD students as agreed. This will involve overseeing the work and progress of students and providing constructive feedback, including advice on research skills or the referral of students to other sources of assistance where necessary.

**N.B.** The post-holder may be required to undertake any other duties which may reasonably be required as within the nature of the duties and responsibilities of the post as defined, subject to the proviso that normally any changes of a permanent nature shall be incorporated into the job description in specific terms.

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| **Personal Attributes** | | |
| **Attributes** | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| **Knowledge** | Expertise in psychology and/or related social sciences.  A thorough understanding of both new and standard research techniques and methods within psychology and/or behavioural science.  Expertise and understanding of current technological developments, and the deployment of techniques and technology within the behavioural sciences.  Be familiar with current developments in the field of moral psychology and/or trust research.  Ability to transfer this knowledge of current developments into research activity.  Expertise in relevant software and IT. | Expertise in quantitative methods.  Expertise in qualitative methods.  Expertise in behavioural economic games and/or constructing novel gamified simulation studies.  Expertise in R. |
| **Skills** | Ability to communicate material of a specialist or highly technical nature orally, in writing and electronically, either in presentations to peers or through lectures  Ability to creativity analyse and interpret research data and draw conclusions on the outcomes  Ability to deal with complex problems which may affect the achievement of research objectives and deadlines | Ability to use initiative and creativity to identify areas for research, develop new research methods and extend the research portfolio |
| **Experience** | Significant relevant work experience in a research environment, utilising both new and standard research methods and techniques relevant to the proposed project.  Publication of research in appropriate journals etc. and presented work at conferences. |  |
| **Qualifications** | Undergraduate, Masters and PhD in Psychology, Biology, Behavioural Science or any other relevant discipline |  |

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| **Competencies** | |
| **Essential Competencies** | **Desirable Competencies** |
| **Communicating and Influencing (Level 2)**  Communicates information effectively to a wide range of diverse stakeholders, influencing events.  **Making informed decisions (Level 3)**  Uses a wide range of complex data to take controlled risks to achieve greater gain. Uses trends and data to establish controls and performance indicators  **Organisation and Delivery (Level 3)**  Takes account of organisational priorities to ensure that operational and strategic plans are being implemented and achieved.  **Team working (Level 3)**  Contributes to team development, seeking and testing improvements to the team’s outputs/service  **Creativity and Innovation (Level 3)**  Reviews, tests and implements new concepts, models and approaches to practice in support of service development and delivery |  |

**[N.B** All competencies should be drawn from the NTU Competency Frameworkwhich can be found [here](#)]

**Job Description and Person Specification created by (post title): Dr Tom R. Kupfer**