UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER

Job Summary

Job Title:	Project Coordinator (PATHS)
Grade:	6
Salary:	£35,302 per annum, pro-rata if part-time
Department:	School of Criminology, Sociology and Social Policy
Hours/Contract:	Part-time (0.5 FTE, 18.75 hours per week) Fixed term from 04 January 2027 to 30 September 2031
Reference	14153

Role purpose

This role will coordinate the day-to-day operation of PATHS (Psychedelics as Therapeutics: Harm Reduction and Safety), a £2.5m, five-year Wellcome Discovery Award led by Professor Jason Hughes (PI). PATHS is a UK-focused programme investigating how people use psychedelics therapeutically outside formal medical and legal settings, what harms and benefits they encounter, and how community-led harm reduction might be strengthened and translated into policy and practice. The programme runs across the University of Leicester and the University of Exeter and is co-produced with three community partners: ClusterBusters (a patient advocacy organisation for people with cluster headaches), PsyCare UK (a festival welfare and harm reduction charity) and OEV Partners (working with police and first responders).

The Project Coordinator will work closely with Professor Hughes and Co-Investigators Dr Michael Dunning (Leicester), Professor Celia Morgan and Professor Hannah Farrimond (Exeter), and with the programme's research associates, community partners and advisory bodies. The Coordinator will effectively act as the operational hub of the programme: monitoring its finances, contracts, meetings, participant logistics, events and communications and ensuring the smooth running of the project across five interlinked work packages.

The post holder will be responsible for monitoring the programme budget and processing expenditure, administering payments to community partners and research participants, coordinating the programme's governance meetings, and organising its workshops, training and knowledge mobilisation events. The research involves people who use psychedelics and other controlled substances, some from marginalised or hard-to-reach communities, so the post requires a well-organised, self-motivated individual who can handle sensitive information with complete discretion and engage with participants and partners in a respectful, non-judgemental way.

The post holder may also draft routine documents and reports for the research team, maintain content on the programme website and social media, and assist in preparing materials for stakeholders, partners and public audiences.

Resources Managed

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Day-to-day monitoring of the PATHS budget (Leicester), including partner consultancy payments, participant compensation, events, travel and supplier costs, reporting to the PI.

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Liaison with staff at Leicester and Exeter, community partners and external suppliers to support the effective working of an interdisciplinary, multi-site and co-produced research programme.

Administrative records relating to research participants (e.g. bookings, consent tracking, compensation), managed securely and in line with the programme's ethics approvals and data management plan.

Main Duties and Responsibilities

Programme coordination and governance

- Act as the main point of operational coordination for PATHS across Leicester and Exeter, keeping the PI and team informed of progress against programme milestones and flagging risks or delays early, with proposed solutions
- Organise and service the programme's governance structure: weekly Study Management Team meetings, the quarterly Participant Advisory Group, the biannual Data Safety and Monitoring Board and Independent Advisory Board, and annual team retreats – including scheduling, agendas, papers, minutes and action tracking
- Maintain the programme timeline, risk register and records of decisions, and coordinate the PI's calendar for PATHS business
- Support the PI in preparing annual and final reports to Wellcome, and act as a point of contact for routine queries about Wellcome terms and conditions, liaising with the Research and Enterprise Division (RED) as needed
- Coordinate responses to internal and external requests for information about the programme
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Finance and contracts

- Monitor income and expenditure against the PATHS budget using the University's finance systems, liaising with the post-Award team, and producing regular budget reports and forecasts for the PI and highlighting under- or overspend
- Process purchasing, invoices and expenses in line with University financial regulations and procurement rules, and order materials and equipment
- Administer consultancy payments to community partners (ClusterBusters, PsyCare UK, OEV Partners) under their Collaborative Research Agreements, and track payments to suppliers such as the documentary production company and website developers
- Liaise with colleagues at the University of Exeter on the Exeter share of the award, including invoicing and financial reconciliation
- Work with RED, Finance and Procurement on contracts, agreements and amendments

Participant recruitment and research support

- Support the research team with participant recruitment logistics across the work packages (including around 150 longitudinal interviews, expert and stakeholder interviews, and online focus groups): scheduling, booking, reminders and record-keeping

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- Administer participant compensation and incentives (vouchers, travel and subsistence) accurately and confidentially, keeping auditable records that do not compromise participant anonymity
- Support the secure handling and storage of research administrative records in line with ethics approvals, UK GDPR and the programme's data management plan
- Assist with the administration of ethics applications and amendments at Leicester and Exeter, and keep track of approvals, consent documentation and version control
- Help organise team training (e.g. trauma-informed research methods, mandatory and specialist training) and maintain records of training and CPD uptake

Events, workshops and knowledge mobilisation

- Plan and coordinate programme events, including stakeholder engagement events, cross-community exchange and co-creation workshops, frontline professional training workshops, policy engagement events and the end-of-project symposium
- Arrange venues, catering, travel and accommodation for the team, partners, participants and advisory board members, paying particular attention to accessibility and to the needs of lay and community participants
- Support the organisation of hybrid and online events and meetings

Communications

- Maintain content on the PATHS website and the ETHOS Network digital hub, and support the programme's social media and newsletters, working with the team and external designers and developers
- Act as a first point of contact for general enquiries to the programme, directing them appropriately
- Help prepare accessible materials for partners, participants and public audiences

Other duties

- Assist with follow-on funding applications arising from PATHS, including costings via Worktribe
- Undertake training and keep up to date with University policies and procedures relevant to the role, including Health and Safety, Data Protection, Financial Regulations and Research Integrity
- Contribute to a positive and inclusive research culture, and comply with University policies on confidentiality, conflict of interest, data protection and equality
- Plan and organise own workload according to the priorities of the programme, and undertake other duties commensurate with the grade as required

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Internal and External Relationships

The post holder will be line managed by Professor Jason Hughes (PI), and will work closely with Co-Investigators Dr Michael Dunning (Leicester), Professor Celia Morgan and Professor Hannah Farrimond (University of Exeter), plus key Research Associates Dr Joshua Stuart Bennett (Leicester) and Dr Eirini Ketzitzidou (Exeter).

Internally: The PATHS research associates and research assistants at Leicester and Exeter; School and College professional services; and central services including RED, Finance, Procurement, HR, IT and the Research Ethics team.

Externally: Community partners ClusterBusters, PsyCare UK and OEV Partners; members of the Participant Advisory Group, Data Safety and Monitoring Board and Independent Advisory Board; programme collaborators; research participants; professional services colleagues at the University of Exeter; Wellcome; and external suppliers (e.g. documentary, design, web and event providers).

Effective communication with the line manager regarding progress on the programme as required.

Planning and Organising

Plans and organises own work over weekly, monthly and annual cycles to meet the programme's milestones, reporting deadlines and governance calendar, on a part-time basis.

Anticipates the administrative needs of five concurrent work packages across two universities, adjusts plans as research priorities change, and resolves most operational problems independently, referring matters of judgement or risk to the PI.

Qualifications, Knowledge and Experience

Essential

- *Educated to degree level, or equivalent relevant experience in research, project or programme administration
- *Commitment to the research objectives of the grant as a demonstrable part of your own career development
- *Experience of coordinating a multi-partner research project or programme, including organising meetings, preparing agendas and minutes, and tracking actions and milestones
- *Experience of monitoring budgets, processing payments and producing clear financial reports for a budget holder
- *Experience of working with external partners such as community, voluntary or third-sector organisations
- *Experience of handling sensitive and confidential information in line with data protection requirements
- *Understanding of, and a non-judgemental approach to, research with people who use psychedelics or other controlled substances, and of the principles of harm reduction

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- Experience of organising events or workshops, including travel, venue and accessibility arrangements

Desirable

- Experience of administering externally funded research grants (e.g. Wellcome, UKRI, NIHR), including funder reporting
- Experience of supporting participatory, co-produced or community-engaged research, including administering participant payments
- Knowledge of drug policy, harm reduction, psychedelic research, or community settings such as festival welfare or patient advocacy
- Experience of supporting research ethics and governance processes
- Experience of working across more than one institution
- Working knowledge of higher education finance and research systems (e.g. Worktribe)

Skills, Abilities and Competencies

Essential

- *Excellent organisational skills, with the ability to manage competing priorities and meet deadlines across several strands of work
- *Excellent written and oral communication skills, with the ability to communicate clearly and tactfully with academics, community partners, research participants and external suppliers
- *Excellent IT skills, including Microsoft Office (particularly Excel), Teams, SharePoint/OneDrive and online booking or survey tools
- *Accuracy and attention to detail, particularly in financial and participant records
- *Ability to handle confidential and sensitive information, including disclosures relating to illegal activity, with discretion and professionalism
- Ability to use initiative and work independently on a part-time basis, while recognising when to escalate
- Proven ability to work effectively as part of a team and to build positive working relationships with people at all levels
- Commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion, and to accessible ways of working with participants and partners from diverse backgrounds
- Willingness to travel occasionally (e.g. to Exeter and to programme events), and to work occasional evenings or weekends around events

Desirable

- Experience of maintaining website content and managing social media
- Experience of producing financial forecasts and management information using spreadsheets

- Experience of organising research conferences or public engagement events

Criteria to be used in shortlisting candidates for interview

Reason for Fixed Term Contract

The reason for the fixed term contract is stated in section 1.9 in the summary of contractual terms in your contract of employment.

Criminal Declaration

If you become an employee, you must inform your manager immediately, in writing, if you are the subject of any current or future police investigations/legal proceedings, which could result in a criminal offence, conviction, caution, bind-over or charges, or warnings.

Supporting University Activities

As a University of Leicester citizen, you are encouraged to support key university activities such as clearing, graduation ceremonies, student registration and recruitment open days. We encourage all staff as citizens to work flexibly across the University if required. If supporting these activities is likely to affect your workload, please speak to your line manager in the first instance

University Values

Inclusive - We are diverse in our makeup and united in ambition. Our diversity is our strength and makes our community stronger.

Inspiring - We are passionate about inspiring individuals to succeed and realise their ambitions. We challenge our community to think differently, to get involved, and to constantly embrace new ideas.

Impactful - As Citizens of Change we will generate new ideas which deliver impact and empower our community

Freedom of Speech

The University is committed to upholding freedom of speech and academic freedom within the law throughout our recruitment processes. We ensure that all candidates are considered based on merit and suitability for the role, without regard to their lawful viewpoints or the expression of challenging or controversial ideas. Our recruitment policies and practices are designed to protect applicants from discrimination or adverse treatment on the basis of their opinions, and to foster an environment where open debate and diverse perspectives are valued as essential to our academic mission.

Equity and Diversity

We believe that equity, diversity and inclusion is integral to a successful modern workplace. By developing and implementing policies and systems that challenge stereotypes across all aspects of our work, we have a culture that recognises and values the diverse contributions of our staff which benefits everyone. Our strong values of inclusivity and equality support our efforts to attract a diverse range of

high quality staff and students, and identify our University as a progressive and innovative workplace that mainstreams equality, diversity and inclusion.