



The
University
Of
Sheffield.

A
Remarkable
Place
To Work.

Research Associate – Civil War Paths (Sub- Saharan Africa)

Faculty of Social Sciences,
Department of Politics and
International Relations

THE SUNDAY TIMES
100
BEST NOT-FOR-PROFIT
ORGANISATIONS
TO WORK FOR
2018

Overview

Join a vibrant team of researchers on a major research project “Understanding Civil War from Pre- to Post-War Stages: A Comparative Approach” funded by a £1.2m UK Research and Innovation Future Leaders Fellowship awarded to Dr Anastasia Shesterinina, Lecturer in Politics and International Politics. The research project, which started in January 2021, aims to investigate civil war across the pre-war, war and post-war stages of conflict through a fieldwork-intensive qualitative comparison of a range of cases around the world to understand different paths that civil wars follow and inform policy on this dominant form of armed conflict. The research team will include Dr Shesterinina, three Research Associates and a PhD student. The new Centre for the Comparative Study of Civil War has been established at the Department of Politics and International Relations to host and support the project. To find out more visit <https://www.civilwarpaths.org/>.

This post offers an exceptional opportunity to be an integral part of a long-term research project on a pressing global problem while advancing their own programme of research; benefit from mentorship by Dr Shesterinina and a mentor in the Department of Politics and International Relations outside the project and a suite of methodological training and other career development opportunities; build a strong academic and nonacademic network in the course of the project for sustained research and impact in the field; and actively engage in the intellectual life of a community of scholars committed to excellence in research and impact at the Department of Politics and International Relations, the Faculty of Social Sciences and the wider University, including the institutes that have established collaborations with the project—the Sheffield Institute for International Development (SIID), the Sheffield Political Economy Research Institute (SPERI) and the Sheffield Methods Institute (SMI).

Person Specification

You should provide evidence in your application that you meet the following criteria. In your application please focus on addressing criteria 1-10. We will ask you to provide examples of how you meet the remaining criteria at later stages of the selection process. We will use a range of selection methods to measure your abilities in these areas including reviewing your online application, inviting shortlisted candidates to interview, seeking references and other forms of assessment action relevant to the post.

We are keen to attract a diverse applicant pool, and we are aware that some under-represented groups can be less confident about applying for jobs unless they are sure they comfortably meet all the criteria. With this in mind, we encourage all potential candidates to reflect on their strengths and experience in the broadest sense, including transferable skills where appropriate, when considering their suitability for the position. In all cases, we will select the best candidate for the role.

If you have any questions about your suitability for this role, please get in touch with Dr Shesterinina (a.shesterinina@sheffield.ac.uk) to have an informal conversation before making an application.

Criteria		Essential	Desirable
1.	Have completed or be near to completing a PhD in Politics, Development Studies, Geography, History, Journalism or another relevant field, preferably on a topic related to civil war.	X	
2.	Expertise on case(s) of civil war in Sub-Saharan Africa.	X	
3.	Evidence of training in qualitative research methods.	X	
4.	Experience of qualitative data collection and analysis on case(s) of	X	

	civil war in Sub-Saharan Africa.*		
5.	Ability to search, collect, organise, analyse and critique complex information in large amounts of resources, eg academic sources, grey literature and empirical data.	X	
6.	Awareness of fieldwork conditions in relevant field site(s) and ability to make informed decisions about field access, permits, logistics and risk assessment.	X	
7.	Relevant language skills, where applicable, for qualitative research in Sub-Saharan Africa.	X	
8.	Evidence of high-quality research and writing in the area of civil war, conflict, peace or security studies and ability to collaborate, lead on and contribute to writing research outputs, eg journal articles, book chapters and policy reports.	X	
9.	Effective communication skills, both written and verbal, academic writing skills and experience of delivering presentations, social media skills.	X	
10.	Ability to work accurately to tight deadlines and good organisational skills.	X	
11.	Understanding of and ability to contribute to administrative duties.	X	
12.	Ability to contribute to the planning and organisation of the research programme and project events, eg workshops, seminars, conferences.	X	
13.	Ability to work independently and closely with a team.	X	
14.	Ability to assess resource requirements and use resources effectively.	X	
15.	Experience of in-depth interviewing.		X
16.	Experience of using quantitative research methods.		X
17.	Experience of developing and maintaining a network of contacts throughout own work area.		X
18.	Ability to motivate others.		X
19.	Ability to develop creative approaches to problem solving.		X
20.	Experience of adapting own skills to new circumstances.		X

*Consideration will be given to candidates who were unable to conduct fieldwork as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic and who conducted desk-based qualitative data collection and analysis. Please include details of how Covid-19 impacted your research in your application if this applies.

About the Department

The Department of Politics and International Relations is one of the UK's most successful centres for teaching and research. Our reputation for world-leading research has been confirmed in successive exercises of the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) and Research Excellence Framework (REF). In RAE 2008 the Department was ranked joint first amongst all Politics departments in the UK, and in REF 2014 we cemented this position within our ranking in the top three departments in the UK as measured by grade point average of our research and the proportion of our research judged to be world leading and internationally excellent.

We also pride ourselves on our outstanding reputation for teaching, with excellent satisfaction ratings in the National Student Survey. The Department is an excellent place for early career scholars to launch their academic careers; it provides a vibrant and collegial intellectual environment, opportunities for mentorship and collaboration, and unique support for policy and public

engagement. The Department values diversity in both intellectual and people terms, and is committed to recognizing the important intellectual contributions that all our scholars make.

Undergraduate students are recruited to two single and five joint honours programmes. We have a strong Graduate School, with a suite of Masters programmes and a thriving community of research students. It is the Department's strategy to maintain this high performance, as well as developing a clearly 'outward-looking' orientation which emphasises the public value of scholarship and the importance of wider engagement and research impact. Our students and staff come from a diverse background. Our operations are underpinned by a team of professional services staff within the Department.

The Department has broad coverage of the discipline, with well-established strengths in the sub-fields of political economy, governance and public policy, political theory, political analysis, international relations, environmental politics, and development.

The Department is strongly committed to dialogue between the sub-disciplines and to pluralism in theory and method. The Department is a major stakeholder in two University research centres, the Sheffield Political Economy Research Institute (SPERI) and the Sir Bernard Crick Centre for the Public Understanding of Politics. Inter-disciplinary links are encouraged within the Faculty of Social Sciences, such as through SPERI and the Sheffield Institute for International Development (SIID), and at the interface with disciplines such as Geography, Sociology or Economics, while links beyond the Faculty are maintained in such areas as food justice, health and environmental issues.

Our website offers more information about all aspects of the Department's activity. Please see <http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/politics> for more details.

Job Description

The post is to conduct cutting-edge research and assist in research activities with the potential to shape new understandings of the paths that civil wars follow from pre- to post-war stages of conflict as part of a prestigious UK Research and Innovation Future Leaders Fellowship funded research project.

You will work primarily with Dr Shesterinina, as well as with other project team members on key project tasks, including: working as part of the research team to advance the theoretical framework of the project; undertaking advanced methodological training to develop a coordinated approach to fieldwork; preparing and conducting fieldwork in relevant field site(s), ideally those in which you have expertise and experience; collecting and analysing relevant academic sources, grey literature and empirical data, including in-depth interviews with key informants and other primary and secondary data; collaborating on transcribing, coding, analysing and interpreting this data to produce high-quality research outputs, including single- and co-authored journal articles, book chapters and policy reports; disseminating the outputs via national and international conference presentations, publication in top interdisciplinary journals and presses and updates on social media and project website; and actively contributing to the administration of the project, including planning and organisation of project events.

Due to the multi-region nature of the project, we are seeking candidates with regional expertise and fluency in language(s) necessary for qualitative research in Sub-Saharan Africa.

The post is full time (35 hours per week) and fixed-term, tenable for three years from January 2022.

Main Duties and Responsibilities

- Collect and analyse relevant academic sources, grey literature and empirical data to advance the theoretical framework of the project.
- Undertake relevant methodological training and development opportunities.
- Organise fieldwork and travel overseas to conduct in-depth interviews with key informants, observation and other primary and secondary data collection in relevant field site(s).
- Transcribe, code, analyse and interpret data generated by the project.
- Undertake other forms of data collection and analysis as required by the needs of the project.
- Write documents to contribute to and support the work of the project team.
- Prepare high-quality journals articles, book chapters and policy reports and presentations of the project or parts thereof.
- Present project outputs, such as journals articles, book chapters and policy reports at in-house and national/international workshops, seminars and conferences to disseminate project findings.
- Contribute to project dissemination to a wide range of academic and nonacademic audiences through proactive use of social media and project website updates.
- Organise and participate in project-related events, such as workshops, seminars and conferences.
- Carry out administrative duties as requested.
- Address problems that may affect the achievement of research objectives and deadlines of the project.
- Contribute to the intellectual life of the Department of Politics and International Relations, the Faculty of Social Sciences and the wider University community, including SIID, SPERI and SMI, through attendance, participation and presentation at research events, such as the Processes of Conflict and Peace Series at the Centre for the Comparative Study of Civil War.
- As a member of staff you will be encouraged to make ethical decisions in your role, embedding the University sustainability strategy into your working activities wherever possible.
- Any other duties, commensurate with the grade of the post.

Reward Package

Terms and conditions of employment: Will be those for Grade 7.1-7.3 staff.

Salary for this grade: £32,344 - £34,304 per annum. Potential to progress to £37,467 per annum through sustained exceptional contribution.

This post is fixed-term for 36 months with a start date of January 2022 and an end date of December 2024.

This post is full-time: 35 hours per week.

This role has been identified as a full-time post, but we are committed to exploring flexible working opportunities with our staff which benefit both the individual and the University (see www.sheffield.ac.uk/hr/guidance/flexible/arrangements). Therefore, we would consider flexible delivery of the role subject to meeting the business needs of the post. If you wish to explore flexible working opportunities in relation to this post, we encourage you to call or email the departmental contact listed below.

Application Requirements

Applicants are required to complete the online application form. **When completing the online application form, instead of completing the section headed 'Application Statement', we ask applicants to attach the following documents:**

1. A full and up to date CV
2. A Proposal, maximum 1 side of A4, outlining up to two cases of civil war that you would ideally focus on as part of the project and your proposed approach to understanding the case(s) from pre- to post-war stages of conflict.

Please do not submit anything in addition to your CV and Proposal at the application stage. If invited for an interview you may be asked for writing samples.

We are committed to ensuring that our recruitment process reflects our commitment to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion. For this reason, we ask applicants who have taken career breaks, whether for parental leave, other forms of personal leave, or to take up secondments or placements, please clearly state the dates of any career breaks on your CV. This enables us to ensure that those who have taken career breaks are not disadvantaged, and their application can be assessed with a clear view of the numbers of years an applicant has been active in academia.

Selection – Next Steps

Closing date: For details of the closing date, please view this post on our web pages at <http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/jobs>

Following the closing date, we will contact you by email to let you know whether or not you have been shortlisted to participate in the next stage of the selection process. Please note that due to the large number of applications that we receive, it may take up to two working weeks following the closing date before the recruiting department will be able to contact you.

It is anticipated that interviews and other selection action will be held on 15 October 2021. Full details will be provided to invited candidates.

For more information on our application and recruitment processes, visit <http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/jobs/info>

Informal enquiries

For informal enquiries about this job and the recruiting department, contact Dr Anastasia Shesterinina on a.shesterinina@sheffield.ac.uk

For administration queries and details on the application process, contact the Department Operations Manager Jackie Mather on j.a.mather@sheffield.ac.uk

For all online application system queries and support, visit <http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/jobs/applying>

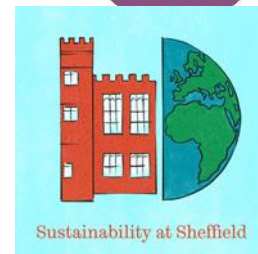
If you join the University you will have access to a Total Reward Package that includes a competitive salary, a generous Pension Scheme and annual leave entitlement, as well as access to a range of learning and development courses to support your personal and professional development. You will have access to your own personalised portal where you can also access a comprehensive selection

of benefits and offers to suit your changing lifestyle needs, for example financial wellbeing, travel options, shopping and cinema discounts.

To find out more visit www.sheffield.ac.uk/hr/thedeal



The University is committed to tackling the global climate emergency. Our sustainability strategy forms an integral part of all we do. We strive to embed this in all areas of university life, from our students' education, the globally impacting international research we contribute, to campus life.



We aim to empower staff to work sustainably by giving them the knowledge to make ethical decisions at work and home. Staff have the opportunity to be involved in impactful sustainability projects through the nationally recognised Green Impact scheme.

Staff have access to excellent green benefits including the cycle to work scheme with discounts and free secure bike storage, as well as many greener choices across campus.

If you have an interest in this area, the university will strive to passionately support you in these commitments. Check out www.sheffield.ac.uk/sustainability for more information.

The University of Sheffield recognises the importance of creating a positive environment, whereby all staff feel able to talk openly and with trust about wellbeing and mental health.

Our Staff Wellbeing offer, encourages and supports staff to maintain their own positive health and wellbeing through a range of accessible, inclusive and supportive services and activities.

To find out more visit www.sheffield.ac.uk/hr/wellbeing

Our leadership development has been designed to ensure that our leaders have the knowledge, skills and behaviours needed by the University.

To find out more visit www.sheffield.ac.uk/hr/sld/lmdevelopment

Inclusion at Sheffield is everyone's responsibility. Our vision is to build a University community that actively attracts, engages and develops talented individuals from many different backgrounds.



We are proud of our award-winning equality, diversity and inclusion action, and 90% of staff tell us they are treated with fairness and respect (staff survey 2018). We continue working to create a fully inclusive environment where everyone can flourish.

To find out more visit www.sheffield.ac.uk/inclusion

We are the only university to feature in the Sunday Times 100 Best Not-for-Profit organisations to work for 2018. In our staff survey (2018) 92% of staff said they were proud to work for the University and 83% of our staff would recommend the University as an excellent place to work. To find out more

about what it's like to work here visit remarkable.group.shef.ac.uk

Creating a remarkable place to work

We build teams of people from different heritages and lifestyles from across the world, whose talent and contributions complement each other to greatest effect. We believe diversity in all its forms delivers greater impact through research, teaching and student experience.

We are consistently ranked in the top 100 of the world's universities, but there's so much more to us than that. By joining the University, you will be joining award-winning teams and departments who are all working together to make the University of Sheffield a remarkable place to work.

Learn more [here](#).