



Research Assistant in Early Psychosis Research

Job Location: Boston, Massachusetts

Department Description: Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center / Massachusetts Mental Health Center/
Harvard Medical School

Principal Investigator: William Stone, PhD

Project Director: Michelle L West, Ph.D.

Director of Commonwealth Research Center (CRC): Matcheri Keshavan, M.D.

Job Summary: We are seeking applicants for a full-time research assistant (RA) position to begin in approximately May-June 2018. The RA would work as a member of an NIMH funded study – “North America Prodrome Longitudinal Study” (NAPLS-3), as well on other psychosis studies in the Commonwealth Research Center (CRC). NAPLS-3 is a longitudinal study monitoring young people (age 12-30) showing signs of clinical high risk (CHR) for psychosis over 2 years, including clinical, cognitive, neuroimaging, and biological assessments, with the aim to understand predictors of developing fully psychotic symptoms. The RA will be responsible for a combination of study tasks, including completing study assessments (e.g., cognitive testing, saliva samples, neuroimaging procedures), maintaining IRB documentation, assisting with recruitment, and administrative/organizational tasks.

Essential Responsibilities:

1. Administer and score cognitive testing for study participants.
2. Learn and monitor strict adherence to protocols by physicians, nurses, and research subjects. Review protocol requirements with other study staff, such as radiology technicians, other study staff, and student interns. Identify problems with protocol compliance and notify project director and/or PI. Learn how to independently resolve problems with protocol.
3. Regularly post, check, and update study recruitment materials (e.g., advertising the study on internet platforms). Contact respondents to ads and screening surveys, inquire about experiences related to study eligibility, and coordinate with clinical staff for screening appointments.
4. Administer EEG scans, including setup, participant preparation, and cleanup; order necessary supplies; and maintain equipment.
5. Perform MRI scans, including setup, participant preparation, and cleanup. Maintain relevant supplies, manage staffing needs/coordinate appointments, coordinate with radiology technicians, and maintain compliance with MGH imaging facility protocols and staffing policies.
6. Recruit, interview, and supervise undergraduate volunteers.
7. Attend relevant recurring research coordination, training, and diagnostic meetings.
8. Obtain saliva samples and related self-report questionnaires.
9. Maintain compliance with BIDMC’s Institutional Review Board (IRB), including submissions and organization of regulatory materials.
10. Upload assessment data to local site and study-wide databases.

Required Qualifications:

1. Bachelor's degree in psychology, behavioral neuroscience, or another related field.

2. 1 or more years of related research work experience (may be on a part time basis during bachelor's education).
3. Working knowledge of computerized data (word processing, spreadsheets, and database).
4. Experience with computer systems required, including web based applications and some Microsoft Office applications which may include Outlook, Word, Excel, and PowerPoint.
5. Strong communication, interpersonal, organizational, and leadership skills.

Preferred Qualifications:

1. Previous experience with and/or exposure to adolescents/adults with serious mental illness; capacity to seek and accept training and supervision to interact safely and professionally with individuals whose reality testing, mood regulation, behavior and/or hygiene may be impaired.
2. Previous research experience administering EEG and/or MRI procedures.
3. Some experience with Linux computer systems.
4. Knowledge of typical IRB procedures and detailed study documentation.
5. Completed academic/research presentations or publications.

Competencies:

1. *Written Communications*: Ability to communicate clearly and effectively in written English with research center staff, clients/participants, families, and external contacts.
2. *Oral Communications*: Ability to comprehend and converse in English to communicate effectively with research center staff, clients/participants, families, and external contacts.
3. *Knowledge*: Ability to demonstrate full working knowledge of standard concepts, practices, procedures, and policies with the ability to use them in varied situations.
4. *Team Work*: Ability to work collaboratively in small teams to improve the operations of immediate work group by offering ideas, identifying issues, and respecting team members.
5. *Customer Service*: Ability to provide a high level of customer service to clients, staff, and respondents to recruitment advertisements in a professional, respectful manner using active listening and problem solving skills. Ability to remain calm in stressful situations.

Physical Nature of the Job:

1. Light work: May involve occasionally exerting up to 20 pounds of force to move objects. Some elements of the job are sedentary, but the employee will be required to stand for periods of time or move throughout the hospital campus. Must be able to travel (either by public transportation or other means) to the Charlestown Navy Yard for MRI scans.

Applications: Applications are being accepted immediately, on a rolling basis until the position is filled, with interviews anticipated to occur in April. Applicants should send a letter of interest, CV/resume, undergraduate transcript, and 2 letters of reference (may be sent later by referrers).

Please email applications and questions to:

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