

RESEARCH ASSISTANT



Job Title:	Research Assistant – Climate change and health
Department:	Nutrition and Planetary Health Theme
Faculty:	MRC Unit The Gambia
Location:	The Gambia (or exceptionally other locations may be considered)
FTE:	1.0 FTE
Grade:	G5
Accountable to:	Prof Kris Murray
Job Summary:	A Research Assistant post is available to join an interdisciplinary team working on modelling climate change impacts on human health to inform national climate change risk and vulnerability assessments for Sub-Saharan African countries.

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

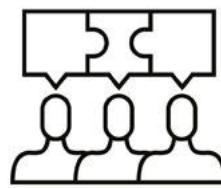
Our values establish how we aspire to achieve our mission both now and in the future - demonstrating what it means to work and study at LSHTM. Please visit our [LSHTM Values page](#) for further information.



**Act with
integrity**



**Embrace
difference**



**Work
together**



**Create
impact**

Faculty Information

Established in 1947, MRC Unit The Gambia (MRCG) at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine is a leading research centre in sub-Saharan Africa. Research is carried out by three major Research Themes (Disease Control & Elimination; Vaccines & Immunity; and Nutrition & Planetary Health) that benefit from the core-supported strategic platforms and of the research services. Disease Control & Elimination investigates the interactions between hosts, pathogens and vectors; and evaluates interventions aimed at interrupting transmission and/or reducing the burden of diseases.

Research is multidisciplinary and include a large epidemiological component complemented by social sciences and combined with strong laboratory and genomics support. Vaccines & Immunity studies the ontogeny of immunity as a baseline to inform the design of vaccines and maximise their impact. It hosts a portfolio of Phase 1-4 clinical trials of existing and novel vaccines and employs cutting-edge system biology methods to understand host responses to infection and vaccination. The Theme is also working on tuberculosis by examining host/pathogen interactions in adults and children. Nutrition & Planetary Health aims to understand the pathophysiology of diet-disease interactions in order to accelerate the development of more effective next-generation community and clinical interventions, and to build a major new program in planetary health. Two Cross-Cutting Programs, i.e., Maternal & Neonatal Health and West Africa, involve all Themes, often in synergy, and underpin the Unit's commitment to carry out research to decrease the current high burden of maternal and neonatal mortality in sub-Saharan Africa and the Unit's vocation as a Regional Centre of Excellence for Research and Training.

The Unit, receives an MRC core investment grant every 5 years, following the review of past activities and future plans. In addition, all research activities are supported by external grants from a variety of sources. The Unit has a turnover of in excess of £22m per annum and employs about 1400 staff.

The main campus is in Fajara on the coast and comprises laboratories, a hospital, offices, workshops etc. There are field stations upcountry in Basse, Keneba and Walikunda, each in a different ecological setting, providing varied research opportunities.

Founded in 1899, LSHTM is a globally renowned public health institution, whose mission is to improve health and health equity worldwide, through cutting edge research and postgraduate education. With over 3,000 staff conducting research in over 130 countries around the world, including at the MRC Units in The Gambia and Uganda, LSHTM is known for diverse and multidisciplinary research.

The Centre on Climate Change and Planetary Health was established to respond to the challenge of environmental changes that threaten human health. The Centre has three areas of focus: research to improve understanding on planetary health; fostering connections globally to bring about change; and co-creating imaginative, scalable solutions.

The MRC Unit The Gambia at LSHTM is seeking to recruit a research assistant with a proven track record of supporting and/or conducting research in the field of environmental change and health.

About the role

The work of the Research Assistant will be to support a project investigating the health impacts of climate change in Sub-Saharan Africa, with an initial focus on updating a national level climate risk and vulnerability assessment. The role requires experience or expertise in environmental epidemiology, literature review and evidence synthesis, or another related discipline suited to investigating linkages between a changing environment, socio-economic risk factors and human health. Initial focus areas will include heat, diarrheal disease and malaria in the country of Togo. The position is funded by GIZ.

The successful applicant will be involved in the overall development, methodological design,

management and execution of the project. The applicant will take a leading role on updating and extending a climate change risk and vulnerability assessment report and a supporting role in compilation and analysis of up-to-date data (climate and other environmental factors, socio-economic risk factors, health outcome data) for use in quantitative modelling of past and future climate change impacts on select human health outcomes in Sub-Saharan Africa.

The post will support and be supported by a Research Fellow and the wider project team, as well as our in-country partners. The successful candidate will have opportunity to contribute to other related projects within the Planetary Health Group / Centre on Climate Change and Planetary Health at MRCG / London. The Research Fellow may be expected to contribute to the submission of funding applications to continue this and related work on the health impacts of climate change in Sub-Saharan Africa. The post requires an independent researcher with the capacity to work to agreed deadlines under dynamic and challenging circumstances. The work related to the project will be compiled into interim- and final reports and final outcomes will be prepared for wider dissemination by scientific publications. Excellent oral and written communication skills and a track record in scientific publishing commensurate with career stage is a must. Experience of working in Sub-Saharan Africa would be an advantage. Travel within this region may be required to support data collection and/or delivery of an intensive shortcourse to in-country partners. French language skills would be beneficial.

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 make a contribution to doctoral student supervision, as appropriate to qualifications and experience;
4. To manage small grants or elements of larger grants, ensuring compliance with good practice in relation to the conduct of research, the ethics policy and other relevant LSHTM policies
5. Conduct research on the intersection between environmental change and health.
6. Lead or contribute to study conceptualization and design, project management and coordination, and data management, data analysis, report writing.
7. Conduct or support data collection, cleaning and processing, programming and statistical analyses with quantitative statistical packages (e.g., R)
8. Support ethical approval process from national ethics committees for research projects.
9. Mobilize and inform stakeholders about the research project.
10. Prepare periodic activities and project reports.
11. Participate in the dissemination of research findings and dialogue on action items with appropriate audiences.
12. Prepare policy briefs and fact sheets based on project results.
13. Travel within the country and abroad based on work demands.

Education

1. To participate in some aspects of LSHTM's Education Programme or educational outreach activities;
2. To contribute to the improvement of the quality of LSHTM's education, by participating in the development of new and updated learning and teaching materials or approaches.

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 participate to the activities of the MRCG Planetary Health group

External Contribution

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

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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;

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;
6. Attend relevant online/hybrid regional meetings and seminars as required.

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 health sciences, biology or another relevant topic.
2. Relevant experience in climate change and health research.
3. Relevant analytical skills in critical evidence appraisal.
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.
7. Experience working in a multidisciplinary team.

Desirable Criteria:

1. Some experience of contributing to research grant applications.
2. Some experience of teaching and assessment
3. Experience with work on the health impacts of climate change.
4. Disposition to work in multicultural and multidisciplinary teams.
5. Some experience in communication and dissemination of policy-relevant results.
6. French language proficiency (oral and written).

Salary and Conditions of Appointment

The post is fixed term until 31 March 2027 and full-time 35 hours per week, 1 FTE. The post is funded MRC The Gambia and is available immediately. The salary will be on the Academic scale, Grade 5 scale in the range £39,182 - £44,847 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

This post is based overseas and 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 send a notarised copy of their passport prior to their start date.

Applicants will be required to have the right to work in the country in which the post is based (or be eligible to apply for a suitable work visa).

Date amended: February 2025