
School of Modern Languages

Research Assistant/Associate in Poetry Translation

Grade: F Vacancy Ref: B60642R

Fixed term for 18-months, start date 1st April 2017 or as soon as possible thereafter.

Newcastle University's Schools of Modern Languages and of English Literature, Language & Linguistics, and the University of Roehampton's Poetry Centre in the Department of English & Creative Writing, are among the UK's leading centres for research and professional/creative practice in poetry translation. They are seeking applications for a Research Assistant/Associate, based at Newcastle University, to contribute to an inter-university research project in poetry translation. This project is funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC).

The project investigates workshops where participants translate from Dutch to English and vice versa, working in collaborative 'trios': the poet who wrote the source poem; a target-language poet (who does not know the source language); and a language advisor (who knows both languages). Its research aim is to draw a multidimensional picture of how expert poet-advisor-poet trios work: what poems they choose to translate; the translation challenges they meet, and how they solve them; interpersonal relations and talk patterns within working trios; what principles poets and advisors try to follow; and what motivates their work. Research findings will be presented in conferences and academic publications. Translations and original poems produced in the workshops will be presented at events and in literary journals.

The Research Assistant/Associate will help organise workshops, and to gather and analyse real-time video + audio data from the workshops. You will also help to publicise the research findings and the creative outputs from the workshops. This will include helping organise poetry publications and a reading event.

This post is suitable for applicants with an interest in translation and poetry, who are skilled in literary-translation or translation-process research, including qualitative and quantitative methods. They should also have some experience in literary editing and/or promoting literary events. A working knowledge of Dutch and English will be an advantage, as will experience with a range of social media.

Main Duties and Responsibilities

You will:

1. Liaise with partner literary organisations, project investigators, and workshop participants from the UK and Netherlands, to help prepare and deliver two 4-day poetry translation workshops in the UK and Netherlands.
2. Liaise with the project's Principal Investigator and Technical Assistant to plan and carry out video + audio recordings of translation discussions during workshop sessions.
3. Liaise with the project's Principal Investigator and Technical Assistant to plan and conduct video + audio recorded interviews with participants.
4. Log email drafts of translations after the workshops.
5. Arrange transcription of audio/video material by professional transcribers, and check transcriptions.
6. Analyse translation discussions, drafts, and interviews, both qualitatively and (where appropriate) quantitatively.
7. Undertake reviews of relevant scholarship.
8. Co-author research reports for academic journals.
9. Present results at local, national or international conferences.
10. Liaise with cultural organisations to video public readings of translations.
11. Identify, in collaboration with project investigators, opportunities for professional development, including further training in research methods and other transferable skills.
12. Meet the Principal Investigator and/or Co-Investigators regularly to plan and collaborate on and discuss the above, and to organise workload.
13. Help to organise and run public events.
14. Write reports for public-facing websites of key cultural organisations.
15. Help to prepare poems for poetry journals.
16. Help to commission a further artwork based on the project, and liaise with the artist.
17. Liaise with the project Technical Assistant and website manager to set up a project twitter feed and blog, and to populate a project website. Post reports, video clips from readings, etc.

Research Role Profile

As part of our commitment to career development for research staff, the University has developed 3 levels of research role profiles. These profiles set out firstly the generic competences and responsibilities expected of role holders at each level and secondly the general qualifications and experiences needed for entry at a particular level. It is unlikely that any single member of staff will be applying all these competences at any one time but he or she would be expected to display most of them over a period of time.

Please follow this link to our [Research Role Profiles](#).

Person Specification

Knowledge (inc. qualifications)

Essential

- PhD-level experience (or equivalent) in poetry-translation research and/or translation-process research
- Knowledge of the processes involved in planning literary reading events and journals

Desirable

- PhD in poetry or translation
- Demonstrable interest in poetry

Skills

Essential

- Ability to conduct interviews and undertake complex correspondence e.g. setting up events
- Ability to work flexibly and co-operatively with others, but also to work independently
- IT literacy, including using Excel spreadsheets to collate numeric data, and keeping accurate data / records
- Ability to use multimedia, including use of camcorder
- Ability to prioritise key tasks, meet deadlines, and manage conflicting priorities
- Native or near-native speaking and academic-writing skills in English
- Editorial skills and/or project-management skills in literature promotion

Desirable

- Ability to communicate in Dutch (speech, phone, email) about project organisation, publications, etc.
- Skills in writing for and maintaining websites and social media
- Ability to use simple video-editing software
- Ability to use Excel spreadsheets to perform simple statistical analyses

Experience and Achievements (paid or unpaid)

Essential

- MA (or equivalent level of experience) in creative writing or translation or a similar field
- Experience of data collection and analysis (qualitative and/or quantitative)
- Experience of carrying out research within agreed timelines and meeting project milestones

- Experience of producing written reports and/or articles to an acceptable academic standard
- Experience in literary publication and/or promotion

Desirable

- Experience of analysing dialogue and/or working with large datasets and/or interviewing
- Experience of collaborating with non-academic stakeholders
- One or more academic publications
- Experience with using a range of social media