

Further Particulars

This document includes information about the role for which you are applying and the information you will need to provide with the application.

1. Role details

Vacancy reference:	8528
Job title:	Research Assistant / Associate
Reports to:	Research Fellow
Salary:	Ranging from £27,578 – £35,938
Terms and conditions of service:	Full time Research Staff
Grade:	AC1 / AC2
Duration of post:	1 st January 2013 – 31 st December 2013
Working hours:	Full time – 37 hours per week
Location:	Knowledge Media Institute of The Open University
Closing date:	13 th December 2012
Type of application form accepted:	Standard form
Number of referees required:	Three
Unit recruitment contact:	Ortenz Rose

2. Summary of duties

The Open University's Knowledge Media Institute (KMi) needs two Research Assistants or Research Associates (depending on qualification) to work on the EU-funded project – DECIPHER.

The aim of the DECIPHER project is to develop a reasoning engine, virtual environment and interfaces that can be used to present museum heritage objects as part of a coherent narrative. This will allow the user, whether a museum professional or member of the public, interactively to assemble, visualise and explore, not just collections of heritage objects, but the underlying knowledge structures that connect and give them meaning. As part of this work, we have been developing a web-based environment (recently renamed as StoryScope) for searching and organising heritage objects, their associated stories and underlying personal and historical events. We have also developed “curate”, which is an ontology that can be used to describe the museum stories and presentations developed in StoryScope.

We are looking for somebody with knowledge and interest in the areas of web technology, the semantic web and artificial intelligence to help us further develop the StoryScope environment and the intelligent assistance it can provide for finding museum resources, researching these, and building engaging presentations. The work will involve collaborating both with the local DECIPHER project team in KMi and also European partners of the DECIPHER project.

The appointments will be made on the Academic Grade 1 or 2 Salary Scales for Research Staff, ranging from £27,578 – £35,938 pa depending on qualifications and experience. Appointment as a Research Associate requires a PhD or three years equivalent in quality of achievement.

Job Description

The research assistant or associate will work as part of a team within KMi and more broadly in the DECIPHER project developing the StoryScope environment to support the construction of narratives from collections of heritage objects. The StoryScope web based environment is being built using the Drupal content management system. StoryScope makes use of a triple-store to formally represent the heritage objects and presentations in StoryScope plus additional knowledge about the people, places and events that feature in the narratives. The triple-store is used for querying of the contents of StoryScope and also in the provision of intelligent assistance for the construction of narratives.

You will contribute to the on-going development of the StoryScope platform. This will require strong software and web development skills. As StoryScope is being built using Drupal, experience of development using the Drupal content management system would be desirable. Experience of semantic web technologies will be required for the development of intelligent support for narrative construction.

As the DECIPHER project is being carried by a consortium of European partners you will therefore need to both work as part of the local project team and collaborate with researchers and developers at other institutions participating in the project.

Relevant Publications and Further Information

1. Mulholland, Paul; Wolff, Annika and Collins, Trevor (2012). Curate and storyspace: an ontology and web-based environment for describing curatorial narratives. In: 9th Extended Semantic Web Conference (ESWC 2012), 27-31 May 2012, Heraklion, Crete, Greece. [<http://people.kmi.open.ac.uk/paulm/ESWC-2012.pdf>]
2. Wolff, Annika; Mulholland, Paul and Collins, Trevor (2012). Storyspace: a story-driven approach for creating museum narratives. In: Hypertext 2012: 23rd ACM Conference on Hypertext and Social Media, 25 - 28 June 2012, Milwaukee, WI, USA.

[<http://people.kmi.open.ac.uk/paulm/hypertext-2012.pdf>].

3. Collins, Trevor; Mulholland, Paul and Wolff, Annika (2012). Web supported employment: using object and event descriptions to facilitate storytelling online and in galleries. In: WebSci 2012, 22-24 June 2012, Evanston, IL, USA. [<http://people.kmi.open.ac.uk/paulm/web-science-2012.pdf>]
4. Main DECIPHER website – <http://decipher-research.eu>
5. The curate ontology – <http://decipher.open.ac.uk/curate>

3. Person specification

Essential Skills

- Degree in computing – if applying for a research associate position, a PhD in a relevant area;
- Strong software and Web development skills;
- Experience of Linked Data/Semantic Web-related technologies (RDF, RDF-S SPARQL, OWL, triple-stores);
- Ability to work both independently and as part of a team;
- Good communication skills;
- Ability to work to challenging targets and deadlines.

Desirable Skills

- Experience in Drupal development;
- Experience in building semantic web applications;
- Knowledge and experience of artificial intelligence techniques
- Experience in using code repositories and issue tracking systems.

4. Role specific requirements e.g. Shift working

n/a

5. About the unit/department

The Knowledge Media Institute (KMi) of the UK's Open University is a highly successful interdisciplinary research centre founded at The Open University in 1995, and located in attractive premises at The Open University's main campus in Milton Keynes, UK. We offer a stimulating environment, widely acknowledged to be at the leading edge of research and development, particularly in Semantic Technologies, Human Computer Interaction, New Media and Information Retrieval. The style, impact and content of our work can be seen at <http://kmi.open.ac.uk/>

6. How to obtain more information about the role or application process

If you would like to discuss the particulars of this role before making an application please contact Dr Paul Mulholland on Tel: +44 (0)1908 654506 or email paul.mulholland@open.ac.uk

If you have any questions regarding the application process please contact Ortenz Rose on +44 (0)1908 654774 or email ortenz.rose@open.ac.uk

7. The application process and where to send completed applications

Please ensure that your application reaches the University by: **13 December 2012**

Post it to:

Name/Job title: **Ortenz Rose – Senior Staffing Coordinator**

Department/Unit: **Knowledge Media Institute**

Address: **The Open University
Walton Hall
MILTON KEYNES
Bucks**

Post Code: **MK7 6AA**

Or e-mail your application to: kmi-recruitment@open.ac.uk

8. Selection process and date of interview

The interview panel will be chaired by Dr Paul Mulholland. Other members of the interview panel will include members of the project team. Interviews will be arranged as soon after the close date as is possible.

The selection process for this post will be by review of applications by the Chair and selected members of the interview panel. There may be a telephone interview before a formal interview. We will let you know as soon as possible after the closing date whether you have been shortlisted for interview together with details of the interview format. Further details on the selection process will also be sent to shortlisted candidates.

Applications received after the closing date will not be accepted.