



**institute of
development
studies**



**institute of
development
studies**

Research Fellow
Digital & Technology Cluster
Closing date: 24 November 2024



**Delivering world-class
research, learning and
teaching that
transforms the
knowledge, action and
leadership needed for
more equitable and
sustainable
development globally**

Acting Director's Foreword

Peter Taylor

At IDS, we aspire to making a positive difference in the world, helping to tackle the many global challenges that affect us all. As our strategy highlights, we are transforming knowledge and transforming lives. I returned to IDS in 2020 as Director of Research, during what was a quite extraordinary period. Even in a time of major global disruption, I was impressed by the calibre of our research, the quality of our partnerships, the robustness of our financial health, and our collective commitment to sustainable development.



We acknowledge the importance of relationships in everything we do, and how these shape the confidence and trust we have in each other. We aspire to be engaged, active learners, co-constructing knowledge with a diverse range of partners. We also believe strongly that we achieve the most successful outcomes by working collectively and collaboratively; we move forward best when we travel together. I invite you to consider joining us on this journey as a Research Fellow and welcome your interest in IDS.

Comments from our Fellows



“Working at IDS is an exhilarating experience. It’s like being on a rollercoaster: you are working under very high pressure, performing your best for a leading Institute on issues that challenge and motivate you, and give you a real rush of excitement at various turns. At the same time, you feel safe and supported by the most amazing set of likeminded colleagues committed to a diverse and stimulating workplace. It’s a big ask to raise funds and deliver on a vast portfolio of projects, but you get a buzz from managing high quality research and teaching. You also collaborate and learn a lot through multi and inter-disciplinary partnerships with a range of stakeholders, including students, from across the world”.

Deepta Chopra



“Three things that distinguish IDS from other places that I’ve worked are the strong culture of collegiality, the wide acknowledgement of the need for inter- and transdisciplinary approaches to solving global challenges, and the commitment to students as being an integral part of the institute’s life and work”.

Lars Otto Naess



“Some of the things I have enjoyed most about working at IDS are the moving terrain of exciting new ideas that bubble up from different corners of the Institute, the flexibility of the job and the multiple perspectives and disciplines that colleagues bring to IDS. Some of the challenges include the pressure of needing to work on multiple (and sometimes unrelated) pieces of work in order to meet the financial targets. So it is really important to manage this and to get a mentor to talk this through with”.

Rachel Sabates-Wheeler



“IDS has been my intellectual home for the last ten years, first as a PhD student and then as staff. Its thriving academic culture, which is powered by its cutting edge interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research, provides manifold opportunities for professional growth and stimulates ‘out of the box’ thinking. I love the fact that we have the opportunity to bring our field insights into our teaching activities. We are a diverse community at IDS and I feel privileged to work with and learn from colleagues who span different social, geographical and intellectual backgrounds. What binds us together is a common vision to strive towards social justice in whatever we do. As a self-financed organisation, IDS works in an intensely competitive funding environment, which can be challenging”.

Shilpi Srivastava

About IDS

The Institute of Development Studies (IDS) delivers world-class research, learning and teaching that transforms the knowledge, action and leadership needed for more equitable and sustainable development globally.

Through equitable and sustainable partnerships, we work with governments, philanthropic foundations, non-governmental organisations, academics and civil society to transform approaches to progressive social, political and economic change in ways that ultimately make a difference to people's lives.

We have helped foster innovative new partnerships that have generated millions of dollars in additional tax revenues in Africa that can be reinvested in countries' national development. We have worked to provide solutions to environmental problems that build on local people's knowledge and practices. We have highlighted the role of local communities in bringing an end to deadly epidemics like the Ebola virus. We have nurtured hundreds of exceptional development leaders and champions including political leaders, country Ambassadors and government officials, civil society leaders and entrepreneurs.

Our reputation for research and international outlook is second to none and reflected in our performance in the latest QS World University Rankings where we are ranked first in the world for development studies, together with the University of Sussex. We are also ranked as the number one international development think-tank by the 2024 Global Go To Think Tank Index Report.

For more information go to: www.ids.ac.uk

Digital Cluster

Since the Digital Cluster was formally established in 2014 it has grown in reflection of broader trends in development, where we are now looking at development in a digitalised world. In reflection of these trends, the Cluster has moved from simply looking at how digital technologies are used to promote development outcomes, to looking at how digital technologies are reconfiguring social relations and geopolitical realities. These technological disruptions and shocks are identified as a key challenge in the IDS strategy, which aims to achieve 'social justice and sustainable livelihoods in a digital age'.

We are developing new understandings of digital poverty and inequalities and the impacts of these issues on people's livelihoods and access to social protection. We collaborate on these aspects in our partnerships with donors, including the German Development Agency GIZ, World Food Programme (WFP), the UK's Foreign Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO), and Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), helping them to understand the realities of governance in a digital world. In our work with SIDA's Countering Backlash programme and the African Digital Rights Network (ADRN) we are looking at how digital spaces both open and close civic space for political debate. Beyond this work, we have a new focus on the digital economy, with important work on gender and the digital economy, the digitalization of public services, digital citizenship, and digital authoritarianism.

This is an exciting and important time for the Digital Cluster at IDS and we need to expand to meet the potential. As a Cluster we have identified some key areas which we see as having potential for growth and new work – including sector specific issues such as digital in humanitarian work, social protection, health, agriculture, education, trade, and climate; as well as broader issues such as technology in development and adaptive management, artificial intelligence and decentralised technologies, circular economy and the relationship between the environment and digital technologies. Within these topics there is significant potential for collaboration with other Clusters at IDS.

We are also looking to expand our work on digital rights and citizenship with the goal of making IDS a global centre for digital rights research, so we are hoping to receive applications from individuals with a particular focus on digital rights and development.

Job details

Research Fellow

Salary: £54,676 to £65,903 per annum

We normally appoint at the beginning of the scale

Post Type: Full Time

Contract Type: Permanent

Closing Date: 23.59 hours GMT on Sunday 01 December 2024

Reference: 27-2024

Overall purpose of the role

We are seeking to recruit a new Research Fellow in the Digital Cluster. As a Research Fellow, the individual will be responsible for directly producing high quality research, exhibiting an approach of 'engaged excellence', and through this work to also contribute to the teaching and training, advisory and/or influencing activities of the Institute. Current cluster research strengths include gender and digital inclusion, digital citizenship, digital governance, digital authoritarianism, artificial intelligence, digital rights, and governance of state-business relations. Within the broad area of business and development, the team is particularly looking to expand its work related to digital rights, governance and authoritarianism, also particularly exploring artificial intelligence, information security, and cybersecurity in international development and humanitarian practice. However, applications from suitably qualified individuals with an interest in other aspects of the cluster's work are welcomed.

The Research Fellow role is at Band 3 – please refer to the job description/band below that is relevant to your skills and experience and tailor your application form accordingly.

Please note there is one role available.

Research areas of particular interest include:

- Gender and digital inclusion,
- Digital citizenship,
- Digital governance,
- Digital authoritarianism,
- Artificial intelligence,
- Digital rights, and governance of state-business relations.

These are research positions that include responsibilities for teaching, training and policy advisory work.

Principal Accountabilities

Research

1. Contribute to the achievement of Cluster and Institute research priorities and themes.
2. Develop proposals for research projects, which will lead to an increase in knowledge or understanding or the development of new explanations, insights, concepts or processes.

3. Produce high-quality research outputs for publication in recognised high-quality journals and make a significant contribution to the field
4. Develop a coherent portfolio of research through individual and multi-person research.
5. Provide support to those working within relevant research areas.
6. Actively build internal and external contacts and play a key role in internal networks and relevant external networks in order to, for example, identify sources of funding, and build relationships for future activities.

Engagement, Influence and Impact

7. Develop relationships with colleagues and partners to generate fund raising opportunities and ensure that research engages with change agents positioned to make a practical difference to development outcomes.
8. Build opportunities for engagement and influence in policy or practice, for example through advisory work, contributing to events or networks, or co-designing research activities.
9. Communicate research outputs in a policy- or practice-relevant way including making presentations at national or international conferences or exhibiting work in other appropriate events of a similar standing and identifying ways to disseminate research outputs informally via the internet, the media and other forms of public engagement.
10. Develop a profile in your area of expertise through, for example, keynote speeches, invitations to advisory committees, steering groups, key roles in wider networks, significant role in civil society, member of boards etc.

Teaching

IDS Fellows have variable levels of involvement in teaching; for those who teach, expectations at this grade are as follows:

11. Undertake IDS teaching and training activities in focal areas of interest, including lecturing, MA programmes and short courses.
12. Develop own teaching materials, methods and approaches
13. Provide leadership in designing new courses and programmes and teaching management, pioneering the use of new teaching methods or other major types of pedagogic innovation
14. Challenge thinking, foster debate and develop the ability of students to engage in critical discourse and rational thinking
15. Supervise PhD researchers, ensuring that they have a quality experience that links well to individual or Cluster research interests
16. Set, mark, and assess coursework and assessments; select appropriate assessment instruments and assessment criteria; and provide constructive and comprehensive feedback to students.
17. Adopt an approachable and accessible attitude towards students, offering office hours, informal advice etc.

Collegiality

18. Participate in cluster and Institute activities as required
19. Chair and/or play a key role in Institute working groups or committees, as required.
20. Liaise with colleagues and students
21. Build internal contacts and participate in internal networks for the exchange of information and to form relationships for future collaboration
22. Belong to external research councils, boards and assessment committees that contribute to the wellbeing of the Institute.

Fundraising

23. All IDS Fellows are responsible, either collectively or individually, for raising sufficient funds to meet

their annual income target of 180 days.

- 24. Develop relationships with colleagues and partners to generate and sustain fund raising opportunities.
- 25. Generate income on a sustained basis to reach the annual financial target.

General

You will be required to undertake such other duties appropriate to the grade and character of the work as may reasonably be required of you. Therefore, the list of duties in this job description should not be regarded as exclusive or exhaustive.

Your duties will be set out in this job description but please note that the Institute reserves the right to update your job description, from time to time, to reflect changes in, or to, your job. Significant permanent changes in duties and responsibilities will require agreed revisions to be made to this job description. You will be consulted about any proposed changes.

Person specification

Successful candidates will clearly and explicitly demonstrate their experience and ability to raise research funds which will support salary and overheads costs through research, teaching and policy advisory work.

Person Specification			
	Essential	Desirable	Method of assessment
Education	PhD or exceptionally, equivalent research experience in information systems, informatics, computer science or related fields; all within the domain of digital development (ICT4D).		Application
Knowledge	Expertise in conducting policy-focused research. Expertise in one or more of the following areas: digital rights, digital governance, digital authoritarianism, artificial intelligence (especially social applications but technical knowledge is also beneficial), information security, and cybersecurity within international development and humanitarian contexts.	Expertise in theory, methods, or practice of learning and pedagogy in information systems, informatics, computer science, or related fields; all within the domain of digital development (ICT4D). Evidence of proactive contribution to the management of an institute such as IDS.	Application, interview, assessment, references.

<p>Skills & Attributes</p>	<p>Highly fluent in written and spoken English.</p> <p>Theoretical and applied skills relevant to the analysis of and engagement in development.</p> <p>Interpersonal and cross-cultural skills and ability to apply these in work with overseas partners.</p> <p>Research management skills.</p> <p>Teaching skills.</p> <p>Presentation skills.</p> <p>Interest in partnership approaches.</p> <p>Interest in engaging research with practice and policy.</p> <p>A capacity to work in a multidisciplinary team.</p> <p>Ability to work both independently and in collaboration with development actors and institutions.</p> <p>An emerging international reputation in the field of study.</p> <p>Ability to exercise a high degree of innovation and creative problem solving.</p>	<p>Language abilities beyond English.</p>	<p>Application, interview, assessment, references.</p>
<p>Experience</p>	<p>Experience of research in one or more of our key strategic themes.</p> <p>Exceptional research record and evidence of publishing.</p> <p>Postgraduate supervision experience.</p> <p>Demonstrated success in obtaining grants, research awards and consultancies.</p> <p>Primary research in low-middle-</p>	<p>Postgraduate teaching experience.</p> <p>Practical experience in the Field.</p> <p>Research co-ordination and managing collaborative teams.</p> <p>Experience of successful curriculum design or re-design.</p> <p>Significant experience of supervising postgraduate students.</p>	<p>Application, interview, assessment, references.</p>

	income countries (LMIC), or marginalised/underrepresented communities in high income countries.		
Other	Willingness and ability to travel overseas as required (as part of on-going research projects and consultancies).		

Information to Candidates

- IDS has a values-driven, non-hierarchical culture, in which formal organisation and roles are embedded in an ethos of strong interaction between groups, engaged and facilitatory leadership including by the Director and Director of Research, and inclusive participation in decision-making. All Fellows have opportunities to contribute to the Institute's strategies, policies and decision making, through the Research and Teaching Forum, and sub-committees and task-based working groups, as appropriate.
- The role is on an ongoing contract.

The Recruitment Process

Subject to the number and quality of applications received, you may be contacted by the Institute and requested to provide copies of your publications as part of the shortlisting stage. If you are successfully shortlisted, you will then have an initial telephone interview with the Cluster Leader and one or two others (max of 3). The telephone interviews will enable a decision on a final short list of candidates to be invited to attend an interview procedure. If you are invited to attend an interview, as part of the interview process, you will be asked to give a presentation to the appointing panel and team members, details of which will be provided. You will also be asked to provide a short biography/profile of about one paragraph to share with those attending the presentation.

References will be sought from those attending interviews, to be provided to the interview panel on the interview day.

Please note, confidentiality of candidates is respected throughout the selection and interview process and so the application forms and references will only be shared with those on the short listing or interview panel.

Benefits

At IDS we offer a number of benefits to staff. These include:

- a competitive salary, including cost of living awards and incremental increases on an annual basis as per policy and the option to join our pension scheme. Please see www.uss.co.uk for more details.
- a reward and incentive scheme for Fellows.
- a commitment to flexible working: available to all staff and includes part time, home working options, career break scheme and leave of absence.
- cycle to work scheme.

- support in attainment of a relevant professional qualification in line with the Professional Development Policy.
- childcare fund.
- competitive maternity and paternity policies that offer compensation above the statutory minimum.
- 24 days annual leave per year (pro-rata for part-time), plus public holidays and up to 6 non-negotiable closure days, plus annual leave purchase scheme.
- enhanced sickness pay entitlements.
- an employee assistance programme.
- support with relocation costs for staff joining us from outside the UK.
- eligibility to use the University of Sussex gym and sporting facilities at staff rates.

Location

The successful candidate will be based at the Institute of Development Studies on the University of Sussex campus. The University of Sussex is located 10 minutes away from the lively and cosmopolitan seaside city of Brighton on the UK South Coast, 60 minutes away from central London, 30 minutes away from London Gatwick Airport and is surrounded by the beautiful countryside of the Sussex South Downs. Situated between the sea and the South Downs, Brighton is one of the most vibrant and unique cities on the South Coast, for more information please go to: www.visitbrighton.com