

The section Cognitive Psychology of the institute Psychology of the Faculty Social and Behavioural Sciences is looking for a

### **Postdoc in Cognitive Psychology (1.0 FTE)**

**Vacancy number 5761**

#### **Project description**

Research Project "The perception of emotions in autism and social anxiety disorder"

Emotion processing deficits have been reported in different disorders and are reflected in disturbed emotion regulation, attentional biases, gaze avoidance, disrupted mimicry and emotion recognition deficits. However, the posed, full-blown facial expressions commonly used in emotion research do not always reflect true feelings, which is particularly confusing for patients. People express emotions through emotional signals and cues. Signals are subject to intentional control: an example is smiling, communicating affiliation, tenderness and affection, or, depending on the context, subordination. Emotional cues lack the same degree of intentional control or awareness. For instance, pupil dilation, tears and blushing are genuine and hard to enact or fake. Although they are principally beneficial to the expressor, they do provide meaningful information to observers and reflect significant states such as arousal, attention, interest and emotion. The question of how patients with SAD and ASD perceive emotional cues, visible in the face or from body language, has not been investigated yet. Due to the high prevalence of such cues in daily life interactions, it is of crucial importance to investigate whether their known deficits in perceiving emotional signals translate to the more subtle emotional cues that are beyond the control of the expressor.

This project is supported by an NWO VIDI grant to Mariska Kret. The project will run in parallel with ongoing projects in the CoPAN lab, directed by Dr Mariska Kret ([www.mariskakret.com](http://www.mariskakret.com)). The research group participates in the Leiden Institute for Brain and Cognition (LIBC), an interfaculty center for interdisciplinary research on brain and cognition ([www.libc-leiden.nl](http://www.libc-leiden.nl)). Patients will at least partly be tested in Germany so the candidate is expected to travel or even temporarily move to Germany for a couple of months per year.

#### **Key Responsibilities**

- Literature study, hypothesis-driven development and execution of experimental studies in these patients;
- Report results at conferences and in at least six international peer-reviewed journals;
- Supervise BSc and MSc thesis projects;
- Assist in the ongoing projects of PhD candidates;
- Participate in the Leiden Institute for Brain and Cognition (LIBC).

#### **Selection criteria**

- PhD in experimental, clinical or neuro psychology;
- Knowledge of multilevel statistics;
- Programming experience (e.g., Matlab, R, E-prime);
- Knowledge of psychophysiological methods (e.g., heartrate, facial temperature, eye-tracking and pupillometry) and/or fMRI;
- Excellent research and writing skills;
- Excellent command of English and preferably basic knowledge of German.

#### **Our Faculty/institute**

The Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences comprises four institutes: Education and Child Studies, Political Science, Psychology and Cultural Anthropology & Development Sociology. The Faculty also includes the Centre for Science and Technology Studies. The Faculty is home to 5,000 students and 600 members of staff. Our teaching and research programmes cover diverse topics varying from adoption to political behaviour. For more information, see <http://www.universiteitleiden.nl/en/social-behavioural-sciences>.

The Institute of Psychology comprises six units for teaching and research: Health, Medical and Neuropsychology, Clinical Psychology, Cognitive Psychology, Developmental and Educational Psychology, Social and Organizational Psychology, and Methodology and Statistics. The Institute of Psychology offers a stimulating environment that promotes collaboration within and between units. For more information, see <https://www.universiteitleiden.nl/en/social-behavioural-sciences/psychology>.

### **Terms and conditions**

We offer a fixed-term post for three years. Salary range from €2,640 to €4,166 gross per month (pay scale 10, in accordance with the Collective Labour Agreement for Dutch Universities). A part-time position is possible, too. Preferred starting date is 1 December 2018. Earlier is not possible, later is discussable.

Leiden University offers an attractive benefits package with additional holiday (8%) and end-of-year bonuses(8.3 %), training and career development and sabbatical leave. Our individual choices model gives you some freedom to assemble your own set of terms and conditions. For international spouses we have set up a dual career programme. Candidates from outside the Netherlands may be eligible for a substantial tax break. More at <https://www.universiteitleiden.nl/en/working-at/job-application-procedure-and-employment-conditions>.

### **Diversity**

Leiden University is strongly committed to diversity within its community and especially welcomes applications from members of underrepresented groups.

### **Information**

Enquiries can be made to Dr Mariska Kret, email [m.e.kret@fsw.leidenuniv.nl](mailto:m.e.kret@fsw.leidenuniv.nl).

### **Applications**

Please submit online your application **no later than 15 October 2018** via the blue button of [our application system](#). Applicants should submit a letter of interest accompanied by a CV.

*Enquiries from agencies are not appreciated.*