

Research Assistant, Digital Technology for Humanitarian Action

Vacancy Announcement

October 2021

1 Overview

Conflict Dynamics International (www.cdint.org) seeks to engage an exceptional and highly-motivated Research Assistant to work as part of our Humanitarian Action Team. The Research Assistant will work alongside Conflict Dynamics' Children in Armed Conflict Team as well as the Humanitarian Engagement and Access Team, both of which develop and disseminate high-quality applied research and guidance in the humanitarian field. The contribution of this position will be in the exploration of how the use of digital technology and artificial intelligence can be harnessed to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian assistance and to put more power in the hands of beneficiaries in conflict zones. The position is for an initial period of 3 months or one semester in Fall/Winter 2021, with the possibility of extension, should it be mutually agreeable. The level of effort is 12-20 hours per week, and the work will be completed in exchange for class credit or applicant-secured external funding.

2 Background

Conflict Dynamics International is an independent, not-for-profit organization founded in 2004. Its **mission** is *to prevent and resolve violent conflict between and within states, and to alleviate human suffering resulting from conflicts and other crises around the world*. In fulfilling this mission, Conflict Dynamics develops and implements innovative strategies for conflict prevention and resolution, and for humanitarian policy relevant to conflict.

Conflict Dynamics' Humanitarian Action programs work to innovate and advance the frontiers of humanitarian knowledge and practice. All streams of work in this program area are grounded in the core humanitarian principles and structured around the relevant international laws and norms. To bring about change through these programs, we engage with people and communities affected by conflict, humanitarian workers and policymakers, as well as those who can positively influence humanitarian conditions. This includes parties to conflict, governments, and international and multi-national organizations such as the United Nations and others.

3 Scope of work

The duties and responsibilities of the Research Assistant may include:

Applied Research

- Conduct research and data analytics, focusing on the application of digital technology and artificial intelligence in the humanitarian field

- Explore use cases of the application of digital technology in the humanitarian field and draft case studies of relevant examples
- Research and monitor the development of new digital technologies and explore their strengths, weaknesses, and associated risks

Outreach and Engagement

- Update program products and other currently existing content, ensuring that they conform to house style and are tailored to different audiences
- Support the drafting of pitch decks and proposals focused on the use of digital technology among humanitarian actors
- Support organizational outreach and engagement with other organizations active in the field of digital technologies for humanitarian action

Communications and Social Media

- Identify and compile relevant analysis pieces, journal articles, and books to include in Conflict Dynamics' [Peace Pulse](#), a digest of recent debates and publications related to peacebuilding, governance, and our country contexts: Somalia and Somaliland, South Sudan, and Sudan.
- Draft, edit, and amplify Peace Pulse content – and as relevant other aspects of Conflict Dynamics' work – across social media platforms (current: Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn) and Conflict Dynamics' website.

4 Experience, skills and qualifications

The following are indicative skills, experience and qualifications for the Research Assistant role:

- Graduate degree (Master's or equivalent) in progress in international conflict resolution, international relations, political science, law, or related social science field.
- Professional or academic experience working on issues related to the development of mobile applications and related technologies.
- Familiarity with artificial intelligence, software engineering, and data science is preferred.
- Familiarity with use of technology in resource poor settings, preferably relating to East Africa and/or the Middle East is preferred.
- Excellent writing and communication skills (English), with experience drafting for a variety of audiences.
- High quality analytical, research, and organizational skills.
- Creativity and ability to work both independently and as a member of a diverse team.
- Experience with major social media platforms (Facebook, Linked In, Twitter, Instagram, etc.), web content management, and/or communications is a plus.

5 Qualities

Some of the qualities Conflict Dynamics seeks in the Research Assistant include:

- Rigorous, systematic thinking.
- Diligence and consistency, with an eye for detail.
- Commitment to Conflict Dynamics’ mission and ethos.
- Commitment to research ethics and integrity.
- Ability to juggle diverse tasks across themes and contexts.
- Ability to draft and edit to tight deadlines.
- Ability to communicate complex ideas succinctly and without jargon.
- Ability to give and receive constructive criticism.

6 Duration and level of effort

The position is for a period of 3 months or one semester, with the possibility of extension should it be mutually agreeable. The Research Assistant should be available for a minimum of 12 hours per week.

7 Location

The Research Assistant will work remotely and can be based anywhere so long as they can overlap with US East Coast hours for part of the time. Depending on the nature of the COVID-19 pandemic and if located in the Boston area, the Research Assistant may be asked to work part of their hours in Conflict Dynamics’ Cambridge office.

8 Reporting and management

The Research Assistant will work directly with Conflict Dynamics’ Chief Operating Officer, and other staff as necessary.

9 Compensation/credit

The Research Assistant will receive course credit for their work. If this is not possible, we will encourage and support Research Assistants to apply for external sources of funding for the role (e.g. an internship fund from their school). Conflict Dynamics will work with the Research Assistant to ensure that their school’s requirements for receiving course credit are fulfilled.

10 Application procedure

Applicants should send a cover letter, Resume/CV, and recent writing sample by email to internship@cdint.org which will be reviewed on a rolling basis. Applicants should save the letter, CV, and writing sample in the following format – ‘**FirstnameLastnameLetter**’ – ‘**FirstnameLastnameCV**’ – ‘**FirstnameLastnameSample**’. The cover email should reference “Humanitarian Research Assistant Vacancy.” Only current students in a degree program should apply.

Please note that applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis. Shortlisted candidates will be asked to complete a short editing exercise, with the second round consisting of a virtual interview. Final candidate(s) will be required to provide the names of three references.

**** NOTE: ONLY SHORTLISTED CANDIDATES WILL BE CONTACTED ****

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