

Postdoc in the History of Traditional Games

Field: Game Studies in History/Anthropology/Archaeology/Psychology/
Cultural Studies

Games and AI Group,
Department of Data Science and Knowledge Engineering (DKE),
Maastricht University

Job Description

The Digital Ludeme Project (<http://ludeme.eu>) is a five-year research project funded by the European Research Council (ERC) that seeks to digitally model the world's traditional games throughout recorded history. This multi-disciplinary project aims to improve our knowledge of ancient games using modern AI and phylogenetic techniques, to chart their evolution and their role in the spread of mathematical knowledge across cultures, and to establish a new field of research called Digital Archaeoludology.

As the project ends its first year, we are implementing a general game system and starting to populate our digital database of the world's traditional strategy games. We now seek a historian, anthropologist, archaeologist, psychologist or cultural studies scholar with expertise in the history of games to complement the team.

The successful applicant will play a leading role in developing the historical and cultural aspects of the research, ensuring that the appropriate data is collated and interpreted correctly, and advising the technical team on best practices and software requirements for achieving the project's historical and cultural objectives. This will include helping to identify the world's 1,000 most influential traditional strategy games and collating data on where, when and how they were played, which may involve field trips to museums, libraries, archives and archaeological sites worldwide; a generous travel budget is provided.

The successful candidate will produce publishable results in leading conferences and journals, assist with the supervision of PhD students and

play an active role in the day-to-day running of the project. Tasks will include coordinating project meetings, field trips, events such as international symposia and conferences, assisting with the pursuit of further research funding, and assisting with the curation of the project's final exhibition at a European venue yet to be decided.

Requirements

Applicants should have a PhD in a relevant field (History, Anthropology, Archaeology, Psychology, Cultural Studies, etc.) and a strong track record of research output and publication. Expert knowledge of the history of traditional games and/or mathematics is essential. Experience with computational or mathematical game analysis, phylogenetic studies, and/or experience coordinating research projects and conference-level events would be advantageous. Programming experience would be advantageous but is not essential.

Conditions of employment

The position is offered for the duration of the project (until 31 March 2023) with yearly evaluations. It will be located on-site at Maastricht, The Netherlands, at one of the world's top new universities known for its international and multi-disciplinary focus.

The salary and conditions of employment will be as set out in the Collective Labour Agreement (CAO) of Dutch Universities (www.caouniversiteiten.nl/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Collective-Labour-Agreement-Dutch-Universities-July-2016-June-2017.pdf) (<http://www.caouniversiteiten.nl/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Collective-Labour-Agreement-Dutch-Universities-July-2016-June-2017.pdf>) for a full-time contract of 38 or 40 hours/week at salary scale 10 (€2,588 to €4,084/gross per month) plus 8% holiday loading and an 8.3% year-end allowance. Non-Dutch applicants may be eligible for a favourable tax treatment (30% rule).

Additional information

Please submit applications by 31 January 2019 as a single PDF document including:

1. Letter of motivation and interest in the topic (1 page).
2. CV including a summary of highlights and names of at least two academic referees with contact details (2 pages).
3. Electronic copies of your two best/most relevant publications.

Shortlisted applicants will be invited for interview at Maastricht in February 2019, or by Skype if needed. Starting date: April 2019 or as soon as the successful applicant is available. For more information, please contact Dr. Cameron Browne (cambolbro@gmail.com).

Employer

Maastricht University

Established in 1976, Maastricht University (UM) is the most international university in the Netherlands and renowned for its innovative, student-centred problem-based learning system. With approximately 16,300 students and 4,300 employees, UM offers a wide choice of Bachelors, Masters and PhD programmes, all of which are designed to integrate research and education. Research at UM is characterised by a multi-disciplinary and thematic approach.

Department

Department of Data Science and Knowledge Engineering (DKE)

Founded in 1992 as part of the Faculty of Humanities and Sciences, today DKE broadly covers Data Science and Knowledge Engineering in research and teaching. DKE comprises three internationally respected research groups, having their focus on “Robotics, Agents and Interaction”, “Networks and Strategic Optimisation”, and “Biomathematics and Bioinformatics”. For further information, see <https://www.maastrichtuniversity.nl/dke> (<https://www.maastrichtuniversity.nl/dke>)