



Job title	Rights Lab Research Associate/Fellow in Human and Environment Interactions	Job family and level	R&T level 4CTG/4 (research focus)
School/ Department	The Rights Lab	Location	University Park Campus

Purpose of role

This role is part of the University’s Rights Lab Beacon of Excellence, which is delivering world-leading research to help end modern slavery. Working as part of a multidisciplinary team, the role-holder will deliver research, stakeholder engagement, and impact within the Rights Lab’s Ecosystems and the Environment programme, which seeks to answer the question: how is environmental change interconnected with modern slavery?

You will work in a team led by Dr Jess Sparks to conduct quantitative, international research and engagement focused on understanding the environmental degradation-climate change-modern slavery nexus across landscapes, sectors, and geographies. Current areas of focus in this research programme include the links between overfishing and forced labour on fishing vessels; social and environmental trade-offs in transitions to sustainable food systems; and the relationship between deforestation and modern slavery. Specifically, your work will focus on integrating and modelling modern slavery data obtained through primary survey research with secondary environmental data to understand interactions.

The research work is international in scope, and covers a wide range of approaches, forms of exploitation, and contexts. Applications are therefore welcome from researchers who wish to bring their particular perspective or method to the programme. The role-holder will have the opportunity to shape a new research agenda based on their interests and expertise, and be supported to use their initiative and creativity to identify new project areas. The role-holder will be supported to develop their own funding proposals and fellowships for future research.

We welcome applications from recent PhD graduates or applicants who are close to completion, as well as from applicants with postdoctoral experience. This is a full-time role, available as a fixed-term, 12-month post with the potential for continuation (start date negotiable). However, we will also consider applications from candidates who wish to work part-time, and job-share arrangements may be considered. Informal enquiries may be addressed to jessica.sparks@nottingham.ac.uk. Please note that applications sent directly to this email address will not be accepted.

The University of Nottingham is an equal opportunities employer and welcomes applications from all sections of the community. Our University has always been a supportive, inclusive, caring and positive community, and we warmly welcome those of different cultures, ethnicities and beliefs. We welcome applications from UK, Europe and from across the globe.

For all successful international applicants, we provide financial support for your visa and the immigration health surcharge. For more information, please see the [Financial Support](#) section of the HR website.

	Main responsibilities (Primary accountabilities and responsibilities expected to fulfil the role)	% time per year
1	Research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To plan and conduct research using recognised and experimental quantitative approaches, methodologies and techniques within the research area. • To gather, analyse and illuminate data, interpret reports, evaluate and criticise texts and bring new insights to research area. • To write up research work for publication, resulting in successful research outputs. • To identify opportunities and assist in writing bids for research grant applications, with the preparation of proposals and applications to external bodies for funding purposes. • To coordinate the operational aspect of research progress towards key milestones and contribute to collaborative decision-making with colleagues in area of research. • To integrate various multidisciplinary research strands by enabling and coordinating collaborations. • To plan and manage own research activity and resolve problems, if required, in meeting own/team research objectives and deadlines in collaboration with others. 	70%
2	Collaborative working <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To collaborate with academic colleagues, internal and external to the Rights Lab, on areas of shared interest, for example, grant development, collaborative research projects and policy engagement events. 	20%
3	External engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To build relationships with external contacts in order to exchange information, form relationships for future collaborations and identify potential sources of funds and/or opportunities for collaboration. • To represent the Rights Lab at externally-facing events and meetings. • To develop and deliver relevant training and workshops. • To plan, organise, and deliver multi-stakeholder events, in line with research requirements. • To write blogs, reports, policy briefings and other audience-specific material. 	10%

Person specification

	Essential	Desirable
Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Proficiency with data management in Excel, cleaning, analysis, and visualization using R software. ▪ Proficiency with human subject survey research including design, collection, analysis, and modelling ▪ Analytical skills related to the following: missing data, uncertainty, and response and non-response bias adjustments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A strong eye for detail and the ability to undertake tasks systematically and rigorously. ▪ Ability to manage a demanding workload and work to tight deadlines. ▪ Excellent communication, networking and interpersonal skills.
Knowledge and experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A research background in the social dimensions of sustainability. ▪ Experience integrating social and environmental datasets for analysis. ▪ A track record of academic publications in environmental science or sustainability journals. ▪ Experience with the transfer of knowledge and methods from one application area or discipline to another. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Experience working across and with multiple disciplines. ▪ Experience of developing new approaches, models, techniques, or methods in a relevant research domain. ▪ Previous success in gaining support for externally funded projects. ▪ Understanding of human and labour rights as they relate to ecosystem change.
Qualifications, certification and training (relevant to role)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A PhD in a relevant field on the topic of sustainability, or a PhD close to completion. 	

Working in the Rights Lab

The Rights Lab is the first large-scale research platform for ending modern slavery, and home to the world's leading modern slavery experts. Our challenge-led, team-based approach to research fosters interdisciplinary collaboration between Rights Lab researchers representing 17 different disciplines from five different university faculties. The Rights Lab works closely with stakeholders in government, civil society, business, and intergovernmental institutions to deliver practically impactful research that speaks directly to the antislavery movement and those working in the field. We are committed to ensuring our work is relevant, timely, responsive, accessible, and actionable. This is captured in our wide variety of collaborative projects and strong long-standing relationships with key players in the global and local antislavery movement(s), our curation and development of policy and practice resources (as well as academic outputs), and our responsive research agenda. We are also committed to inclusive, ethical, and survivor informed research, supported by our INSPIRE project and partnership with the Survivor Alliance.

Rights Lab early career researchers are supported to develop their academic, leadership, engagement, and impact skills. Flexible and personalised development and mentorship opportunities assists Rights Lab Research Fellows to build an international profile of research excellence and antislavery impact. This includes training and structured support for:

- Developing research skills and methods, including through mentorship, project delivery, and engagement in innovative methods projects.
- Academic leadership, including through practical skills development, senior mentorship, development of new projects and funding applications, and flexible scaling-up of project management and leadership over time.
- Building a funding profile, including training and in-house support for identifying funding and grant opportunities, developing new proposals, writing applications, and relevant skills for preparing and delivering funded projects, as well as opportunities to join collaborative bids.
- Publishing, including through collaboration with colleagues, mentorship, internal review and editorial support, and participation in rigorous research projects with academic and non-academic outputs as deliverables.
- Knowledge exchange and engagement, including through support for research 'translation', access to Rights Lab networks, participation in conferences and events, and delivery of collaborative projects involving external partners in academia, policy, and practice.



The University of Nottingham is focused on embedding equality, diversity and inclusion in all that we do. As part of this, we welcome a diverse population to join our work force and therefore encourage applicants from all communities, particularly those with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

Expectations and behaviours

The University has developed a clear set of core expectations and behaviours that our people should be demonstrating in their work, and as ambassadors of the University's strategy, vision and values. The following are essential to the role:

- Valuing people** Is always equitable and fair and works with integrity. Proactively looks for ways to develop the team and is comfortable providing clarity by explaining the rationale behind decisions.
- Taking ownership** Is highly self-aware, looking for ways to improve, both taking on board and offering constructive feedback. Inspires others to take accountability for their own areas.
- Forward thinking** Driven to question the status quo and explore new ideas, supporting the team to "lead the way" in terms of know-how and learning.
- Professional pride** Sets the bar high with quality systems and control measures in place. Demands high standards of others identifying and addressing any gaps to enhance the overall performance.
- Always inclusive** Ensures accessibility to the wider community, actively encouraging inclusion and seeking to involve others. Ensures others always consider the wider context when sharing information making full use of networks and connections.

Key relationships with others

