PhD position in neuropsychology and cognitive neurosciences at the Center for Research in Psychology and Neuroscience, Marseille, France—Application deadline: 27 may 2024

Title: The influence of negative aging stereotypes in the assessment of memory deficits for prodromal state of Alzheimer's disease

We are excited to announce the opening of one PhD position at the Center for Research in Psychology and Neuroscience in Marseille (UMR CNRS 7077) under the co-direction of Pr. Isabelle Régner in the doctoral school ED356 of Aix-Marseille University, and Pr. Francis Eustache, Unité INSERM-EPHE-UNICAEN U1077.

General information
Workplace : Center for Research in Psychology and Neuroscience, Aix-Marseille University, CNRS, Marseille, France. The co-direction with Pr Francis Eustache will imply visiting the Unité INSERM-EPHE-UNICAEN U1077 in Caen.
Type of Contract : PhD position
Contract Period : 3 years
Expected date of employment : October 1st 2024
Proportion of work : Full time
Remuneration : 2100 euros monthly gross salary
Desired level of education : Master of neuropsychology or cognitive neurosciences

Project and Missions
This project is a follow-up from the AGING project funded by the French Research Agency, a 6-year randomized clinical trial designed to test for the first time whether negative aging stereotypes implicitly permeate the clinical neuropsychological testing and thus inflate memory deficits in older adults judged "at risk", resulting in false-positive detection of amnestic mild cognitive impairment (aMCI). In addition to examining neuropsychological performances, this hypothesis was tested using biomarkers of neurodegeneration to distinguish false positives from true aMCI, as well as biomarkers of stress to examine whether and how aging stereotypes can lead to acute physiological stress during the testing.

The fellowship will involve working on behavioral (neuropsychological performances, self-reports), physiological (heart rate variability), and imaging (MRI, PET-scan) dataset from patients tested in the clinical setting. Similar behavioral and physiological data are also available from healthy older adults tested in the lab setting for comparison purpose.

The selected candidate will have access to many training opportunities and scientific activities thanks to the interdisciplinary AGING consortium (social and cognitive psychology, neurology, neuropsychology, integrative neurosciences, geriatrics medicine), which involves researchers from six research units associated with five French universities (Aix-Marseille, Caen, Clermont-Fr, Paris Descartes, Poitiers) and two major research institutions (CNRS, INSERM), as well as neurologists and neuropsychologists from four public hospitals.

Qualifications and requirements
-Candidate should be skilled, highly motivated, have excellent communication and organizational skills, able to work independently and as part of a team.
-A master's degree in neuropsychology or cognitive neurosciences.
 -Good to excellent writing and communication skills in English will be appreciated. Learning French will be requested from those not mastering the language.
-Strong research skills including experimental designs, programming and statistical analyses (with SPSS, R, or other statistical software).
-Experience in text statistical analysis will be highly appreciated.

-Previous experience MRI and/or PET-Scan is also appreciated.

Application

Applicants are invited to respond as soon as possible no later than 27 May 2024. Please include all the following documents in PDF format:

- a cover letter (maximum 2 pages) describing your personal qualifications, research interests and motivation for applying.
- a CV, including a list of research projects you were involved in (with a brief description of your contribution) and a link to a copy of your master thesis (or other research reports if you have not finished your master thesis yet).
- contact information for two referees.

Applications or informal inquiries should be sent via email to Isabelle Régner (isabelle.regner@univ-amu.fr). Interviews (on-site or online) for shortlisted candidates are scheduled between June 17 and June 21, 2024.