

Job Description

Senior Research and Policy Specialist

Job Purpose

To provide strategic subject matter expertise and technical leadership for the CIRCLE (Co-creating Inclusive Research Culture and Leadership Environments) project by leading the design, delivery and evaluation of the project's research, institutional development and knowledge exchange activities. The post holder will be responsible for designing and implementing the research methodology, developing research and consultation tools, leading institutional diagnostics, synthesising evidence, and producing high-quality reports and recommendations that inform the co-design of research culture and leadership initiatives.

Working collaboratively with the University of Glasgow and University of the Punjab project teams, the post holder will ensure that all research activities are methodologically rigorous, ethically sound and aligned with project objectives, while contributing to project governance, research management systems, ethics and research governance processes, stakeholder engagement and the development of practical resources that support sustainable institutional change.

About the Project

CIRCLE (Co-creating Inclusive Research Culture and Leadership Environments) is a collaborative project between the **University of Glasgow (UK)** and the **University of the Punjab (Pakistan)** funded through the Glasgow Centre for International Development (GCID) that aims to strengthen research culture through evidence-informed institutional development, inclusive leadership, recognition of hidden research contributions, researcher engagement and organisational development.

Job Details

Job Title: Senior Research and Policy Specialist

Location: University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan

Contract Type: Fixed-term consultancy / project appointment

Duration: October 2026 – July 2027 (10 months)

Salary: PKR 175,000–200,000 per month

Last Date To Apply: August 12, 2026 to:

circle.project@pu.edu.pk/info.dm@pu.edu.pk

Reporting to: Project Leads, University of Glasgow

Working closely with:

- Project Co-Investigator, University of the Punjab
- Project Officer
- Strategic Advisory Group
- Senior university stakeholders

Main Duties and Responsibilities

The post holder will:

1. Lead the design and implementation of the project's research methodology, institutional diagnostic framework, surveys, focus group discussions, interviews and stakeholder consultation activities.
2. Conduct desk reviews, policy analysis and evidence synthesis on research culture, inclusive leadership, research environments and organisational development to inform project activities and outputs.
3. Lead qualitative and quantitative data collection, analysis and interpretation, producing robust evidence to inform institutional recommendations and project deliverables.

4. Develop practical resources and project documentation, including research tools, ethics applications, participant information sheets, consent forms, Data Management Plans (DMPs), Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), monitoring and evaluation frameworks, and other research governance documentation.
5. Design and facilitate consultations, workshops, focus groups and engagement activities with senior university leadership, academic staff, researchers, research professional staff and other key stakeholders.
6. Provide specialist advice to the project team on research culture, leadership, organisational development, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI), researcher development and institutional policy and practice within higher education.
7. Prepare high-quality technical reports, policy briefs, institutional recommendations, presentations and dissemination materials to communicate project findings to internal and external stakeholders.
8. Work collaboratively across both partner institutions to ensure project activities are delivered to agreed milestones, meet high standards of research quality and comply with project governance, contractual and reporting requirements.
9. Support the development, implementation and evaluation of research culture and leadership initiatives, including institutional action planning, recognition activities and knowledge exchange events.
10. Contribute to project planning, risk management, quality assurance, stakeholder relationship management and continuous improvement to support successful delivery of the CIRCLE project.

Knowledge, Qualifications, Skills and Experience

Essential

Qualifications

- PhD (or equivalent professional experience) in any relevant discipline.
- A strong track record of research, publications and/or consultancy relevant to higher education, organisational development, research environment or institutional change.

Knowledge

- Demonstrated understanding of research culture, research environments, inclusive leadership, organisational development, institutional change or higher education policy.
- Understanding of the opportunities and challenges affecting research and innovation within higher education, particularly in the Pakistani context.

Experience

- Significant experience designing and leading research, institutional diagnostics, scoping studies or evaluation projects.
- Experience undertaking literature reviews, policy reviews and evidence synthesis to inform institutional or strategic decision-making.
- Experience designing qualitative, quantitative or mixed-methods research, including surveys, interviews, focus groups and stakeholder consultation approaches.
- Experience facilitating consultations, workshops and discussions with senior institutional leaders and diverse stakeholder groups.
- Experience analysing complex qualitative and quantitative data and translating findings into clear, evidence-informed recommendations.
- Experience preparing high-quality reports, policy briefs, strategic documents and other knowledge products for academic and non-academic audiences.

Skills

- Excellent analytical, critical thinking and problem-solving skills.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, with the ability to communicate effectively with academic, professional and senior leadership audiences.
- Excellent interpersonal skills with the ability to build productive working relationships across institutions and disciplines.
- Strong facilitation and stakeholder engagement skills, including the ability to lead participatory workshops and consultation processes.
- Strong organisational and project planning skills with excellent attention to detail.
- Ability to work collaboratively within multidisciplinary and international teams while also working independently with minimal supervision.
- Demonstrated commitment to inclusive working, equality, diversity and inclusion, and ethical research practice.

Desirable

- Experience working on UK-funded, international or donor-funded higher education or research capacity strengthening projects.
- Experience supporting institutional strategy, policy development or organisational transformation.
- Awareness of current national and international developments relating to research culture, responsible research assessment, research integrity, equality, diversity and inclusion, researcher development, and research leadership.
- Familiarity with UK research culture initiatives and frameworks

- Experience preparing ethics applications, Data Management Plans, Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIAs), Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and other research governance documentation.

How to Apply

Interested candidates should submit the following documents:

- An up-to-date CV.
- A cover letter (maximum 1,000 words) outlining their suitability for the role.

The cover letter should clearly demonstrate how the applicant meets the **essential** and, where applicable, the desirable criteria outlined above. Applicants are encouraged to provide specific examples of relevant knowledge, skills, experience and achievements that evidence their suitability for the role.

Applications should be submitted by **12th August 2026** to:

circle.project@pu.edu.pk/info.dm@pu.edu.pk

Please include "**Application – Senior Research and Policy Specialist (CIRCLE Project)**" in the subject line of your email.

For informal enquiries about the role, project or areas of responsibility, please contact: Zain Ul Abidin, Circle Project Co-Lead, University of Glasgow, Zain.UlAbidin@glasgow.ac.uk or Prof. Dr. Savera Shami, Project Co-Lead, University of the Punjab, Email: chairperson.dm@pu.edu.pk

Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted and invited for interview.