Fully funded PhD position in Psychology and Neuroscience of Cognition (University of Liège)

The Psychology and Neuroscience of Cognition (PsyNCog) research unit has one fully funded PhD student position, under the supervision of Dr. Christel Devue (Cognitive Psychology research group), to conduct a research project entitled “A cost-efficient mechanism of face learning - Interactions between stability in appearance and learning conditions”.

Project

The aim of the project is to test a new integrative theory of human face learning (introduced in a recent submission available here) that explains how recognition performance changes as familiarity with faces develops. We hypothesise that the relative stability of a given face’s appearance interact with learning demands to determine the level of details that are stored in memory over time and the quality of facial representations. In that framework, recognition errors are viewed as the flip side of an otherwise efficient and economical mechanism.

This theory will be tested with behavioural and eye-tracking experiments that will track the development of facial representations. A new understanding of human face learning will help address limits of facial recognition technologies and help improve the well-being of people with debilitating face recognition difficulties.

Duties

- Design and conduct experiments described in the research project (available on demand).
- Report and present findings at conferences and in international peer-reviewed journals.
- Write a dissertation thesis in French or in English.
- Fulfil at least 60 ECTS of Graduate School required activities (e.g. courses, conference).
- Supervise student research projects at the bachelor and master levels.
- Participate in general activities of the Psychology and Neuroscience of Cognition (PsyNCog) research unit and of the Cognitive Psychology research group.

Offer

- Up to four years of full-time paid employment (~2100EUR/month).
- Contribution to Belgian social security scheme.
- Supportive work environment on a wooded campus (Sart Tilman).
- Budget for travels to national and international conferences.
- Budget for paid research participants.
- Starting date is negotiable (between May and October 2022).
Selection criteria

- Master degree (120 credits) in Experimental/cognitive psychology, cognitive neuroscience or equivalent.
- Strong background in methodology and statistical analyses.
- Experience with experiment programming software (e.g. OpenSesame, E-prime).
- Excellent organisational and time management skills.
- Excellent writing and oral communication skills.
- Solid bases in French (e.g. to follow graduate school courses).
- An excellent command of English.
- A willingness to travel abroad (for conferences or short research stays).
- Enthusiasm, self-motivation, team spirit and benevolence.

- Coding skills (e.g. in R or Python) and experience with eye-tracking are a plus.
- Experience with image and/or video editing software is a plus.

Procedure

To apply, please send the following to cdevue@uliege.be with email subject “Application for PhD position”:

- A cover letter detailing your background and motivations.
- A curriculum vitae, including a link to a copy of your master thesis and a list of research projects in which you were involved, with a brief description of your contribution.
- Transcripts and diplomas for bachelor’s and master’s degrees.
- Contact details of at least two academic references.

- Deadline: 15 March 2022 at noon (UTC+01:00).

Selected candidates will be invited for an interview. If the position is not filled after this call, a second call aimed at future master graduates will be made later this year.

Feel free to contact Christel Devue (cdevue@uliege.be) for informal inquiries or to express your interest in the position if you are currently finishing up you master.