



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

CANDIDATE BRIEF

Postdoctoral Research Fellow, School of Performance and Cultural Industries, Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Cultures



Salary: Grade 7 (£33,797 to 40,322 p.a.) (appointment will not be made above £33,797 due to funding restrictions on the role)

Reference: AHCPCI1020

Interview Date: 11 March 2020

Fixed-term from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2023 (funded post)

We will consider job share and flexible working arrangements

Postdoctoral Research Fellow

School of Performance and Cultural Industries

Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Cultures

Are you a talented postdoctoral researcher? Are you passionate about women's subcultural practices, costume, gender politics and questions of inclusivity and diversity? Do you want to further your career in one of the UK's leading research intensive Universities?

Applications are invited for a Postdoctoral Research Fellow to work on a 3 year project, 'Fabulous Femininities: Extravagant Costume and Transformative Thresholds' that is funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC).

You will be part of the core project team that will be led by Dr Jacki Willson (Principal Investigator). Co-Investigators on this project will be Professor of Applied Performance Alice O'Grady (PCI, University of Leeds) and Dr Claire Nally (School of English, University of Northumbria).

You will be responsible for the everyday running of the project, based at the University of Leeds and be mentored by Jacki Willson and Alice O'Grady. Primary responsibilities will be fieldwork activities, compiling and circulating secondary research to the team at monthly meetings as well as curating the archive and organizing impact activities with the support of Claire Nally. You will be an integral part of the team and will be expected to work independently.

You will possess a PhD in a subject that is relevant to the project such as: Performance and Performativity, Costume/Fashion, Cultural/Subcultural or Gender/Sexuality Studies. You may also have a wide network in a relevant cultural industry. You will hold a PhD that involves extensive ethnographic research and fieldwork activities. You may also have experience curating digital archives or an aptitude for undertaking such an activity. Excellent interpersonal and communication skills are essential, as is a willingness to work independently.



What does the role entail?

As a Postdoctoral Research Fellow your main duties will include:

- Curating, maintaining and promoting the digital archive (an archive modelled on the University of Leeds AHRC funded YARN community-based website) alongside Co-I Claire Nally. Attending bi-monthly meeting in Leeds or Newcastle with Nally;
- Maintaining and contributing to social media platforms affiliated to the project – for instance the project’s Twitter and newsfeed – and conducting analysis of the buzz that is generated on social media and on positive media coverage;
- Undertaking ethnographic and immersive fieldwork activities across the UK, working with Co.I Prof. Alice O’Grady who will oversee these methods to ensure the best results for the focus groups and interviews and working within the appropriate ethical guidelines set out by the University;
- Working with Claire Nally to deliver impact activities - Nally will be at the forefront of the diversity and equality element of the impact activities. This will involve building and maintaining relationships with UK-wide activist communities (disability, women’s groups, equality committees and safe space campaigners, LGBT+ and BDSM communities) and relevant subcultural networks (goth, fetish, steampunk, drag, festivals and clubbing, cosplay, gothic, trans, burlesque). This will ensure that the research impacts the target groups and the project is inclusive and intersectional;
- Writing and delivering two conference papers (one co-written with PI Jacki Willson) at relevant annual international conferences, such as Critical Costume, Gender Studies (ICGR), IFTR and TAPRA;
- Developing conference papers into two high quality publications: a co-authored journal article and a chapter for the project’s edited book;
- Conducting an extensive and ongoing literature of research relating to costume/dress, women and trans women cabaret practices, clubbing and club space, subcultural/post-subcultural studies, intersectionality, gender and sexuality, identity/body/feminist politics, ethnographic and immersive methodologies;
- Organizing ‘Embodied Costume as Manifesto’ symposium alongside Jacki Willson;
- Proactive attendance at regular project meetings. There will be monthly meetings with the core team and bi-annual meetings with the academic steering group and the non-academic advisory team;



- Engaging with formal mentoring meetings with Jacki Willson and Alice O’Grady;
- Liaising with academic and non-academic organizations and individuals. This will involve the project’s stakeholders such as club/festival organizers, venue managers, performers, make-up artists, costume and accessory designers/makers and activist pressure groups;
- Building and maintaining strong relationships with the project’s five core cultural industry co-partners;
- Analysing project data using software such as Mindova and NVivo;
- Accessing established research groups and the Organizational Development and Professional Learning (OD&PL) training services at the University of Leeds.

General responsibilities

- Carry out the post in accordance with the University values of professionalism, inclusiveness, integrity and community, supporting the core value of academic excellence;
- Carry out the duties of the post in accordance with the University’s standards, policies and procedures and local Faculty/School benchmarks, as appropriate;
- Maintain a safe work environment, including ensuring compliance with legislation and the undertaking of risk assessments;
- Integrate the University value of inclusiveness into all appropriate aspects of the job; respect the dignity and diversity of all members of the University community and of visitors to the University.

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 Postdoctoral Research Fellow you will have:

- A PhD in a subject relevant to the project such as Performance and Performativity, Costume, Cultural/Subcultural or Gender/Sexuality Studies or a related field. *Please note, the PhD must have been awarded by the time of application;*
- Experience of synthesizing a wide body of academic literature to produce a literature review;



- Experience of networking and collaborating with performing, costume or cultural industry organizations and individuals;
- Excellent interpersonal skills; including the ability to interact with others on a multi-faceted, multi-site project;
- An emerging track record in publishing research outputs related to ongoing projects;
- High level of accuracy and attention to detail;
- Excellent time management; project management and organizational skills;
- Excellent written and oral communication skills;
- A proven ability to work independently and to tight deadlines;
- Flexible and adaptable, with a proactive and positive approach.

You may also have:

- A performance or costume/fashion background;
- A established network with a specific subcultural/performing industry or community;
- Experience of organizing conferences and symposia;
- Experience in designing, populating and curating online platforms.

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. Jacki Willson, Principal Investigator

Email: j.m.willson@leeds.ac.uk



Additional information

Fabulous Femininities: Extravagant Costume and Transformative Thresholds

Fabulous Femininities will seek to understand the way that resistant feminine identities are performed by burlesque club-goers via specific DIY approaches to costume. The ethnographic study will focus on a range of participants who identify as women (biologically born women and male to female transsexual woman) in order to document, understand and theorize the transformative threshold between the everyday self and the extravagant spectacle. The project will explore this transformative element of costume in order to understand the way costume performs and politicizes alternative embodied versions of 'womanhood'. The objective of the research is to develop a new critical framework for understanding costume as an embodied performative and political tool. This will be developed by way of interviews, focus groups, a digital archive and a symposium. This post is subject to ethical approval.

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.

