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PhD Student Position in Cognition and Decision Making at the University of Lausanne

The University of Lausanne is a higher teaching and research institution composed of seven faculties where approximately 14,300 students and nearly 3,900 collaborators, professors, and researchers work and study. Ideally situated along the lake of Geneva, near Lausanne's city center, its campus brings together over 120 nationalities.

We offer a doctoral student position (max 5 years of funding, supervised by Julian Marewski) for studying decision making and other cognitive processes within the context of our interdisciplinary research program on adaptive cognition.

Research program

In our research, we model how people make adaptive decisions under uncertainty based on a repertoire of simple decision heuristics. We investigate how such heuristics exploit both the structure of environments and the workings of cognitive capacities, such as memory. For instance, we have modeled how the human memory system exploits statistical regularities in social and non-social task domains and how the interplay between memory and the environment, in turn, can help people to make smart decisions. The research carried out in our group draws on experimental methods and mathematical/computational models. Theoretically, our research is based upon the fast-and-frugal heuristics framework and the ACT-R cognitive architecture.

Job information and profile of candidates

We look for applicants with much intellectual curiosity, and a passion for research. Ideally, applicants should, moreover, be interested in pursuing a career in academia/research. Candidates should be interested in decision making processes, and interdisciplinary research on human cognition. Candidates will develop a dissertation topic of their own choice on decision making or other cognitive processes.

Expected start date in position: April 1st, 2018 or a mutually-convenient date in the spring or summer 2018.

Contract length: We can offer funding for a maximum of 5 years (the first contract has a duration of 1 year and is renewable 2 x 2 years).

Activity rate: 60% - 100%, to be mutually agreed upon.

Dissertation supervisor: Julian Marewski

Your responsibilities

As per the rules of the University of Lausanne, at least 50% of your work time is reserved for the completion of your doctoral training/dissertation work. At most 50% of your time can be spent on providing research, teaching, administrative, or technical support to your supervisor.

Your qualifications

Knowledge of experimental methods, prior exposure to quantitative research methods (e.g., cognitive modeling, programming skills) are helpful but by no means required. A Master degree in psychology, computer science, physics, mathematics, biology, economics, or any other discipline is required. Excellent English skills are required.

Your application

Application deadline: February 15th, 2018

Applications should include the following documents: Cover letter, detailed outline of at least 3 research projects the candidate would be interested in pursuing as part of his/her doctoral work, curriculum vitae, university transcripts, up to two letters of recommendation (can be submitted at a later point in time, to be agreed upon with Julian Marewski), past publications (if existing).

Applications should be made exclusively online. We thank you for your understanding.

Available resources and work environment

You will work within the Department of Organizational Behavior at the Faculty of Business and Economics at the University of Lausanne.

Our faculty offers a unique interdisciplinary research environment with generous resources, including funding for conference trips and summer schools, in-house courses and training, as well as administrative support for conducting experimental work. In the past few years, we have built up a new excellent behavioral research laboratory that is, among others, fully equipped for cognitive and decision making research and that allows for precisely measuring response times and for conducting timing-sensitive cognitive studies. Our laboratory also features excellent facilities and equipment for virtual reality experiments, group experiments, and EEG studies.

Our department – the Department of Organizational Behavior – offers a highly interdisciplinary, stimulating research environment. Past and current members have backgrounds in cognitive psychology, decision making, management, economics, physics, mathematics and other areas. We publish in top-tier journals in different disciplines (e.g., Psychological Review, American Economic Review, Science). Our department's members come from several different countries, and the working language of the department is English. We have an excellent collegial atmosphere, with regular academic and other social activities, including scientific talks, informal weekly get-togethers, or even parties. Current professorial faculty are John Antonakis, Joerg Dietz, Ulrich Hoffrage, Franziska Krings, Julian Marewski, Marianne Schmid-Mast, and Christian Zehnder. More information on the Department of Organizational Behavior is available at

http://hec.unil.ch/hec/recherche/unite?unite_id=239&dyn_lang=en.

The University of Lausanne is located in close vicinity to several other higher education institutions, including the business school IMD or the Swiss technical university EPFL. Located near Lake Geneva and surrounded by the Jura Mountains and the French Alps, Lausanne itself is a beautiful and cosmopolitan spot to live and work.

Contact for further information

For any complementary information, please contact by email Julian Marewski (Julian.Marewski@unil.ch)

Additional information

UNIL is committed to promoting gender equality and strongly encourages applications from female candidates.

The official job ad can be found here: <http://bit.ly/2B9rJsE>.