

## Research Associate for Community Energy Systems Full time and fixed term for 12 months from date of commencement

Job Ref: REQ220944

As part of the University's ongoing commitment to redeployment, please note that this vacancy may be withdrawn at any stage of the recruitment process if a suitable redeployee is identified.

### Project Description

The overall focus for this role will be on community energy systems (CES) and resilience in the Global South. The Research Associate will work across two projects (60/40 time split) – the Community Energy and Sustainable Energy Transitions in Ethiopia, Malawi and Mozambique (CESET) project and Modern Energy Cooking Services (MECS) programme.

Project 1 (60%) CESET is a three-year research project exploring how communities can support just energy transitions in East Africa funded by the Global Challenges Research Fund. The project focuses on diversity: diversity of models of community energy and diversity of communities that engage in renewable energy projects. We believe that the strength of community energy lies in such diversity and adaptability. Diversity and adaptability are precisely what is needed to support the deployment of off grid energy technologies (solar, wind, hydro, biogas) in a variety of social and geographical contexts. The project focuses on Ethiopia, Malawi and Mozambique, three countries which face enormous energy challenges with very diverse contexts.

The Research Associate will work on Work Package 3 of CESET, which focuses on the landscape of CES in Ethiopia, Malawi and Mozambique. The work package will deliver a programme of multi-scalar research to evaluate the different ways in which CES projects contribute to building resilience. The work will help unpack the concepts of fit, community, and transition in relation to questions of resilience in the context of off-grid development. Project partners for Work Package 3 include Mzuzu University (Malawi), University Eduardo Mondlane (Mozambique), Mekelle University (Ethiopia) and University of Oxford (UK). Loughborough University's contribution will focus on comparisons between different contexts, identifying best practices for community energy and resilience aspects.

Project 2 (40%) MECS is a 5-year programme funded by UKAid through the Foreign and Commonwealth Department Office, led by Loughborough University. We already know that increasing access through renewable energy generation is becoming more affordable and opening new windows of opportunity. New business models and smart monitoring are improving the reliability of LPG distribution, appliances can be made more energy efficient but still cook favourite foods so they taste right, and cooking with electricity is becoming increasingly affordable with issues of reliability and sustainability being overcome. The Research Associate will work in collaboration with other MECS researchers to build on these opportunities and the new knowledge emerging from community energy and sustainable energy transitions to break out of business-as-usual approaches and rapidly accelerate the transition from biomass to clean cooking on a global scale.

The post-holder will work in close collaboration with the CESET and MECS Co-I Dr Long Seng To.

For more information on the projects see: <https://cesetproject.com/> and <https://mecs.org.uk/>

### Job Description

**Job Grade:** Specialist and Supporting Academic Grade 6

## **Job Duties**

### **CESET specific**

- Deliver a programme of multi-scalar research to fulfil the aims of work Package 3 by working with project partners and focusing on the notion of resilience. The approach will be as follows:
  1. Developing a literature review on how community energy systems contribute to building community's resilience and how they are affected by or help coping with risks (e.g. climate change related risk)
  2. Comparative analysis of data collected by in-country project partners focusing on identifying success factors and resilience aspects. The data collected includes an inventory of CESs in each country and case studies of selected CESs developed through field visits, interviews and surveys
  3. Fieldwork in Malawi, Mozambique and/or Ethiopia to further develop and complement the selected case studies through semi-structured interviews and other relevant research methodologies
  4. Organise and document a capacity development meeting with project partners to discuss a definition of what works for CESs in practice

The outputs will include:

1. At least one journal publication exploring resilience aspects of community energy, collective authored with members of the CESET team
2. An interactive manual on best practices for community energy projects relevant to East Africa

### **MECS specific**

- Provide technical and research mentoring, advice, and assistance to MECS partners in any of the MECS priority countries on activities related to community energy resilience.
- To formulate plans for the scale-up of modern energy cooking services through community energy resilience, in partnership with MECS partners

### **Common duties**

- Provide regular progress updates and feedback to the project team, making recommendations for the next steps.
- Travel to attend meetings and make presentations both within the project partners' working group and to external stakeholders.
- To support the project team by enhancing relationships with existing collaborators and by assisting in the establishment of relationships with new collaborators.
- To write research papers suitable for publication in high-quality academic journals.
- To attend and contribute to conferences.
- To contribute to project promotion and public engagement events.
- Maintain confidentiality at all times and ensure that intellectual property (IPR) agreements are not violated.
- Engage in training programmes in the University (or elsewhere) that are consistent with the needs and aspirations of the project and those of the Department.
- Hold the highest standard of attention to diversity practices and avoid any form of cultural or institutional discrimination

Undertake other duties as may be reasonably requested and that are commensurate with the nature and grade of the post

### **Points to Note**

The purpose of this job description is to indicate the general level of duties and responsibility of the post. The detailed duties may vary from time to time without changing the general character or level of responsibility entailed.

### **Special Conditions**

All staff have a statutory responsibility to take reasonable care of themselves, others and the environment and to prevent harm by their acts or omissions. All staff are therefore required to adhere to the University's Health, Safety and Environmental Policy & Procedures.

All staff should hold a duty and commitment to observing the University's Equality & Diversity policy and procedures at all times. Duties must be carried out in accordance with relevant Equality & Diversity legislation and University policies/procedures.

Successful completion of probation will be dependent on attendance at the University's mandatory courses which include Respecting Diversity and, where appropriate, Recruitment and Selection.

### Organisational Responsibility

Reports to CESET and MECS Co-I: Dr Long Seng To.

### Person Specification

Your application will be reviewed with respect to meeting the essential and desirable criteria listed below.

**Applicants are strongly advised to explicitly state and evidence how they meet each of the essential (and desirable) criteria in their application.**

Stages of assessment are as follows: 1 – Application; 2 – Presentation; 3 – Interview

#### Essential Criteria

Area	Criteria	Stage	
Experience	Background in a relevant field (e.g. renewable energy, community energy, sustainable energy etc)	1,3	
	Experience of conducting qualitative research through interviews and surveys.	1,3	
	Experience of working and/or conducting research in the global south	1,2,3	
	Experience of building relationships with government/industry/civil society/communities and developing strong relationships with partners and stakeholders.	1,2,3	
	Authoring original work for academic journal papers, conference papers or technical reports	1,3	
Skills and abilities	Excellent knowledge of quantitative and qualitative research approaches (data collection and analysis)	1,2,3	
	Understanding of the intersection between social and technical facets of the energy sector	1, 3	
	Excellent written and oral communication skills	1,3	
	Self-motivated with ability to meet deadlines and manage own workload	1,3	
	Excellent interpersonal and organisational skills	1,3	
	Ability to write project reports and make presentations to a range of stakeholders	1,3	
	Ability to work across different locations / environments	1,2,3	
	Ability to develop creative ways for presenting research analysis and findings	1,2,3	
	Training	Demonstrate evidence of having undertaken further training	1,3
	Qualifications	PhD (or near completion) in a relevant field	1,3
Other	Commitment to observing the University's Equal Opportunities policy at all times.	1,3	
Other	Willingness to travel on behalf of the project including overseas	1,3	

## Desirable Criteria

Area	Criteria	Stage
Experience	Experience of working on related topics such as gender, inclusion, disability and inequality	1, 2,3
Skills and abilities	Ability to support others to produce high-quality research outputs	1, 2,3
Skills and abilities	Relevant language skills for working in Mozambique, Malawi and Ethiopia	1,3

## Conditions of Service

The position is full-time, starting as soon as possible and fixed term for 12 months from date of commencement. Salary will be on Specialist and Supporting Academic Grade 6 £31,406 – £40,927 per annum, pay award pending at a starting salary to be confirmed on offer of appointment. The appointment will be subject to the University's Terms and Conditions of Employment for staff grades 6 and above details of which can be found [here](#).

The University is committed to enabling staff to maintain a healthy work-home balance and has a number of family-friendly policies which can be found [here](#).

The University offers a wide range of employee benefits which can be found [here](#).

We also offer an on-campus nursery with subsidised places, subsidised places at local holiday clubs and a childcare voucher scheme (further details are available at: <http://www.lboro.ac.uk/services/hr/a-z/childcare-information---page.html>)

In addition, the University is supportive, wherever possible, of flexible working arrangements. We also strive to create a culture that supports equality and celebrates diversity throughout the campus. The University holds a Bronze Athena SWAN award which recognises the importance of support for women at all stages of their academic career. For further information on Athena SWAN see <http://www.lboro.ac.uk/services/hr/athena-swan/>