



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

CANDIDATE BRIEF

Research Fellow in Spatial Inequality, Faculty of Environment



Salary: Grade 7 (£38,205 - £45,585 p.a. depending on experience)

Reference: ENVGE1244

Fixed-term for up to 10 months, 1 October 2024- 31 July 2025 (to complete specific time limited work)

Location: University of Leeds (with scope for hybrid working)

We are open to discussing flexible working arrangements

Research Fellow in Spatial Inequality, School of Geography, Faculty of Environment

Are you an ambitious researcher with experience in quantitative data analysis and spatial inequalities? Do you want to contribute to impact focused research to reduce barriers to accessing greenspace? Do you want to develop your career at one of the UK's leading research-intensive universities?

We seek a Research Fellow in Spatial Inequalities with experience in developing reproducible methods using open data to support the delivery of an exciting new project focused on enhancing park safety for women and girls. This project, led by [Dr Fran Pontin](#) at the University of Leeds in partnership with the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) and Bradford Metropolitan District Council (BMDC), aims to integrate safety research into local decision-making processes by providing a quantitative assessment of park safety metrics.

This project will build on the Safer Parks work between the University of Leeds and the West Yorkshire Mayor. Utilising open-source spatial data to identify areas in parks that promote safety for women and girls as well as highlight areas needing improvement.

Working with the project lead [Dr Fran Pontin](#) and co-investigator [Dr Vikki Houlden](#) in the School of Geography and co-investigator [Dr Anna Barker](#) in the School of Law, you will conduct novel research to develop and implement safety-promoting metrics for parks, culminating in the creation of an interactive dashboard map for evidence-based decision-making. Key tasks will include conducting literature reviews, scoping and evaluating open data, developing composite safety measures from park features, creating data visualizations, and engaging with stakeholders to ensure the project's success.

The project is funded by Research England through the [University of Leeds Policy Support Fund](#). The project will also be closely aligned with the [Green AWARE](#): (Greenspace Accessibility, Wellbeing, and Resident Equality) project, with opportunity for knowledge transfer across projects.

This role will be located in the School of Geography's [Institute for Spatial Data Science \(ISDS\)](#). As well as working closely with members of the project team, there will be opportunities to network and contribute to research activities in ISDS and the [Leeds Institute for Data Analytics \(LIDA\)](#).

For full details of the project plans, role details, or to discuss your suitability for the role, please feel free to contact [Dr Fran Pontin](#) (f.i.pontin@leeds.ac.uk).



Main duties and responsibilities

As a Research Fellow, your main duties will include:

- Evaluating methods and techniques used and results obtained by other researchers and to relate such evaluations appropriately to your own work through a rapid evidence review;
- Generating spatial insights into park safety through open source data;
- Establish methods for combining park safety measures to evaluate both within-park and across-park safety metrics;
- Coordinating and facilitating project workshops with key stakeholders, including WYCA, BMDC, to establish project priorities, scope, and integration needs.
- Reporting to regular team meetings, reviewing and presenting progress with investigators and external project stakeholders;
- Working with a Research Software Engineer to develop a dashboard to communicate research insights;
- Making research findings open source and ensuring the reproducibility of research outcomes;
- Preparing papers for publication in leading international journals and disseminating research results through other recognised forms of output, including an interactive data dashboard;
- Maintaining your own continuing professional development and acting as a mentor to less experienced colleagues as appropriate;
- Working both independently and as part of a larger team of researchers, engaging in knowledge-transfer activities where appropriate and feasible.

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?

Essential:

- A PhD (or be near to completion - i.e. the initial thesis needs to have been handed in at the point of application) in geography/urban science/computer science/GIS or a closely allied discipline;



- A strong background in inequalities, accessibility, spatial justice, or health geography;
- Experience with reproducible programmatic / data science approaches to Geographical Information Science in either R or Python;
- Experience of using statistical and spatial analysis tools to derive insights from large datasets;
- Good time management and planning skills, with the ability to meet deadlines, manage competing demands and work effectively under pressure without close support;
- A proven track record of peer-reviewed publications in high impact factor journals;
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills including presentation skills;
- 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 working with a range of open spatial data sources;
- Skills in mapping software such as ArcGIS or QGIS;
- Experience of impact and engagement activities to ensure research outputs and resources are meaningful and accessible for intended audiences;
- Experience facilitating workshops and/or co-producing research with external stakeholders;
- Experience of developing interactive data dashboards or working with software engineers;

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 Fran, Pontin](#), Senior Research Data Scientist,

Email: F.L.Pontin@leeds.ac.uk



Additional information

Please note: If you are not a British or Irish citizen, from 1 January 2021 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 and resident in the UK before 31 December 2020, this may be your passport or status under the EU Settlement Scheme.

Find out more about the [Faculty of Environment](#).

Find out more about the [School of Geography](#).

Find out more about our [Research and associated facilities](#).

Find out more about [Equality in the Faculty](#).

Our University

As an international research-intensive university, we welcome students and staff from all walks of life and from across the world. 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 Environment 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.

The Faculty of Environment has received a prestigious Athena SWAN silver award from [Advance HE](#), the national body that promotes equality in the higher education sector. This award represents the combined efforts of all schools in the Faculty and shows the positive actions we have taken to ensure that our policies, processes, and ethos all promote an equal and inclusive environment for work and study.

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.



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 foehr@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.

Please note that this post may be suitable for sponsorship under the Skilled Worker visa route but first-time applicants might need to qualify for salary concessions. For more information please visit: www.gov.uk/skilled-worker-visa.

For research and academic posts, we will consider eligibility under the Global Talent visa. For more information please visit: <https://www.gov.uk/global-talent>

