

Job Description

Title	Details
Job title	Research Assistant (PPADEM)
Department/Unit	Politics and International Relations
Job Type	Part time (0.2 FTE), Fixed Term (12 months)
Grade	Grade 6
Accountable to	Line Manager
Accountable for	N/A
Vacancy reference	SRF54369

Purpose

The Department of Politics and International Relations seeks to appoint a Research Assistant to support and contribute to the European Research Council (ERC) project *Political Parties in Africa and Democracy* (PPADEM). PPADEM is an international research collaboration between the University of Strathclyde, the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, the University of Bristol, and the University of Reading.

The project is designed to discover the key drivers of democratic decline and democratic progress in Africa, by undertaking the largest empirical study of political parties ever carried out anywhere in the world. We ask: (1) What role do political parties play in the process of democratisation in Africa? (2) Under what conditions do they make positive or negative contributions toward defending and expanding democracy? And (3) How can political parties across Africa be supported to help counter the decline of democracy on the continent?

The successful candidate will join an international team of senior and early-career scholars working on political parties, democratic institutions and African politics. ***They will contribute to building and analysing the project's cross-national multi-level data set, with opportunities to present co-authored or sole-authored publications at workshops and conferences with an aim to publish in leading peer-reviewed journals.*** Starting date – as early as possible. The PPADEM research assistant position is for one year, subject to regular evaluation of tasks fulfilled.

Main duties and responsibilities

1. Collect, code, enter, check and clean country and organizational level data on African political parties (e.g. archival research including coding of party histories, constitutions, campaign materials and survey data)
2. Identify and code features of elite-level party representatives (e.g. demographic backgrounds, social media presence, etc.)

3. Assist in preparation of research instruments for party headquarters and branch studies, and constituency elite surveys
4. Analyse citizen and expert survey data (e.g. Afrobarometer and V-Party)
5. Assist with organisation of project events such as planning meetings and research seminars
6. Support project website, and manuscript preparation and publication activities

Supervision received

To be line managed by the Principal Investigator of PPADEM with limited day to day supervision. The post holder is expected to use their initiative to manage their workload independently and effectively.

Supervision given

N/A

Contact

Principal Investigator, Co-Investigators, Executive Administration Manager

Terms and conditions

The contracted working week will be 7 hours; daily working hours will be by agreement with the line manager. The post holder may be required to occasionally work at weekends or out of hours to support the research project.

The core duties of the role are outlined to indicate the level of responsibility. It is not a comprehensive or exhaustive list and the line manager may vary duties from time to time which do not change the general character of the job or the level of responsibility entailed.

Date assessed: 8th October 2026

Person Specification

Job Title	School/Department
Research Assistant (PPADEM)	Politics and International Relations

Which stage these Criteria be assessed

A = Application

I = Interview

P = Presentation/Pre task/Other

Criteria	Essential	Desirable
Skills Required	- Ability to work in research teams (A/I) - Strong organisational skills and eye for detail. (A/I) - Excellent written and oral proficiency in English (A/I)	Experience of using research software such as SPSS, NVivo, R, Stata or equivalent. (A/I)
Attainment	Master's degree in political science or closely related social science discipline. (A)	PhD Candidate in political science or a related social science discipline (A)
Knowledge		- Demonstrated expertise in elections, public opinion, party politics. (A/I) - Demonstrated expertise in African politics. (A/I) - Demonstrated expertise in survey design and data analysis. (A/I)
Relevant Experience	- Demonstrated experience in qualitative or quantitative methods. (A/I) - Demonstrated experience of preparing reports, literature reviews or research summaries. (A/I)	- Demonstrated experience contributing to academic publications. (A/I) - Demonstrated experience of coordinating research activities across multiple partners or teams. (A/I)

Other	• Commitment to complying with University policies, health and safety requirements, GDPR and information governance procedures. (I)	• Willingness to travel to PPADEM meetings where required. (I) • Experience of working with diverse communities and stakeholder groups. (I)
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Completed By Nicola Humphrey/Matthias Kroenke

Date 8th October 2026