

The Institute of Psychology of the Faculty Social and Behavioural Sciences is looking for a

**PhD candidate Resilience to Stress and Uncertainty (1.0 FTE)**

Vacancy number 7947

Applications are invited for a four-year PhD position under the joint supervision of Prof. Ellen de Bruijn (promotor, Clinical Psychology Unit), Dr. Anna van Duijvenvoorde (Developmental Psychology Unit), and Dr. Henk van Steenbergen (Cognitive Psychology Unit). This project is embedded in the multidisciplinary research programme [Social Security and Resilience](#).

We are looking for an enthusiastic student who would like to develop her/his career in the field of affective neuroscience combining a clinical and developmental approach.

**Project description**

**Bouncing back: Investigating individual differences in resilience to stress and uncertainty from a psychophysiological, clinical, and developmental perspective**

The complex ability to respond to change and other challenges in the environment is a critical component of psychological resilience. Difficulties with changing the way we think, feel or act are associated with mental, neurodevelopmental, and neurodegenerative disorders. Indeed, individuals who are flexible tend to be more resilient, and the ability to maintain flexible responding may be particularly important as we age. Behavioural laboratory tasks and more novel approaches using psychophysiological measures and daily-life experiences associate cognitive and emotional flexibility with various outcomes of psychological well-being.

This project will set-out to test the mechanisms underlying individual variance in resilience to stress and uncertainty. To accomplish this, we will combine behavioral and psychophysiological measures and will specifically focus on clinical and developmental aspects of cognitive and emotional flexibility.

The PhD-candidate is expected to perform the following main tasks:

- Investigate psychophysiological signatures (including cardiovascular measures, facial EMG, and EEG or (f)MRI) of flexible behaviour following stress and uncertainty.
- Establish age-related differences in resilience to stress and uncertainty from childhood to adulthood.
- Determine disturbances in these processes in relation to stress-related symptoms and/or uncertainty in a patient population (e.g., PTSD).
- Write a review and perform a meta-analysis of stress- and uncertainty-related resilience behavior across clinical groups and development.

**Selection criteria**

- Master degree in psychology or related field;
- Experience with psychophysiological methods;
- Excellent English writing skills (online TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) (TOEFL-iBT) of at least 90 or equivalent test);
- Technical skills;

- Programming experience (e.g., Python, R, E-Prime, matlab);
- Be committed to mixed-method experimental research.

### **Our organization**

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>.

### **Terms and conditions**

The appointment will initially be for 12 months and if evaluated positively extended with 3 years and must lead to the completion of a PhD thesis. The salary ranges from €2,325 gross per month in the 1st year up to €2,972 gross per month in the 4th year based on a fulltime employment in accordance with the Collective Labour Agreement for Dutch Universities. A part-time position is possible as well. The preferred starting date is the 1st of January 2021.

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 Prof. Ellen de Bruijn, email [edebruijn@fsw.leidenuniv.nl](mailto:edebruijn@fsw.leidenuniv.nl)

### **Applications**

Please submit online your application no later than 30 November via the blue button in our application system (available 17 November onward). Applicants should submit a letter of interest accompanied by a CV and two referees names and contacts (all online). Referees will be contacted directly by the search committee in case of shortlisting.

You can apply via the application button; no applications will be processed on the email addresses. Enquiries from agencies are not appreciated.