



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

CANDIDATE BRIEF

Acting Director of Leeds University Centre for African Studies (LUCAS),
School of Politics and International Studies Faculty of Social Sciences



20% workload remission

Reporting to: Paul Johnson

Reference: ESLPO1103

Available on a fixed term basis for 6 months because there is a need for temporary cover.

Location: University of Leeds Main Campus

We are open to discussing flexible working arrangements.

Acting Director of LUCAS (Leeds University Centre for African Studies)

School of Politics and International Studies

Overview of the Role

Are you looking for the opportunity to lead an interdisciplinary centre that brings together scholars with an active interest in Africa, from across the University? Do you have expertise and academic competence in the interdisciplinary field of African Studies?

The Leeds University Centre for African Studies (LUCAS) aims to strengthen the University's engagement with Africa, in terms of research, education and public engagement, and to be a leading interdisciplinary centre for excellence for the study of African cultures, societies and politics in the UK and Europe. Formally based in the School of Politics and International Studies (POLIS, Faculty of Social Sciences), LUCAS brings together academic staff as well as postgraduate research students from a range of Schools and Faculties, with an active research interest in Africa and its diaspora.

With the current director taking research sabbatical, LUCAS is looking for an acting director for 6 months from January to June 2025 (preferred start date 1st January 2025). The role is open to applications from academic members of staff employed by the University, who have relevant expertise in the field of African Studies and are committed to the mission and vision of LUCAS.

We would typically expect applicants to be on academic Grade 8 or Grade 9. The role requires the agreement of the relevant Head of School. You will be bought out 0.2 FTE of your existing grade and salary level. This role is open only to internal applicants currently employed at the University of Leeds on academic Grades 8 and above.

Fixed term 6 months. Starting January 2025.

We will consider job shares and are also open to discussing flexible working arrangements.



Main duties and responsibilities

As Director of Leeds University Centre for African Studies, and in liaison with the LUCAS Advisory Board and the Executive Committee, your main duties will include:

- Providing academic leadership to the strategic development of the Centre, in consultation with the Head of School and the Dean of the Faculty in which LUCAS is based as well as with other relevant colleagues and units in the University;
- Overseeing and managing LUCAS finances in dialogue with the relevant School business managers and Faculty finance officers;
- Line-management of staff directly working for LUCAS (administrator; lecturer; postgraduate teaching tutors);
- Providing oversight of and advice to the module leader for the LUCAS modules FOAR1100 Creative Africas and PIED1906 Contemporary Africas, and overseeing accreditation of new LUCAS MA modules, as appropriate;
- Coordinating interdisciplinary research activities in the Centre such as: planning research seminars and conferences; stimulating research collaboration and grant activity; promoting postgraduate student activity; editing the online LUCAS Bulletin; advertising and recruiting to LUCAS-LAHRI Virtual Fellowships;
- Maintaining LUCAS' local, national and international networks (YASN, ASAUk, AEGIS) and its University of Leeds profile

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.

Qualifications and skills

Essential

As Director of Leeds University Centre for African Studies you will have:

- Expertise and academic competence of the interdisciplinary field of African Studies;
- Knowledge and understanding of the workings of LUCAS in relation to wider University structures, and a commitment to LUCAS' mission and vision;



- Leadership and vision: clear vision; ability to secure commitment to vision; to initiate and manage change; to earn credibility; to inspire colleagues; to accept responsibility; integrity and fairness; to establish and communicate clear standards and expectations; to delegate effectively and appropriately; to make best use of skills; to give constructive feedback and respond to feedback from staff; to monitor performance; to acknowledge and reward good performance;
- Strategic thinking and planning: ability to define and articulate strategy, priorities and imperatives; ability to understand strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats' long-term thinking; ability to take decisions on time, even in uncertain circumstances;
- Communication and interpersonal: ability to negotiate, listen; effective oral and written communication, presentation and media skills; ability to act as an advocate; to promote and maintain relationships;
- Political/environmental awareness: ability to take account of all 'stakeholder' requirements' to influence senior University managers; to network, understand and operate effectively within different 'political' environments;
- Personal effectiveness/self management: good time-management, ability to remain calm under pressure, flexibility adaptability, commitment to own development

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.

Your application should include:

- an expression of interest (1-2 sides of A4) detailing how your experience to date meets the person specification and, if successful, how you would envisage fulfilling the requirements of the post;
- a copy of your curriculum vitae.



Contact information

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

Dr Brendon Nicholls, Director of LUCAS

Email: B.L.Nicholls@leeds.ac.uk

Please note: If you are not a British or Irish citizen, you will require permission to work in the UK. This will normally be in the form of a visa but, if you are an EEA/Swiss citizen, this may be your status under the EU Settlement Scheme.

Additional information

Working at Leeds

We are a campus-based community and regular interaction with campus is an expectation of all roles in line with academic and service needs and the requirements of the role. We are also open to discussing flexible working arrangements. To find out more about the benefits of working at the University and what it is like to live and work in the Leeds area visit our [Working at Leeds](#) information page.

Our University

As an international research-intensive university, we welcome students and staff from all walks of life. We foster an inclusive environment where all can flourish and prosper, and we are proud of our strong commitment to student education. Within the Faculty of Social Sciences we are dedicated to diversifying our community and we welcome the unique contributions that individuals can bring, and particularly encourage applications from, but not limited to Black, Asian, people who belong to a minority ethnic community; people who identify as LGBT+; and disabled people. Candidates will always be selected based on merit and ability.

Information for disabled candidates

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

