

## **PhD position: Water and Health in Refugee and Displacement settlements**

United Nations University UNU-MERIT (Maastricht) and Deltares (Utrecht)

The Netherlands

### **Job description**

UNU-MERIT and Deltares have a joint position for a PhD candidate on the subject of water and health in refugee and displacement settlements. The main objective of this PhD position is to advance knowledge on new methods and tools to address the interlinkages between water and health within and outside the refugee and displacement settlements. In particular, the PhD candidate will investigate disease risks and health benefits of water and sanitation services and propose options to address these. Importance will be given to inclusive interventions that boost social cohesion between refugees and internally displaced people and the hosting population.

The last decennia's (geo)political instability and long-term conflicts combined with poverty, high population growth and climate change provide for a dangerous cocktail causing humanitarian crises to become more complex, to last longer (almost ten years on average) and to affect more people. The increasing and record high numbers of individuals being forcibly displaced as a result – over 70 million – are amongst the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups faced with severe barriers to access basic water supply, sanitation and health services. Moreover, they are often in poor health and exposed to adverse environmental conditions.

The PhD student will join the UNU-MERIT PhD program on Innovation, Economics and Governance for Development and is expected to spend part of the research time at Deltares in Utrecht and in the field collaborating with United Nations and governmental agencies, and other universities.

### **The Host Institute: United Nations University UNU-MERIT**

UNU-MERIT is a research and training institute of United Nations University (UNU) based in the south of the Netherlands, which collaborates closely with Maastricht University. The institute's research mission is to provide new insights into the economic, social and political aspects of growth and development in local and international contexts. Its research and training programs address a broad range of questions including the economics of technology and innovation, multi-level governance, intellectual property protection, social protection policy, knowledge creation and diffusion, and migration.

### **The UNU-MERIT PhD Program on Innovation, Economics and Governance for Development**

This multidisciplinary PhD program is offered by the United Nations University - Maastricht Economic and social Research institute on Innovation and Technology (UNU-MERIT). The program provides advanced training in the knowledge and skills most relevant to the economics of technology, migration and innovation, and to governance, social protection and public policy analysis. During their first year, PhD fellows complete a basic, compulsory training program conducted by leading scholars of the host and partner universities. These courses are taught in Maastricht and spread across two semesters. Taught entirely in English, this is an annual

Maastricht-based program which starts on 1 September. At the end of the program, the doctoral degree is awarded by Maastricht University upon successful defense of the thesis.

### **Function description**

- Carry out cutting edge academic research within an international team of engaged researchers and experts from UNU-MERIT and Deltares;
- Publish international journal articles resulting in a PhD thesis;
- Participate in and present at international scientific and policy meetings and events to report research findings and contribute to dissemination activities.

### **REQUIREMENTS**

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Candidates should have:

- A master's degree from a relevant academic field, including public health, environmental engineering, water resources management, governance, nutrition, migration and/or refugee studies, humanitarian studies, or other related topics;
- Experience in interdisciplinary research;
- Proficiency in English, with a minimum level of 600 PBT / 240 CBT / 100 IBT for the [TOEFL](#) or 7.0 for the [IELTS](#) (native speakers of English and students who received their Bachelor's or Master's education in English are exempt). Maastricht University's TOEFL code is 7102. Fluency in other languages is an advantage.
- Excellent writing skills;
- Team work spirit and preferably experience in working in international teams;
- Knowledge and field experience in refugee or displacement settlements, or in water supply, sanitation or hygiene education (WASH) in fragile states and hosting countries is an asset.

### **Application requirements:**

All applications are to be submitted by email to [phdapplication@merit.unu.edu](mailto:phdapplication@merit.unu.edu) and should include a PDF attachment with a cover letter clarifying your motivation and eligibility for this position, and a detailed CV (including list of publications if available). All applications will be reviewed, and upon initial selection, short-listed candidates will be asked to provide:

- certified copies of your certificates and grades and an explanation of the grading system
- proof of English proficiency
- three letters of recommendation (in English only) by current or former professors or employers
- copy of your passport
- passport size photo
- full information about your present study and/or job

Details on how to provide this information will be communicated to all shortlisted candidates.

### **Conditions of employment**

The candidate is expected to start by 1 September 2020. The initial appointment will be for a period of 1 year. After positive evaluation, the appointment will be extended for another 3 years.

The selected candidate will receive a UNU Fellowship and the tuition fees for the program will be waived.

### **Information and Application**

For more information on this vacancy, you can contact Prof Bartel Van de Walle at UNU-MERIT via email. Applications should be sent to [phdapplication@merit.unu.edu](mailto:phdapplication@merit.unu.edu) before July 31 2020.

### **UNU-MERIT AND DELTARES**

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**Host Institution: UNU-MERIT** is a joint research and training institute of UNU and Maastricht University. The Institute explores the social, political and economic factors that drive technological innovation, with a particular focus on the creation, diffusion and access to knowledge. Working with the Maastricht Graduate School of Governance (MGSoG), UNU-MERIT covers all aspects of governance in domestic and global organizations, from risk assessment to policy analysis, design and evaluation. In its work, UNU-MERIT researches how countries can catch up in the unequal global playing field of the 21st century, without increasing inequality and social exclusion; analyses knowledge flows at the regional and global levels, and their impact on local development, employment and productivity; and trains specialists who combine a high level of academic scholarship with leadership, in order to strengthen democratic governance in domestic and international organizations.

**DELTARES** is an independent institute for applied research in the field of water and subsurface. Throughout the world, we work on smart solutions, innovations and applications for people, environment and society. Our main focus is on deltas, coastal regions and river basins. Managing these densely populated and vulnerable areas is complex, which is why we work closely with governments, businesses, other research institutes and universities at home and abroad. Our motto is Enabling Delta Life. As an applied research institute, the success of Deltares can be measured in the extent to which our expert knowledge can be used in and for society. For Deltares the quality of our expertise and advice comes first.