

PhD student and Postdoc Position, Leiden University

Application deadline: Nov 23, 2012

Caroline van Eck

The Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO) will be funding the Horizon research project 'Knowledge and Culture'. This project will be carried out as a collaboration between the Leiden University Centre for Linguistics (LUCL), the Leiden University Centre for Arts in Society (LUCAS), the Meertens Institute (KNAW), and the University of Amsterdam (UvA). The Leiden University Centre for Linguistics (LUCL) of the Faculty of Humanities at Leiden University will be coordinating the research project.

Within this project we are looking for:

A PhD STUDENT IN ART HISTORY

(4 years, 38 hrs a week)

A POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCHER IN ART HISTORY

(3 years, 38 hrs a week)

(Please scroll down for Postdoc position)

A PhD student in art history

1. Background

In various domains of cognitive science, a new paradigm holds that humans and non-human animals are born with a small set of hard-wired cognitive abilities that are task-specific, language-independent, and non-species-specific. These core knowledge systems are innate cognitive skills that have the capacity for building mental representations of objects, persons, spatial relationships, numerosity, and social interaction. In addition to core knowledge systems, humans possess species-specific, uniquely human abilities such as language and music.

The 'core knowledge' paradigm challenges scholars in the humanities to ask the question how nurture and culture build on nature. This project examines the way in which innate, non specifically human, core knowledge systems for object representation, number, and geometry constrain cultural expressions in music, language, and the visual

arts. In this research program, four domains of the humanities will be investigated from the point of view of core knowledge:

- subproject 1: music cognition

(1PhD student, 1 Postdoc, teamleader: Prof.dr H. Honing)

- subproject 2: language and number

(1PhD student, 1 Postdoc, teamleader: Prof.dr S. Barbiers)

- subproject 3: visual arts and geometry

(1PhD student, 1 Postdoc, teamleaders: Prof.dr.ir M. Delbeke & Prof.dr C. van Eck)

- subproject 4: poetry, rhythm, and meter (1PhD student, 1 Postdoc)

(1PhD student, 1 Postdoc, teamleader: Prof.dr M. van Oostendorp)

2. PhD-project: Universal decorative patterns and geometrical core knowledge

As a part of the subproject on visual arts and geometry, this project seeks to establish what universals in decorative patterns can teach us about aspects of geometric core knowledge and of the geometric systems building on core knowledge. This research will be informed by existing research on the acquisition of geometric concepts in young children. This project is therefore radically interdisciplinary, bringing together expertise from anthropology, art history, developmental psychology and the acquisition of geometry.

3. Embedding

The PhD-student will participate in and contribute to a research team comprising a total of 4 PhD students and 4 Postdocs in four teams corresponding to the subprojects outlined above. The entire project is coordinated by Prof.dr. Johan Rooryck at Leiden University. The PhD student will work in the research institutes LUCL (Prof.dr. Johan Rooryck) and LUCAS (Prof.dr. Caroline van Eck, Prof.dr.ir. Maarten Delbeke) at Leiden University. The project will start on 1 February 2013. For more information, please see the full description of the project at

<http://www.hum.leiden.edu/lucl/job-opportunities/vacancies-at-leiden-university.html>

4. Your profile

We are looking for someone who:

- holds a Master's or equivalent degree in art or architectural history. Students who are close to finishing their Master's program are also welcome to apply.

- has a demonstrable interest in the general topic of this Horizon program, as well as in the sub-project proper, in particular the psychological aspects of pattern recognition.

- has a Master's thesis that shows evidence of expertise in recent developments in psychological and art-historical views on the

embodied nature of perception, and its anthropological aspects,
- has a keen interest in cognitive science, experimental methods, and core knowledge systems,
- is eager to expand his/her knowledge and skills in all of these fields,
- has a curious, enterprising, and creative mind as well as excellent analytical and organizational skills,
- has an excellent command of both spoken and written English, as well as outstanding writing skills,
- has the ability to work both independently and as part of a team, as well as the ambition to pursue an academic career in an internationally oriented scientific context.

5. Your tasks

The successful candidate will:

- conduct original research in line with both the general research project and the PhD-project described above,
- complete a PhD thesis in 4 years,
- present intermediate research results at (international) conferences,
- submit research results for publication in peer-reviewed academic journals,
- assist in teaching activities in the second and third year of the appointment,
- participate in the programme's research activities and their organization, including reading and discussions groups, seminars, conferences, workshops, and joint publications at LUCL and LUCAS,
- collaborate with the researchers in the other teams of the programme.

6. Research at LUCL and LUCAS

Leiden University has a longstanding tradition in research in the world's languages and features unique linguistic expertise. LUCL combines current theoretical insights and modern experimental methods in its research profile area 'Language Diversity in the World'. For more information, see:

<http://www.research.leiden.edu/research-profiles/language-diversity/>

At LUCAS, the research group around Prof.dr. Caroline van Eck and Prof.dr.ir Maarten Delbeke focuses on meaning, perception, and interpretation in the visual arts and architecture; interactions between classical rhetoric and the visual arts; architectural theory of the classical tradition; and primitivism, that is the return to origins to understand the cultural meaning of architecture in the present. For more information, see:

<http://www.hum.leidenuniv.nl/lucas/>

7. Context and conditions

We offer a dynamic, enthusiastic, inspiring and supportive working environment. Our focus will be on training you to be a top-notch independent scientist. In addition to thorough research training, the graduate schools of both universities offer a variety of courses aimed at training of professional and personal skills. In addition, advanced courses to deepen scientific knowledge are offered by various national research schools.

The project will run for four years and must lead to the completion of a PhD thesis. We will offer an initial contract of 18 months, which is extended with an additional 30 months after a positive evaluation of your research skills, initial results, and compatibility. The appointment will be under the terms of the CAO (collective labour agreement) of the Dutch Universities. The gross monthly salary is set on € 2,042.- in the first year up to € 2,612.- gross per month in year four. Benefits include a pension build-up, an annual holiday premium of 8% and an end-of-year premium of 8.3%. Non-Dutch nationals may be eligible for a substantial tax break (30% ruling).

8. Application

Applicants are kindly requested to submit the following documents electronically (in English):

- A cover letter in which you motivate your candidacy,
- A curriculum vitae,
- References: the contact details of two people whom we may contact for further information. One of these should be your MA-thesis supervisor,
- Copies of your academic transcripts (or Dutch cijferlijst),
- Copies of your MA thesis, and any other publication in English that is representative of your research qualities.
- A short essay (c. 2000 words) in which you describe how you envisage doing the research and writing the thesis. This should consist of a table of contents of the thesis, with a paragraph for each chapter summarizing its contents, a list of sources and bibliography, and a workplan.

Please submit these documents in two files:

I – containing documents 1 to 4 (PDF or Word file,) using your last name underscore 1 as document name (e.g. BROWN_1.pdf).

II – containing document 5 (PDF or Word file), using your last name underscore 2 as document name (e.g. BROWN_2.pdf).

If the documents are not in the requested format, the application will not be taken into account.

For further information on these projects please contact: Prof.dr

Caroline van Eck c.a.van.eck@hum.leidenuniv.nl, prof.dr.ir Maarten Delbeke Maarten.Delbeke@ugent.be, or Prof.dr. Johan Rooryck j.e.c.v.rooryck@hum.leidenuniv.nl; or with respect to practical matters Ms Gea Hakker, g.c.hakker@hum.leidenuniv.nl

Applicants should submit their application (documents as described above) before

23 November 2012. Applications should be sent to vacatureslucl@hum.leidenuniv.nl, clearly indicating the application number. The selection procedure will take place in December 2012, and selected candidates can expect to be invited for an interview in December 2012 or January 2013

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POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCHER IN ART HISTORY

(3 years, 38 hrs a week)

1. Background

In various domains of cognitive science, a new paradigm holds that humans and non-human animals are born with a small set of hard-wired cognitive abilities that are task-specific, language-independent, and non-species-specific. These core knowledge systems are innate cognitive skills that have the capacity for building mental representations of objects, persons, spatial relationships, numerosity, and social interaction. In addition to core knowledge systems, humans possess species-specific, uniquely human abilities such as language and music.

The 'core knowledge' paradigm challenges scholars in the humanities to ask the question how nurture and culture build on nature. This project examines the way in which innate, non specifically human, core knowledge systems for object representation, number, and geometry constrain cultural expressions in music, language, and the visual arts. In this research program, four domains of the humanities will be investigated from the point of view of core knowledge:

- subproject 1: music cognition

(1PhD student, 1 Postdoc, teamleader: Prof.dr H. Honing)

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(1PhD student, 1 Postdoc, teamleaders: Prof.dr.ir M. Delbeke & Prof.dr C. van Eck)

- subproject 4: poetry, rhythm, and meter (1PhD student, 1 Postdoc)

(1PhD student, 1 Postdoc, teamleader: Prof.dr M. van Oostendorp)

2. Postdoc project: Basic proportional patterns and geometrical core

knowledge

As a part of the subproject on visual arts and geometry, this project will investigate the relation between basic proportional patterns and geometrical core knowledge. Do simple proportional patterns indeed possess the universality that has always been claimed for them, and what is their connection with geometrical core knowledge? Research in this project will include fieldwork with the Batamaliba in Benin, who have a rich architectural lexicon, as opposed to the Amazonian Mundurucu, who lack precise geometrical terms (Dehaene's et al 2006, Science, 311(5759), 381–384). The main research question of this project is how the Batamaliba geometrical lexicon affects their perception of space.

3. Embedding

The Postdoc will participate in and contribute to a research team comprising a total of 4 PhD students and 4 Postdocs in four teams corresponding to the subprojects outlined above. The entire project is coordinated by Prof.dr. Johan Rooryck at Leiden University. The Postdoc will work in the research institutes LUCL (Prof.dr. Johan Rooryck) and LUCAS (Prof.dr. Caroline van Eck, Prof.dr.ir. Maarten Delbeke) at Leiden University. The project will start on 1 February 2013. For more information, please see the full description of the project at <http://www.hum.leiden.edu/lucl/job-opportunities/vacancies-at-leiden-university.html>

4. Your profile

We are looking for someone who:

- has completed a doctoral degree in architectural history or theory. PhD students who are close to defending their dissertation are also welcome to apply. In addition, applications from MA students with demonstrable expertise, as evidenced from their thesis or other writings, are also welcomed.
- has demonstrable interest in the general topic of this Horizon program, as well as in the sub-project proper, in particular with respect to perception of space and proportion, and anthropological approaches to architectural design and its perception,
- has a keen interest in cognitive science, experimental methods, and core knowledge systems,
- has publications in peer-reviewed journals or with established academic publishers,
- has a curious, enterprising, and creative mind as well as excellent analytical and organizational skills,
- has an excellent command of both spoken and written English, as well as outstanding writing and presentation skills,
- has the ability to work both independently and as part of a team, as

well as the ambition to pursue an academic career in an internationally oriented scientific context.

5. Your tasks

The successful candidate will:

- conduct original research in line with both the general research project and the Postdoc-project described above,
- present intermediate research results at (international) conferences,
- submit research results for publication in peer-reviewed academic journals,
- assist in teaching activities in the department of art history,
- participate in the programme's research activities and their organization, including reading and discussions groups, seminars, conferences, workshops, and joint publications.
- collaborate with the researchers in the other teams of the programme.

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7. Context and conditions

We offer a dynamic, enthusiastic, inspiring and supportive working environment. In addition to thorough research training, the graduate schools of both universities offer a variety of courses aimed at training of professional and personal skills. In addition, advanced courses to deepen scientific knowledge are offered by various national research schools.

You can choose an appointment for three years at 1.0fte or for four years at 0.75fte. The Postdoc project must result in the publication of a minimum of three articles. The appointment will be under the terms of the CAO (collective labour agreement) of the Dutch

Universities. The gross monthly salary ranges from € 2977.- in the first year up to a maximum of € 3530.- gross per month, depending on experience and qualifications. Benefits include a pension build-up, an annual holiday premium of 8% and an end-of-year premium of 8.3%. Non-Dutch nationals may be eligible for a substantial tax break (30% ruling).

8. Application

Applicants are kindly requested to submit the following documents electronically (in English):

- A cover letter in which you motivate your candidacy,
- A curriculum vitae,
- References: the contact details of two people whom we may contact for further information. One of these should be your PhD-thesis supervisor,
- Copies of your PhD thesis, and any other publications in English that are representative of your research qualities.
- A short essay (c. 2000 words) in which you describe how you envisage carrying out the research. This should consist of a further refinement of research questions, a provisional outline of the articles you are aiming to write, a list of sources and bibliography, and a workplan.
- If you are applying as an MA student: copies of your academic transcripts (or Dutch cijferlijst); copies of your MA thesis and any other publication in English; a short essay (c. 2000 words) in which you describe how you envisage doing the research and writing the thesis. This should consist of a table of contents of the thesis, with a paragraph for each chapter summarizing its contents, a list of sources and bibliography, and a workplan.

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Reference:

JOB: PhD student and Postdoc Position, Leiden University. In: ArtHist.net, Nov 2, 2012 (accessed Jun 19, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/4134>>.