

## Job Related Information

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

### 1. Role Details

Vacancy reference	12409
Job title:	Research Assistant / Associate
Reports to:	Professor of Computer Science
Salary:	Ranging from £28,982 – £37,768
Terms and conditions:	Full time Research Staff
Grade	AC1 / AC2
Duration of post:	12 months
Working hours:	37 hours per week (full time, Monday to Friday)
Location:	The Knowledge Media Institute at The Open University
Closing date:	30 June 2016
Type of application form accepted:	Standard / Accessible version (plus covering letter)
Number of referees required:	Three
Unit recruitment contact:	Ortenz Rose

## 2. Summary of duties

A major obstacle to increase the efficiency, effectiveness and quality of education in Europe is the lack of widely available, accessible, multilingual, timely, engaging and high-quality educational material (i.e. OpenCourseWare). The creation of comprehensive OpenCourseWare (OCW) is tedious, time-consuming and expensive with the effect that often courseware employed by teachers, instructors and professors is incomplete, outdated, inaccessible to those with disabilities and dull.

With the open-source SlideWiki platform, the effort of the creation, translation and evolution of highly-structured remixable OCW can be widely shared (i.e. crowdsourced). Similarly to Wikipedia for encyclopaedic content, SlideWiki allows to collaboratively create comprehensive OCW (curricula, slide presentations, self-assessment tests, illustrations etc.) online in a crowdsourcing manner:

- to semi-automatically translate this content into more than 50 different languages and
- to improve the translations in a collaborative manner and
- to support engagement and social networking of educators and learners around that content.

Several hundred comprehensive course materials are available in SlideWiki in dozens of languages. In this large-scale trial project, we will further mature the SlideWiki technology platform, integrate it with a state-of-the-art MOOC delivery platform and perform four large-scale trials in:

- secondary education,
- vocational and professional training,
- higher education and
- community-driven open-education.

Each of these large-scale trials will be performed with hundreds of educators and thousands of learners in countries all over Europe. A particular focus of the technology development and testing in the trials will be the suitability for academics, teachers and learners with disabilities.

We are currently looking for a Research Assistant or a Research Associate (depending on qualification) to work on this project. The appointment will be made on the Academic Grade 1 or 2 Salary Scales for Research Staff, ranging from £28,982 to £37,768 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 work will target the multi-platform delivery of learning resources that have been developed using SlideWiki. In particular, the learning resources developed with the use of the SlideWiki platform will be delivered via a variety of educational platforms that address different learning contexts. More specifically, learning resources will be delivered via the following educational platforms:

- Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs)
- Learning Management Systems (LMSs)
- Interactive eBooks
- Social Networks

The distribution of learning resources to these platforms will be facilitated by SlideWiki's standard compliant HTML5, RDF/Linked Data and SCORM compatible content model. Additionally, commonly used technology-enhanced learning standards and specifications, such as the IMS Learning Tools Interoperability (LTI), will be used in order to increase the interoperability of SlideWiki with other educational platforms.

The work also includes the execution and evaluation of trials with informal learners using learning resources that have been developed with SlideWiki. In particular, we will be conducting a series of trials involving the production, delivery and evaluation of a wide range of MOOCs and Open Educational Resources (OERs), most

notably the MOOCs offered by the FutureLearn platform, as well as in the form of OERs offered by OpenLearn and iTunes U.

We expect successful applicants to fit into our Computer Science REF profile depending on previous experience. The REF is a UK research assessment exercise whereby research departments are evaluated for their research contribution through their publications, income generation and non-academic impact.

You will be working as part of a team of dynamic researchers in the field of knowledge technologies, Semantic Web and Web services within KMi, and in the context of a European project consortium. There will be the opportunity to develop your research profile, to travel to give demos and presentations, and to write academic papers.

#### *RELEVANT PUBLICATIONS AND FURTHER INFORMATION*

All the publications below are available from <http://kmi.open.ac.uk/publications/>

Mikroyannidis, A., Domingue, J., Pareit, D., Gerwen, J., Tranoris, C., Jourjon, G. and Marquez-Barja, J. (2016) Applying a methodology for the design, delivery and evaluation of learning resources for remote experimentation, IEEE Global Engineering Education Conference (EDUCON), Abu Dhabi, UAE, IEEE Education Society Publications <http://ict-forge.eu/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/EDUCON-2016-full-paper.pdf>

Mikroyannidis, A., Domingue, J., Maleshkova, M., Norton, B. and Simperl, E. (2014) Developing a Curriculum of Open Educational Resources for Linked Data, 10th annual OpenCourseWare Consortium Global Conference (OCWC), Ljubljana, Slovenia [http://conference.ocwconsortium.org/2014/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Paper\\_15-Curriculum.pdf](http://conference.ocwconsortium.org/2014/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Paper_15-Curriculum.pdf)

#### *USEFUL URLS*

The SlideWiki platform - <http://slidewiki.org>

FORGE: a project on the development of multi-platform open educational resources for online experimentation - <http://ict-forge.eu>

EUCLID: a project on creating open educational resources based on eBooks for Linked Data - <http://www.euclid-project.eu/>

FutureLearn - <http://www.futurelearn.com>

OpenLearn - <http://openlearn.open.ac.uk>

The Open University on iTunes U - <http://www.open.edu/itunes/>

### 3. Person specification

#### **Requirements (E = Essential/ D = Desirable)**

##### **Education, qualifications and training**

A PhD in Computer Science or a related field, or 2+ years of Research & Development experience in IT. Appointment as a Research Associate requires a PhD or three years equivalent in quality of achievement.

##### **Knowledge, work and other relevant experience**

<b>Essential:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong software and Web development skills;</li> <li>• Experience in eLearning technologies and pedagogy;</li> <li>• Familiarity with Learning Management Systems, MOOC platforms and Social Networking platforms;</li> <li>• Familiarity with eBook formats, such as Apple iBooks and ePUB.</li> </ul>
<b>Desirable:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience with PHP, Java and JavaScript;</li> <li>• Experience in the development of technology-enhanced learning applications and widgets for Learning Management Systems and other educational platforms;</li> <li>• Experience in the use of technology-enhanced learning standards and specifications, such as SCORM and IMS LTI;</li> <li>• Experience working in (higher) education.</li> </ul>
<b><u>Personal abilities and qualities</u></b>	
<b>Essential:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proven ability to fit into the OU's Computer Science REF profile (depending on level and experience: publications, supporting income generation and non-academic impact);</li> <li>• Ability to quickly demonstrate understanding of the project aims and specific tasks as requested;</li> <li>• Self-starter in providing solutions to meet project needs;</li> <li>• Ability to work in complex team relationships;</li> <li>• Excellent written and oral communication skills;</li> <li>• Work to challenging targets and deadlines;</li> <li>• Ability to handle constructive feedback.</li> </ul>
<b>Desirable:</b>	n/a

#### 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 Professor John Domingue on +44 (0)1908 653800 or by email: [john.domingue@open.ac.uk](mailto:john.domingue@open.ac.uk)

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

## 7. The application process and where to send completed applications

Please ensure that your application reaches the University by:	30 June 2016
Post it to:	Ortenz Rose
Name/Job title:	Senior Co-ordinator - Staffing & Recruitment
Department/Unit:	The Knowledge Media Institute
Address:	The Open University, Walton Hall, MILTON KEYNES. Bucks
Post Code:	MK7 6AA
Or e-mail your application to:	<a href="mailto:kmi-recruitment@open.ac.uk">kmi-recruitment@open.ac.uk</a>

## 8. Selection process and date of interview

The interview panel will be chaired by:	Professor John Domingue
The other members of the interview panel will be:	Dr Allan Third Dr Alexander Mikroyannidis
The interviews will take place on:	date TBA
The selection process for this post will include...	...a review of applications by the Chair and selected members of the interview panel.  a) Please ensure you complete all relevant sections of the application form. You are encouraged to also include a curriculum vitae; however <b>CVs submitted <u>without</u> a completed application for employment form will not be accepted.</b>  b) You are also asked to provide a covering letter describing how your skills make you a suitable candidate for the post.



We will let you know as soon as possible after the closing date whether you have been shortlisted for interview. Further details on the selection process will also be sent to shortlisted candidates.

Applications received after the closing date will not be accepted.