



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

CANDIDATE BRIEF

Research Fellow in Critical Urban Studies
Faculty of Engineering & Physical Sciences



Salary: Grade 7 (£33,797 - £40,322 pro rata p.a.)

Reference: EPSCV1013

Closing date: 26 January 2020

0.8 FTE, 30 hours a week

Fixed-term for 9 months, available from the 1st March 2020

We will consider flexible working arrangements

Research Fellow in Critical Urban Studies School of Civil Engineering

Are you an enthusiastic and experienced researcher in the broader field of Constructions and Urban Studies? Are you looking for a new and exciting challenge as part of an international collaboration? Do you want to provide practical solutions to disaster risks in the Global South?

Applications are invited for a 9 months researcher based at the University of Leeds. The successful applicant will conduct research on a British Academy funded project entitled “NOVeI Approach for Vital Infrastructure post DisAster (NOVA VIDA)”. The work will be conducted under the supervision of Dr Ornella Iuorio and Dr Michael Janoschka, along with Dr Gustavo Duran at the Department of Public Affairs in FLACSO, Ecuador.

The primary focus of the project is researching into the creation of new bottom-up community-led frameworks for cohabitation, with the potential to transform how post-disaster infrastructure is conceived and deployed. NOVA VIDA follows a multi-disciplinary approach combining qualitative and participative social sciences approaches and engineering tools including: (i) Case study analysis; (ii) Core empirical work through interviews, focus groups and stakeholder workshops; (iii) Immersion of people in simulated scenarios using virtual reality.

You will be involved in developing Critical Policy Analysis (CPA) of post-disaster reconstruction strategies in Ecuador, and investigate technologies and materials employed, as well as social dynamics occurring in post-disaster development of housing and community centres. This frame will be applied to analyse three locations severely affected from the 2016 earthquake in Ecuador. A critical understanding of post-disaster reconstruction strategies in Ecuador requires critically de-constructing the public political discourse to inquire details about the actual rationale behind reconstruction management. CPA requires also comparing these policies and their rationales to households' experiences of the causes and consequences of post-disaster management.

You will be proficient in Spanish (verbal and written) and be able to spend up to 6 months in Ecuador for this research.



What does the role entail?

As a Research Fellow, your main duties will include:

- Carrying out data collection, including desk-based tasks such as analysis of grey literature and official documents regarding adopted policies;
- Conducting semi-structured interviews with Ecuadorian national and local government representatives, local NGO's, urban planners, think tanks and professionals involved in the post-earthquake reconstruction;
- Carrying out qualitative research including focus groups, participatory mapping and other participatory approaches involving neighbours and inhabitants of affected areas in the three case studies;
- Developing an in-depth analysis of the recollected empirical material through use of adequate text-processing software such as NVivo, and the application of GIS tools;
- Developing visual maps and critical schemes, to capture pre and post disaster: (i) urban development of the areas under scrutiny, (ii) housing and community centres typologies and distribution, (iii) organizations and bottom-up initiatives involved in the post disaster reconstruction;
- Collaborating with internal and external investigators, and participate in the research group meetings;
- Generating and pursuing independent and original research ideas in the appropriate subject area;
- Developing research objectives and proposals and contributing to setting the direction of the research project and team including preparing future funding proposals in close collaboration with colleagues;
- Preparing papers for publication in leading international journals and to disseminate research results through other recognised forms of output;
- Working both independently and also as part of a larger team of researchers, engaging in knowledge-transfer activities where appropriate and feasible;
- Maintaining your own continuing professional development and acting as a mentor to less experienced colleagues as appropriate;
- Contributing to the training of both undergraduate and postgraduate students, including assisting with the supervision of projects in areas relevant to the project.

These duties provide a framework for the role and should not be regarded as a definitive list. Other reasonable duties may be required consistent with the grade of the post.



What will you bring to the role?

As a Research Fellow, you will have:

- A PhD (or have submitted your thesis before taking up the role) or equivalent either in Architectural Engineering, Architectural Technology, Urban Planning, Geography, Anthropology, or Public Policies, as well as an excellent honours degree in related subjects;
- Very strong understanding and previous expertise of applying qualitative and participatory empirical research methods;
- Evidence of the ability to develop critical mapping exercises and implement practical knowledge of GIS applications;
- Evidence of the ability to co-design and contribute to the elaboration of policy-relevant documents;
- Proficiency in Spanish (verbal and written);
- The ability to spend up to 6 months in Ecuador for this research;
- Good time management, self-organisation and planning skills, with the ability to meet tight deadlines and work effectively under pressure;
- A proven track record of peer-reviewed publications in high impact factor journals;
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills including presentation skills;
- Proven ability to manage competing demands effectively, responsibly and without close support;
- A proven ability to work well both individually and in a team;
- A strong commitment to your own continuous professional development.

You may also have:

- Experience of pursuing external funding to support research;
- Proven experience of the ability to interact with PhD students, Masters students and undergraduates;
- Ability to contribute to and develop interdisciplinary collaborative research projects in a broad range of social and architectural engineering applications.



How to apply

You can apply for this role online; more guidance can be found on our [How to Apply](#) information page. Applications should be submitted by **23.59** (UK time) on the advertised [closing date](#).

Contact information

To explore the post further or for any queries you may have, please contact:

[Dr Ornella luorio](#), Associate Professor, School of Civil Engineering

Tel: +44 (0)113 343 2294

Email: O.luoro@leeds.ac.uk

Additional information

Faculty and School Information

Further information is available on the research and teaching activities of the [Faculty of Engineering & Physical Sciences](#), and the [School of Civil Engineering](#).

A diverse workforce

The Schools in the Faculty of Engineering & Physical Sciences are proud to have been awarded the Athena SWAN [Bronze or Silver](#) Award from the Equality Challenge Unit, the national body that promotes equality in the higher education sector. Our [equality and inclusion webpage](#) provides more information.

Working at Leeds

Find out more about the benefits of working at the University and what it is like to live and work in the Leeds area on our [Working at Leeds](#) information page.

Candidates with disabilities

Information for candidates with disabilities, impairments or health conditions, including requesting alternative formats, can be found on our [Accessibility](#) information page or by getting in touch with us at disclosure@leeds.ac.uk.



Criminal record information

Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

A criminal record check is not required for this position. However, all applicants will be required to declare if they have any 'unspent' criminal offences, including those pending.

Any offer of appointment will be in accordance with our Criminal Records policy. You can find out more about required checks and declarations in our [Criminal Records](#) information page.

