Osnabrück University’s Institute of Psychology, Department of Developmental Psychology belonging to the School of Human Sciences invites applications for the position of a

**PhD/Post-Doctoral candidate (f/m/d)**

( Salary level 13 TVL, 75%; possibility to increase to 100%)

starting in the autumn of 2021 (specific date to be agreed upon). The position is available for four years (extension possible).

We are seeking a PhD or a post-doctoral candidate with a deep interest/experience in network science and social network analysis for two projects within two international, interdisciplinary consortiums: The research proposals can be shared with you via the contact details below. The candidate is expected to develop their own research proposal.

The candidate can focus on one or both of the following projects, and/or other social network projects at the department of developmental psychology.

**Project 1: Coping with Corona: Understanding individual differences in well-being during the COVID-19 pandemic**

The COVID-19 pandemic not only poses major threats to people’s physical health but also to their psychological well-being. To manage the pandemic, governments around the world have mandated policies that restrict people’s daily activities and limit social contact with others. Importantly, individuals differ in how they cope with these social challenges. The Coping with Corona (CoCo) Project aims to predict (build up theoretically derived and data-driven prediction models) and understand (unpack mediating situation selection, interpersonal perception, and emotional co-regulation processes) individual differences in well-being during the pandemic. These goals will be pursued by an analysis of existing network data (collected in 2020) and large-scale international smartphone-based network assessments (to be implemented spring 2022; including experience sampling and mobile sensing of everyday social interactions). The CoCo team integrates interdisciplinary expertise of leading researchers in the fields of personality, relationship, developmental, network, and behavioral science. It is a collaboration between Osnabrück University and the Stanford University, the University of Texas, the Columbia Business School in New York, the LMU in München, the WWU in Münster. This project will generate insights of empirical, theoretical, and practical importance. Specifically, results provide a rich description of how different people cope with pandemics, and novel insights on person-environment transactions that explain these differences. This will constitute a sorely needed step towards the large-scale availability of personalized tools to foster psychological resilience in individuals, groups, and societies in the wake of pandemics.

The candidate will be able to analyse the data collected with real-time mobile sensing network methodology, to be collected over eight periods (each consisting of two weeks) among freshmen of three universities (i.e., the LMU in München, WWU in Münster and UOS). Both online (e.g., each time a participant interacts with another freshman) and offline (e.g., using Bluetooth and other functions, experience sampling questions are triggered) positive and negative interactions will be measured. An international research team will collect these data, including designing a smartphone app that enables this (e.g., the PhoneStudy app; see https://osf.io/ut42y/).

**Project 2: INCLUSIVITY: Inclusivity Norms to Counter Polarization in European Societies**

The project focuses on understanding how social norms in networks can improve relations between opposing groups. Knowledge is lacking on the degree to which norms can causally improve intergroup relations in polarized contexts. The interdisciplinary area of social network analysis has set clear antecedents in studying the diffusion of information and
innovations in social networks, which we draw on to model norm transmission. Recent work on network interventions has integrated network models by targeting both social referents and complex social reinforcement over time. Such research has shown that this approach can effectively decrease interpersonal conflicts in adolescence. However, little is known about the potential role of social network structure in transmitting inclusivity norms in polarized networks. In this subproject, inclusivity norms will be promoted through a school-based network intervention. Our intervention will combine social referent approaches and social reinforcement by targeting influential groups of individuals and training them to exert long-term influence on inclusivity norms. The intervention’s effectiveness will be evaluated in a four-wave experimental network study (with five randomized conditions), with two pre-tests and two post-tests. We will invite five schools for participation at all four waves and implement the intervention randomly in four schools, with one remaining school as control group. At each wave, network data (positive and negative network ties) will be collected in all five schools. The candidate will be able to analyze the collected intervention network data to help address the research aims of the project.

The project is part of the international and interdisciplinary research program INCLUSIVITY: Inclusivity Norms to Counter Polarization in European Societies. INCLUSIVITY is funded by the Volkswagen Foundation, and includes researchers from 4 countries: Prof. Oliver Christ (FernUniversität in Hagen), Prof. Marcin Bukowski (Jagiellonian University, Kraków), Dr. Miranda Lubbers (Autonomous University of Barcelona), Dr. Eva Jaspers (Utrecht University) and Prof. Maarten van Zalk (Osnabrück University). A total of three post docs and two PhD students will be appointed simultaneously across all countries. The team’s competencies guarantee a genuine interdisciplinary approach, bridging social, political, developmental psychology with sociological perspectives and network methodologies. The full proposal will be send to you via the contact details below.

We offer:

• Opportunity to obtain a PhD or habilitation (German post-doctoral / Assistant Professor qualification);
• Unique opportunities to develop an individual scientific career in a new, interdisciplinary and internationally networked research group which received funding for two interdisciplinary and international projects: the Challenges for Europe project “Inclusivity” by the VW Foundation and the “Coping with Corona” Project funded by the DFG;
• Access to a variety of existing experimental and longitudinal network data sets, including mobile sensing and experience sampling network interaction data, experimental field network interventions, longitudinal "community network” samples, representative and international network data;
• Excellent research infrastructure, for participation in new and ongoing experimental network studies (e.g., online, in work places, in schools) and field studies (including experience sampling via online diaries and smartphones, weekly measurements of network and behavioral processes)
• Possibilities to actively participate in an international collaboration network of research institutes from different (sub)disciplines (e.g., social, development, and personality psychology, political science, sociology, criminology)
• Finances for travel to national and international conferences;
• Further education and professional training.

Description of responsibilities:
• Active participation in two large international and interdisciplinary projects with network data collected with various methodologies, including mobile sensing technologies, intensive longitudinal methods (e.g., event-based experience sampling methods), experimental network
interventions, and/or large community networks (see contact details below for more information)

- Publication in peer-reviewed international journals;
- Supervision of master's and bachelor's theses;
- Participation in administrative tasks;
- Teaching in the field of Psychology (3 hours (SWS) per week)
- The successful candidate will have the opportunity to work towards a PhD / habilitation (German post-doctoral lecturing/assistant professor qualification).

**Required qualifications:**
- An academic degree (Master/Diploma/PhD) as well as knowledge in social, behavioral, network, or computer science;
- Excellent English proficiency.

**Desirable qualifications:**
Keen interest and experience in further development and/or application of network methods to complex and intensive longitudinal data (e.g., RSiena, ERGMs);
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills relevant to teaching and research
- Willingness and ability to contribute to the overall objectives of the Department, working collaboratively with others.

Osnabrück University has been certified as a family-friendly university committed to helping working/studying parents and carers balance their family and work life.

The university aspires to ensure equal opportunities for men and women and strives to work towards a gender balance in schools or departments where new appointments are made.

If equally qualified candidates apply, preference will be given to those with special needs.

Your complete application (cover letter, Curriculum Vitae, qualification certificates, 2 reference letters, research proposal for the PhD/Habilitation Project (English, max. 2 pages including references) and, if available, up to three selected publications) should be submitted electronically in a single PDF document to Prof. Dr. Maarten van Zalk (maarten.vanzalk@uni-osnabrueck.de). The closing date will be around the 15th of September (to be confirmed).

For more information on this position and the projects mentioned, please contact Prof. Dr. Maarten van Zalk (maarten.vanzalk@uni-osnabrueck.de).

We look forward to receiving your application.