RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Job Title:	Research Assistant in Evidence Synthesis for Planetary Health
Department:	Department of Population Health
Faculty:	Epidemiology and Population Health
Location:	Keppel Street, London
FTE:	1.0
Grade:	5
Accountable to:	Head of Department through Hugh Sharma Waddington
Job Summary:	LSHTM's Pathfinder Initiative Phase II, funded by the Wellcome Trust and Oak Foundation, is filling evidence synthesis gaps on particular topics to achieve rapid reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, as well as evaluating and communicating the impact of actions on health and equity to inform and inspire further action. We are seeking a committed Research Assistant to support the team in developing methods of machine learning to assist in the identification and extraction of data from relevant studies, and conducting evidence synthesis work (systematic review, meta-analysis, evidence and gap map, scoping review) on priority topics in the area of climate and health. In the first year, the post-holder will also contribute to the Digital Evidence Synthesis Tools for Climate and Health (DEST-CH) project, which aims to understand the current use of digital evidence synthesis tools by researchers and science assessment professionals (e.g. politicians) and the needs, to ensure a wider uptake of such evidence synthesis tools in the future, specifically in the field of climate and health.

General Information

The London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (LSHTM) is one of the world's leading public health universities.

Our mission is to improve health and health equity in the UK and worldwide; working in partnership to achieve excellence in public and global health research, education and translation of knowledge into policy and practice.

Staff and students are committed to helping create a more healthy, sustainable and equitable world for everyone, because we believe our shared future depends on our shared health.

We embrace and value the diversity of our staff and student population and seek to promote equity, diversity and inclusion as essential elements to improve health worldwide. We believe that when people feel respected and included, they can be more creative, successful, and happier at work. While we have more work to do, we are committed to building an inclusive workplace, a community that everyone feels a part of, which is safe, respectful, supportive and enables all to reach their full potential.

To find out more please visit our Introducing LSHTM page.

Our Values

Our values establish how we aspire to achieve our mission both now and in the future - demonstrating what it means to work and study at LSHTM. Please visit our LSHTM
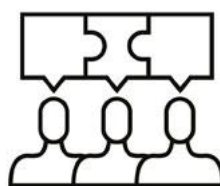
[Values page](#) for further information.

Act with integrity   **Embrace difference**   **Work together**   **Create impact**

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Faculty Information

The Faculty of Epidemiology & Population Health (EPH) houses a large group of epidemiologists, demographers, statisticians and nutritionists working on major issues of importance to public health provision in the UK and globally. EPH employs approximately 560 people in five research departments.

- Department of Infectious Disease Epidemiology & Dynamics
- Department of Infectious Disease Epidemiology & International Health
- Department of Medical Statistics, which includes the Clinical Trials Unit
- Department of Non-communicable Disease Epidemiology
- Department of Population Health

The Faculty has a postgraduate teaching programme including eleven intensive MSc courses: Epidemiology, Demography and Health, Medical Statistics, Health Data Science, Public Health for Development (jointly with Faculties of Infectious & Tropical Diseases and Public Health & Policy), Nutrition for Global Health, Global Mental Health (jointly with Kings College London, Institute of Psychiatry), Reproductive & Sexual Health Research, Sexual & Reproductive Health Policy and Practice (online), Veterinary Epidemiology (run jointly with the Royal Veterinary College) and Climate Change and Planetary Health. There are also three distance Learning MSc courses: Epidemiology, Clinical Trials and Demography in Health. The Faculty also has approximately 120 research students studying for an MPhil, PhD or DrPH degree.

The Dean of Faculty is Professor Elizabeth Allen.

Department of Population Health

The Department of Population Health aims to bring important benefits to global population health and health equity by generating, evaluating and disseminating effective interventions, treatments and policies. It is a centre of excellence in the determinants and consequences of population change. Our research involves epidemiology, drug trials, complex intervention development and trials, demography, research on the mechanisms of disease, treatments and interventions, qualitative research and systematic reviews of evidence, and evidence to improve the health and wellbeing of people with disabilities globally. We work on some of the largest public health issues in the world including: climate change and planetary health, Covid-19, demography, emergency care, global mental health, maternal, newborn and child health (MNCH), nutrition, non-communicable disease and sexual and reproductive health (SRH). The Department of Population Health has strong links with the Malawi Epidemiology and Intervention Research Unit (MEIRU), the MRC unit the Gambia, international agencies and a large network of overseas research collaborators. The Head of Department is Professor Suneetha Kadiyala.

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The portfolio of duties outlined below will vary in accordance with the academic expectations of the role, which may be varied from time to time, and agreed at your annual Performance and Development Review (PDR).

Job Description

Main Activities and Responsibilities

Knowledge Generation

1. To undertake high quality research as directed by your line manager, including contributing to drafting grant proposals and peer-reviewed and other outputs, and evaluating teaching practice;

2. To support the administration of projects linked to your employment, helping ensure compliance with good practice in relation to the conduct of research, the ethics policy, and other relevant LSHTM policies;

3. To undertake high quality research as directed by your line manager, including contributing to drafting grant proposals and peer-reviewed and other outputs, and evaluating teaching practice

4. To support the administration of projects linked to your employment, helping ensure compliance with good practice in relation to the conduct of research, the ethics policy, and other relevant LSHTM policies

5. To support the team in developing methods of machine learning to assist in the identification and extraction of data from relevant studies under the direction of a line manager. A major deliverable of Pathfinder Phase II is to develop and maintain a living map of evidence on health co-benefits of climate action. The aims of this project are to work in conjunction with our partners at MCC to develop further methods to automate screening and data collection from quantitative studies of implemented actions and modelling, through machine learning algorithms. This will include developing and testing efficient algorithms based on manual data collection including systematic searches, screening of eligible studies, data collection on relevant study characteristics and, where possible, effect sizes and critical appraisal

6. To support the team in conducting systematic evidence synthesis projects (systematic reviews, meta-analyses, evidence maps, scoping reviews) on priority topics in the area of climate and health under the direction of a line manager. These include, but are not limited to, evidence from modelling studies and implemented actions on the effects of carbon taxation, and evidence from quantitative and qualitative studies (mixed methods) on the effectiveness of approaches to improve green-house gas emissions from sanitation (faecal and solid waste management)

7. To support the team in conducting workshops with developers and users of evidence synthesis tools to identify the needs to accelerate uptake of its use in the

climate and health space, and perform thematic analysis of the obtained data in these workshop

8. To support the team in developing a detailed state-of-the-art document regarding the current use of digital evidence synthesis tools and the gaps/needs for wider uptake

9. To support the team in preparing applications to good quality funders.

Education
1. To participate in some aspects of LSHTM's Education Programme or educational outreach activities;

2. To contribute to teaching, including the new MSc in Climate Change and Planetary Health and/or Distance Learning modules, and co-supervise MSc student projects

Internal Contribution
1. To undertake activities that support the Department, Faculty, MRC Unit or LSHTM;

2. To reflect LSHTM's EDI goals in your work and behaviour;

3. To participate in LSHTM's PDR process;

4. To attend and present findings of research at Department/Group seminars and LSHTM Centre meetings.

External Contribution
1. To demonstrate good external citizenship by supporting the external academic and practice communities;

2. To support Pathfinder Initiative external collaborations including the peer review activities of the Climate Solutions Coordinating Group of the Campbell Collaboration.

Professional Development and Training
1. To keep up-to-date with the latest research / thinking in your academic field and with changes to pedagogic practice within LSHTM and more generally;

2. For lab-based disciplines: where the length and nature of the position permits, to apply for and, if accepted, undertake a doctoral degree (if not already acquired);

3. To undertake and successfully complete the mandatory training required by LSHTM as appropriate to the role;

4. To undertake professional development to support these research activities, including by enrolling in a PhD programme.

General
All academic staff are free within the law to question and test received wisdom, and put forward new ideas and controversial or unpopular opinions, to enable LSHTM to engage

in research and promote learning to the highest possible standards.

All staff at LSHTM are also expected to:

1. Act at all times in LSHTM's best interests;
2. Treat staff, students and visitors with courtesy and respect at all times;
3. Comply fully with LSHTM policies, procedures and administrative processes relevant to the role;
4. Uphold and support LSHTM's values (as set out in the LSHTM Strategy);
5. Act as ambassadors for LSHTM when hosting visitors or attending external events;

Academic Expectations

All academic roles have a statement of academic expectations attached to each level. Please ensure that these have been read and understood. For further information please refer to the [Academic Expectations page](#).

The above list of duties is not exclusive or exhaustive and the role holder will be required to undertake such tasks as may reasonably be expected within the scope and grading of the role.

Role descriptions should be regularly reviewed to ensure they are an accurate representation of the role.

Person Specification

This form lists the essential and desirable requirements needed by the post holder to be able to perform the job effectively.

Applicants will be shortlisted solely on the extent to which they meet these requirements.

Essential criteria:

1. A relevant first degree in the field of economics, epidemiology, data science, public health, or another relevant quantitative social science discipline;

2. Relevant experience in conducting evidence synthesis (e.g., evidence mapping, systematic review, meta-analysis) as part of a research project or dissertation).

3. Relevant analytical skills in including in quantitative data analysis (statistics, econometrics, clinimetrics.

4. Evidence of good organisational skills, including effective time management.

5. Proven ability to work independently, as well as collaboratively, as part of a research team.

6. Evidence of excellent interpersonal skills, including the ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing.

Desirable Criteria

7. Some experience of teaching

8. Knowledge and/or experience working in topics related to climate change and health;

9. Experience in designing or using machine learning programmes and algorithms

Salary and Conditions of Appointment

The post is fixed term until 28 February 2026 and full-time, 35 hours per week, 1.0 FTE. The post is funded by the Wellcome Trust and is available immediately. The salary will be on the Academic scale, Grade 5 scale in the range £38,292 - £43,947 per annum pro rata (inclusive of London Weighting).

The post will be subject to the LSHTM terms and conditions of service. Annual leave entitlement is 30 working days per year, pro rata for part-time staff. In addition to this there are discretionary "Wellbeing Days". Membership of the Pension Scheme is available.

LSHTM has a Hybrid Working Framework, which alongside agreed service requirements, enables teams to work more flexibly (if the role allows), promoting a greater wellbeing and work/life balance.

Application Process

Applications should be made on-line via our [jobs website](#). Applications should also include the names and email contacts of 2 referees who can be contacted immediately if appointed. Online applications will be accepted by the automated system until 10pm of the closing date. We regret that late applications cannot be accepted. Any queries regarding the application process may be addressed to jobs@lshtm.ac.uk.

The supporting statement section should set out how your qualifications, experience and training meet each of the selection criteria. Please provide one or more paragraphs addressing each criterion. The supporting statement is an essential part of the selection process and thus a failure to provide this information will mean that the application will not be considered. An answer to any of the criteria such as "Please see attached CV", "Yes" or "No" will not be considered acceptable and will not be scored.

Please note that if you are shortlisted and are unable to attend on the interview date it may not be possible to offer you an alternative date.

Asylum and Immigration Statement

LSHTM will comply with current UKVI legislation, which requires all employees to provide documentary evidence of their legal right to work in this country prior to commencing employment. Candidates will be required to email a copy of their passport (and visa if applicable) to HR prior to their interview and if appointed will be asked to bring the original documents in to be copied and verified before their start date.

Applications from candidates who require sponsorship to work in the UK will be considered alongside other applications but due to the pending salary threshold changes effective 04 April 2024 applicants under certain circumstances may not qualify for sponsorship. Applicants who do not currently have the right to work in the UK will have to satisfy UK Visas & Immigration regulations before they can be appointed.

Further information about Sponsorship and eligibility to work in the UK, can be found on

the [government immigration rules page](#).

Date amended: Jan 2024