

Job description: Major System change for Covid-19 (MSC-19) study
Simon Turner, V2, 28 April 2020

Project title: “Análisis de la coordinación de un cambio sistémico significativo en el sistema de salud colombiano como respuesta al COVID-19”.

Posts available: Full time research assistants (2 posts) and project manager (1 post)

Accountable to: Dr Simon Turner, principal investigator

Duration: 8 months (end date 31 December 2020)

Project summary:

This study will analyse the response of the Colombian health system to the COVID-19 emergency, during on qualitative case study of three departments of the country. The study will collect information on “bottlenecks” as well as successful practices and forms of innovation that have emerged locally, which have the potential for 'scaling up' across Colombia's health services. The emerging findings will be shared among various actors in the system in order to inform, and contribute to, the adaptive capacity of the health system to respond to COVID 19. To analyse the changes required by health systems to address the challenges posed by COVID-19, this project uses the concept of “major system change”. This concept refers to coordinated change across multiple organisations, including service providers and purchasers of care, with the goal of improving services across a health system (e.g. an entire geographic area such as the metropolitan area of Bogotá). This concept is derived from an emerging body of research that focuses on identifying and analysing barriers to implementation and facilitating aspects of change involving multiple organisations. The project will include interviews with key actors who are directly involved in the planning and implementation of services that respond to COVID-19. The interviews will be supplemented with the analysis of secondary sources, including official documents. This project represents a commitment to systematise and capitalise on the knowledge and experience of the people who are responding to the crisis and develop a university-policy network that can be harnessed to produce timely responses to the current crisis and future planning, both nationally and internationally.

This study is led by Dr. Simon Turner, principal investigator, and Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Administration, Universidad de los Andes. The project is financed by the MinCienciatón program of the Ministry of Science and Technology and Innovation (project with code 77001) and supported by the "Fund for the Support of Assistant Professors" (FAPA) of the Universidad de los Andes.

In order to support the delivery of the study, we are recruiting two full-time research assistants and a project manager. The main duties and responsibilities of the posts, as well as the person specification, are outlined below.

FULL TIME RESEARCH ASSISTANTS (2 POSTS)

Main duties and responsibilities

- Work as a conscientious and committed member of the research team in order to achieve the specific and general objectives of the project;
- Carry out qualitative research on the study under the direction of Dr Simon Turner, with specific duties to include:
 - liaising closely with project team members based at the university and other stakeholders (e.g. related to the three in-depth case studies) to contribute to the success of the study;

- organising focus groups or other meetings/workshops to obtain feedback from health system stakeholders
- carrying out qualitative fieldwork (interviews, documentary analysis, and potentially observations) in the participating health system organisations.
- Review the relevant literatures on health system change and responses to COVID-19 specifically, including material from organisational and management studies and health services research;
- Ensure that appropriate ethical clearance and research governance approvals are obtained and maintained for all empirical research activity;
- Contribute to the development and refinement of qualitative research instruments, including interviews, non-participant observations and documentary analysis;
- Contribute to the analysis of qualitative data;
- Assist in the delivery of dissemination activities, both virtually and face-to-face;
- Contribute to drafting papers arising from this project for publication;
- Help draft progress reports for the funder, including summaries, as required by the principal investigator;
- Report progress to Dr Simon Turner, the wider research team, and any project advisory group members;
- Contribute to presenting findings to different audiences and attend relevant conferences, both virtually for example 'webinars' and face-to-face;
- Assist with the development of proposals for external research grant funding, under the direction of Dr Simon Turner, and other members of the research team;
- Facilitate collaboration and networking that engages and supports activities of the research team;
- Liaise with the relevant administrative team for the support of the project;
- Ensure confidentiality on all matters and information obtained during the course of employment;
- The post-holder should be willing and able to attend meetings and/or conduct interviews outside normal working hours where necessary (for example, early morning or evening meetings).
- Carry out any other reasonable duty commensurate with the grade and purpose of the post.

This job description reflects the present requirements of the post and, as duties and responsibilities change/develop, the job description will be reviewed and be subject to amendment in consultation with the post-holder.

Person specification and experience:

- Bilingual with excellent written and oral communication in English and Spanish
- Masters degree in a relevant discipline or equivalent research experience.
- High quality academic research using qualitative methods
- Conducting qualitative research (including interviews) in health care or public planning
- Proven research aptitude and experience
- Ability to work both independently and collaboratively
- Manage time efficiently and work to deadlines
- Demonstrate excellent interpersonal skills
- Able to write scientific reports clearly and quickly
- Ability to design and implement research studies (e.g. question formulation)
- Ability to develop new techniques, projects, and outputs
- Experience of working within multi-disciplinary teams
- Proven ability and commitment to carrying out high quality original research

- Ability to work as part of a fast-moving team, and collaborate with people from a range of disciplinary backgrounds
- A high level of personal credibility and ability to maintain confidence of various service providers
- The highest ethical and professional standards in research and impact
- Highly self-motivated and hard working

PROJECT MANAGER (1 POST)

Main duties and responsibilities

- Undertake project management and marketing-related responsibilities, under the direction of Dr Simon Turner,
- Work as a conscientious and committed member of the team in order to achieve the specific and general objectives of the project
- Coordinate regular 'operational' meetings among distributed research team
- Coordinate wider 'advisory' meetings with project steering group (including international members and other key stakeholders outside immediate research team)
- Support the development of a research & policy network to improve organisational responses to COVID-19
- Coordinate meetings to disseminate research findings including online 'webinars'
- Develop and regularly update the project website
- Maintain presence of project on other social media (e.g. Twitter and YouTube)
- Maintain a stakeholder list and regular communications on project progress (e.g. email newsletters)
- Update the research funder and other project stakeholders on research progress
- Identify and liaise with a design agency to produce non-academic study outputs aimed at practitioners, policymakers, and the wider public (e.g. interactive guidance, 'bite size' summaries, informative videos, research blogs)
- Develop a project plan and measure and support progress against delivery of key tasks / milestones (e.g. Gantt chart)
- Facilitate project-specific travel and fieldwork by members of the research team
- Maintain the project budget and support procurement of resources specified in the budget (e.g. research materials)
- Contribute to research summaries and other forms of reporting required by the research funder
- Help to publicise the project and raise its internal and external profile
- Ensure confidentiality on all matters and information obtained during the course of employment;
- The post-holder should be willing and able to attend meetings and/or conduct interviews outside normal working hours where necessary (for example, early morning or evening meetings).
- Carry out any other reasonable duty commensurate with the grade and purpose of the post.

This job description reflects the present requirements of the post and, as duties and responsibilities change/develop, the job description will be reviewed and be subject to amendment in consultation with the post-holder.

Person specification and experience:

- Completed masters degree or one year equivalent project management experience
- Bilingual in English and Spanish with excellent written and oral communication skills
- Experience of managing high-profile and impactful research projects

- Experience of using project management tools and techniques (e.g. Gantt charts; virtual collaborative platforms)
- Skills in public relations and marketing for maintaining the profile of the study and sharing of its findings
- Understanding of financial and budgetary management
- Ability to work as part of a fast-moving team, and collaborate with people from a range of disciplinary backgrounds
- A high level of personal credibility and ability to maintain confidence of various service providers
- The highest ethical and professional standards in research and impact
- Highly self-motivated and hard working

Application process:

To apply for the positions available, please send your CV and a cover letter explaining your reasons for applying and what you would bring to this important project. Shortlisted candidates will be interviewed.