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Research Associate:   
Knowledge Exchange

Faculty of Social Sciences,

iHuman

**Overview**

Help us to make disability the driving subject of inquiry in the health, research and science sectors.

This post is for a Research Associate (RA) who will be based in iHuman, an interdisciplinary research institute at the University of Sheffield. This post arises from the award of a major grant (£2.9 million) from the Wellcome Trust to Professor Dan Goodley.

The project, **Disability Matters***,* is a major international project that brings together disabled researchers and disabled people’s organisations from across the globe including Australia, Canada, India, Singapore and the UK.

*Disability Matters* is recruiting six Research Associates (RAs) in 2024 - two based at the University of Sheffield - and one each at the University of New South Wales, Ambedkar University Delhi, University of Toronto and National Institute of Education/Nanyang Technological University.

All of the RA roles will help the Disability Matters team to deliver a number of ambitious expected outcomes:

1. Intellectual transformation in health research scholarship through an engagement with critical disability studies and the expertise of disabled people
2. Pan-national understanding of the common and differential health priorities of disabled people across four continents
3. Transformation of health research methods to ensure the meaningful inclusion of disabled people as researchers and participants
4. Promotion of more inclusive health research environments, cultures and systems through a focus on disability and other protected characteristics
5. Reframing the representation of disability in healthcare research, dissemination and public engagement
6. Raising the capacities of disabled and disability-positive early career health researchers
7. Generating transformative equity, diversity and inclusion knowledge that supports Wellcome’s strategy to lead the sector in challenging ableism and disablism in the practices and cultures of health research

This specific five year RA position, based at the University of Sheffield, will focus on delivering the objectives for two phases of the project; that is Phase 6: Researcher Development Programme and Phase 7: Transforming Equity, Diversity and Inclusion through Disability.

The RA will help us to answer the following questions linked to these phases throughout their role:

1. *How do we build a new generation of disabled and disability-positive health researchers?*
2. *What transformative knowledge pertaining to equity, diversity and inclusion can be generated through a focus on anti-ableist and anti-disablist practice?*

**Person Specification**

You should provide evidence in your application that you meet the following criteria.

We will use a range of selection methods to measure your abilities in these areas. These will be reviewing your online application and then inviting shortlisted candidates to interview. Please see the information under “Selection – Next Steps” below for more.

If you require any assistance in completing your application, please do contact us via the details under “Informal enquiries”.

The University of Sheffield is proud to be a Disability Confident Employer, we commit to recruit and retain disabled applicants and support positive action.

We encourage disabled people to apply for our jobs and to have the opportunity to demonstrate their skills, talent and abilities at the interview stage. We commit to offer an interview to disabled applicants who meet the minimum criteria for the job. For further information on the Disability Confident Scheme, please follow this hyperlink: <https://disabilityconfident.campaign.gov.uk/>

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|  | **Criteria** | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| 1 | Have an honours degree in the social sciences, arts or humanities | X |  |
| 2 | Have a PhD OR equivalent experience of research and/or communications, advocacy and activism in disability | X |  |
| 3 | Experience of working with disabled people and/or their representative organisations | X |  |
| 4 | Experience of working well as part of a team and taking responsibility for delivering a specific role | X |  |
| 5 | Organisational skills; such as time management, planning and prioritisation of tasks | X |  |
| 6 | Experience of presenting information in a range of formats to meet the needs of different target audiences (such as blogs, articles, lectures, audio and film) | X |  |
| 7 | Knowledge of and/or experience in disability access in relation to resources, media and events | X |  |
| 8 | Experience of organising academic and/or public engagement events | X |  |
| 9 | Experience of marketing and publicity (for example using social media to promote events and for knowledge exchange) |  | X |
| 10 | Knowledge of current Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy and legislation in the health, science and research sectors |  | X |

**About the Team**

Disability Matters globally positions disability as a driving subject of healthcare research; addressing differential health realities and health research practices for disabled people across five nations.

These country sites are chosen because of their historically distinct approaches to disability studies, the presence of high concentrations of interdisciplinary health research and to capture diverse national/cultural perspectives of disabled people.

You will work with The Principal Investigator (PI) Professor Dan Goodley (University of Sheffield, UK) and an esteemed international team of Co-Investigators (CoIs) all of whom are disabled academics.

They are Professor Anita Ghai and Mr Sandeep Singh (Ambedkar University Delhi, India), Professor Jackie Leach Scully (University of New South Wales, Australia), Professor Tanya Titchkosky (University of Toronto, Canada) and Professor Wong Meng Ee (National Institute of Education/Nanyang Technological University, Singapore).

You will also work with four disabled people’s organisations, one in each of our international contexts. These include Action for Ability Development and Inclusion (India), Council of Canadians with Disabilities, People with Disability Australia, Disabled People’s Association (Singapore), and Disability Rights UK.

The National Association of Disabled Staff Networks (NADSN) will be a key contact, bringing together these organisations in leading our International Research Advisory Board. Joanna Tobbell, a film-maker with specific learning difficulties, will produce films in co-production with disabled informants, and will also sit on the Board.

The research programme is broken down into seven research phases over six years, and each will address a particular research question.

Empirical work will be undertaken concurrently in all five countries in key research sites of universities, disabled people’s communities, health research organisations, research funders and spaces of public engagement.

Our bold ambitions are to interrogate the assumptions, priorities, methods and applications of different *types* (conceptual, empirical, exploratory, applied and translational) and *fields* of health research (medicine, health sciences, medical humanities, medical sociology and science and technology studies).

We encourage applications from individuals with lived experience of disability and under-represented groups (inc. neurodiverse, LGBTQ+, black researchers).

For more information about the team and the wider Faculty, please visit our website via the hyperlink: <https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/ihuman/disability-matters/job-opportunities>

**A commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) and Researcher Development**

All the Disability Matters university partners have signed up to a bespoke Mandatethat commits us to:

* Work closely with our Human Resources colleagues to develop an inclusive recruitment process for the RA positions that actively seeks applications from individuals with lived experience of disability and those from black, neurodiverse and LGBTQ+ backgrounds (from job advertisement to recruitment processes)
* Provide RAs with Career Mentors
* Ensure RAs are given leadership opportunities in relation to scholarship, empirical work, analysis and dissemination which are reviewed through annual review processes
* Develop a programme of researcher development for our RAs
* Support RAs to lead their own grant applications (years 5 and 6)
* Adopt an inclusive approach to participant recruitment to ensure that our research captures the perspectives of disabled people from some of the most marginalised communities
* Enhance the involvement of disabled people and their organisations in health research through our International Research Advisory Board
* Support our universities' concurrent commitments to EDI (including disability, race, gender, sexuality) by sharing our practice with senior colleagues, committees and working groups
* Promote literacy and good practice in relation to research integrity including Open Access, Open Data and Data Management

We will therefore work closely with the successful RA on a bespoke programme of career development activities that have equality, diversity and inclusion as a central concern.

At the start of each year and in subsequent annual reviews, 10 days of development activities will be agreed to by the postholder to avail themselves of specific support from the University of Sheffield.

**Job Description**

**Main Duties and Responsibilities**

* Lead on project communications, including development and maintenance of the Disability Matters website and Social Media accounts (X / Twitter and Instagram)
* Support the PI and Programme Manager to deliver online events, such as Online Symposia and Online Conversations
* Contribute to modules, lectures, blogs, workshops and materials that introduce contemporary developments in disability and health research
* Help organise a Researching Disability Online Summer Institute that builds the work of an emerging scholars community supplemented by a Researcher Monthly Meeting
* Edit, publicise and seek contributions to an annual Disability Matters Globally e-publication that showcases disability studies scholarship
* Help organise an International Exchange to facilitate collaboration across universities
* Work with the PI to develop a new online Global Leaders in Disability and Health Research Mentoring Programme that will mentor and support disabled researchers from across the world
* Contribute to writing that documents developments of the Disability Matters programme, and support its dissemination
* Liaise with the Disability Matters team to collate and generate knowledge exchange that informs policy, strategy and practice of health research and research culture
* Capture and disseminate findings from the Disability Matters team that promotes discussions and debates about the centrality of disability to matters of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
* Liaise and collaborate with disabled people’s organisations
* Help disseminate to non-academic audiences the key findings of the programme
* Organise annual Online Townhalls aimed at external audiences such as science and health funders, policy makers and researchers in other institutions; supplemented by a series of Policy Workshops with EDI colleagues
* Plan and lead international reach of knowledge through a series of International Symposia, led by the PI and NADSN, aimed at similar audiences in Singapore, Toronto, Delhi, Sydney and London
* Liaise closely with the research team, and relevant professional staff throughout the project
* Undertake mandatory online training required for members of the Faculty and specialist forms of training as the project requires
* Organise and publicise advisory board meetings, workshops and conferences
* Support the PI and CoIs at each stage of the project when needed
* Centre equality and diversity in all activities
* You will make a full and active contribution to the principles of the ‘Sheffield Academic’. These include the achievement of excellence in applied teaching and research, and scholarly pursuits to make a genuine difference in the subject area and to the University’s achievements as a whole
* As a member of staff you will be encouraged to make ethical decisions in your role, embedding the University sustainability strategy into your working activities wherever possible

**Reward Package**

**Terms and conditions of employment:** Will be those for Grade 7 staff.

**Salary for this grade:** £37,099 to £45,585 per annum, with potential to progress to £46,974 per

annum through sustained exceptional contribution.

**This post is fixed-term** with a start date of 2nd September 2024 and an end date of 31st August 2029.

**This post is full-time:**

This role has been identified as a full-time post, but we are committed to exploring flexible working opportunities with our staff. This means we will consider alternative working patterns suited to the individual. We will discuss this with shortlisted candidates during the selection process or, if you would like to query in advance, please contact us via the details under ‘Informal Enquiries’ below.

We are a campus-based residential university. This role would work well to a hybrid model, that is a combination of campus and remote working, however, this role could be delivered remotely. We are open to exploring options and, if successful, your manager will discuss these arrangements with you.

If you join the University you will have access to a Total Reward Package that includes a competitive salary, a generous Pension Scheme and annual leave entitlement, as well as access to a range of learning and development courses to support your personal and professional development. You will have access to your own personalised portal where you can also access a comprehensive selection of benefits and offers to suit your changing lifestyle needs, for example financial wellbeing, travel options, shopping and cinema discounts.

The University is committed to tackling the global climate emergency. Our sustainability strategy forms an integral part of all we do. We strive to embed this in all areas of university life, from our students’ education, the globally impacting international research we contribute, to campus life.

We aim to empower staff to work sustainably by giving them the knowledge to make ethical decisions at work and home. Staff have the opportunity to be involved in impactful sustainability projects through the nationally recognised Green Impact scheme.

Staff have access to excellent green benefits including the cycle to work scheme with discounts and free secure bike storage, as well as many greener choices across campus.

If you have an interest in this area, the university will strive to passionately support you in these commitments. Check out [www.sheffield.ac.uk/sustainability](http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/sustainability) for more information.

The University of Sheffield recognises the importance of creating a positive environment, whereby all staff feel able to talk openly and with trust about wellbeing and mental health.

Our Staff Wellbeing offer, encourages and supports staff to maintain their own positive health and wellbeing through a range of accessible, inclusive and supportive services and activities.

Our leadership development has been designed to ensure that our leaders have the knowledge, skills and behaviours needed by the University.



Inclusion at Sheffield is everyone's responsibility. Our vision is to build a University community that actively attracts, engages and develops talented individuals from many different backgrounds.

We are proud of our award-winning equality, diversity and inclusion action, and we continue to work to create a fully inclusive environment where everyone can flourish.

To find out more about the benefits of working at the University, visit [www.sheffield.ac.uk/jobs/benefits](http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/jobs/benefits)

**Selection – Next Steps**

**Closing date:** For details of the closing date please view this post on our web pages at [www.sheffield.ac.uk/jobs](http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/jobs)

Following the closing date, we will contact you by email to let you know whether or not you have been shortlisted to participate in the next stage of the selection process. Please note that due to the large number of applications that we expect to receive, it may take up to two working weeksfollowing the closing date before the recruiting department will be able to contact you.

If shortlisted for the next stage, you will be sent a written/video task, details of which will be shared in advance via email. Responses to the task will be used to select interview candidates. We will be sharing with all shortlisted candidates the criteria that the panel will be using to review the written/video task submissions.

We aim to let candidates know if they have been shortlisted to the next stage (the task) by the 15th April and we will give two weeks for completion of this task. We will inform applicants whether or not they have been shortlisted for interview by early May.It is anticipated that interviews will be held between 20th to 31st May.

Interviews will be held online or in person. Interview questions will be shared in advance via email to all shortlisted candidates. The interview panel will consist of University of Sheffield staff members and potentially members from one of our external partners.

We are committed to ensuring accessibility during all stages of the selection process. If you feel adjustments to the selection process would be beneficial for you, please contact us via the details below.

Once in post, we will work with the successful candidate to ensure they have the adjustments in place to work comfortably before they start and as part of their induction.

For more information on our application and recruitment processes visit [www.sheffield.ac.uk/jobs/application-tips](https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/jobs/application-tips)

**Informal enquiries**

**More information on this role and our FAQs can be found on our website:** <https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/ihuman/disability-matters/job-opportunities>

For informal enquiries about the job, please email Dan Goodley and/or Rhea Halsey at [disabilitymatters@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:disabilitymatters@sheffield.ac.uk)

For administrative queries related to the application process, please contact Lucy Dunning on 0114 222 8346 or at [ssrfinance@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:ssrfinance@sheffield.ac.uk)

For additional online application system queries and support, visit: [www.sheffield.ac.uk/jobs/faqs](https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/jobs/faqs)

**Creating a remarkable place to work**

We build teams of people from different heritages and lifestyles from across the world, whose talent and contributions complement each other to greatest effect. We believe diversity in all its forms delivers greater impact through research, teaching and student experience.

We have a global reputation for impactful research, excellent teaching and learning.  By joining the University, you will be joining award-winning teams and departments who are all working together to make the University of Sheffield a remarkable place to work.