**JOB DESCRIPTION**

**Job title:** Senior Research Associate - Decolonising the Deep Seabed: Countermapping Territory, Heritage and Knowledge

**Salary range and conditions:** Grade 7 (£43,093 - £46,853), Full-time, 3 years fixed-term (Oct 1 2025-)

**Department/Division:** Lancaster Environnent Centre <https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/lec/>

**Reports to:** Dr John Childs (PI)

**Other contacts:** Dr Nicola Frith (Co-I, University of Edinburgh)

**About the Department:** We are a community of high-achieving students, world-class environmental researchers, government scientists and enterprises working together to address today’s biggest environmental challenges: <https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/lec/>

**Overview of the Position**

Lancaster Environment Centre invites applications for a postdoctoral researcher to join the Leverhulme Project Grant project *Decolonising the Deep Seabed: Countermapping Territory, Heritage and Knowledge*, working with Dr John Childs (Lancaster University, PI) and Dr Nicola Frith (University of Edinburgh, Co-I). Offering an alternative to mainstream approaches to understanding the political geography of the deep seabed, this project seeks to foreground, understand and counter-map the deep seabed in ways that better highlight and represent its multiple heritages, geographies and worldviews globally.

Specifically, it aims to:

1. Develop a new analytical framework for understanding the political geography of deep-sea mapping that deconstructs the coloniality of existing efforts.
2. Develop and map a new ‘counter atlas’ of the deep seabed which privileges alternative cultural perspectives and narratives of resistance globally.
3. Investigate the ways in which decolonial perspectives can reshape understanding of deep-sea ‘territory’ and ‘heritage’ in the Atlantic and Pacific respectively through two cases studies in Benin and Papua New Guinea.
4. Establish a decolonial toolkit entitled ‘principles for mapping deep-sea justice’ produced in collaboration with case study communities.

As a critical social sciences scholar, the successful candidate will contribute to achieving these objectives under the direction of, and in collaboration with, Dr Childs and Dr Frith.

**Please note:** Travel to Papua New Guinea for data collection will be necessary for this role. A willingness to travel and conduct participatory research in logistically challenging locations is essential.

**Main Responsibilities**

1. Contribute to the development and execution of the project’s research programme, which will include engaging with the practical and theoretical problems concerning methodology, analysis and ethics that arise through the research.
2. Undertake empirical, participatory research and its analysis for the case study in Papua New Guinea. Research methods will be co-produced with research communities and will include the use of photovoice methodology.
3. Co-develop the production of a ‘counter atlas of the seabed’ as a free, web-based tool.
4. Co-lead the writing up and publishing of results in well-regarded journals.
5. Co-edit a special issue on decolonial approaches to the deep ocean.
6. Engage with colleagues, collaborators, advisory board and project co-investigators.
7. Present findings at internal and external workshops, meetings and international conferences.
8. Support PI with small-scale project management tasks (e.g. updating project website and social media channels, liaising with stakeholders).
9. Through the above, develop an independent and leading research profile, including via co-leading on publications, presenting at conferences, undergoing career development activities.

**Values:** The University recognises and celebrates good employment practice undertaken to address all inequality in higher education whilst promoting the importance and wellbeing for all our colleagues. We expect all staff to embrace our core values and work positively to support equality, diversity and inclusion, ensuring that every team member contributes to a supportive, and respectful working environment.

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