Saarland University is a campus university with an international reputation for research excellence, particularly in computer science and in the life sciences and nanosciences. The university is also distinguished by its close ties to France and its strong European focus. Around 17,000 students, studying over one hundred different academic disciplines, are currently enrolled at Saarland University. Saarland University is officially recognized as one of Germany’s family-friendly higher-education institutions and with a combined workforce of more than 4000 it is one of the largest employers in the region.

The Department of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine, Saarland University and University Hospital is inviting applications for the following position commencing at the earliest opportunity.

**Academic research assistant (m/f/x)**

**Reference number W2044**, salary in accordance with the German TV-L salary scale\(^1\), pay grade: E13 initially for 2 years with possibility for extension, employment: 50 % of standard working time.

**Workplace/Department:**
At the Department of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine, Saarland University and University Hospital, we have a well-established team working on the role of nutrition in metabolism and different areas of health. We have established analytical platforms to measure modern metabolic and nutritional biomarkers that are modified by nutrients. Moreover, we conduct clinical studies, systematic reviews and meta-analyses of existing literature and accommodate tools of evidence based medicine in the field of nutrition. We have currently 7 students perusing their MD Degree in different fields of nutrition and health. One key health area of interest for our work is foeto-maternal health.

Taking folic acid during pregnancy reduces the risk of neural tube defects (NTDs) in the newborn by approximately 50%, but it does not prevent all cases. NTDs are serious defects that affect the central nervous system of the child during early development (first pregnancy trimester). NTDs have a high recurrence rate (among families) suggesting either inherited or environmental factors. It is not clear how folic acid can prevent NTDs, it possibly has un-specific effect. In addition, NTDs show a sex distortion with more females born with NTDs than male. It is theoretically possible that male fetuses are at lower risk of NTD or they might be lost (unrecognized abortion or early death) at early gestational age (thus causing detection bias).

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\(^1\) TV-L = collective agreement on remuneration of public sector employees in the German Länder

The pay grade assigned to an employee depends on their professional qualifications and the number of years of service. Each pay grade is further subdivided into levels. Entry-level employees with no previous experience will initially be assigned a level 1 rating. After one year at level 1 of the E10 pay grade, an employee will move up to level 2. After a further two years, the employee will move to level 3, etc.
We are interested in identifying additional and underestimated risk factors of NTDs which will help developing strong recommendations on a population level. The final aim is to prevent as many birth defects and as many cases as possible.

We are looking for highly motivated people to join our team to develop the evidence on risk factors for birth defects.

**Job requirements and responsibilities:**
- We expect that the Candidate will work on topic related to neural tube defects and will aim to pursue a PhD and we therefore look for a candidate who fulfills all requirements for pursuing a PhD at the Saarland University.

**Your academic qualifications:**
- Completed scientific university studies in biology, natural science, toxicology, public health, epidemiology, biometry or related disciplines. The candidate should optimally have some project experience.

**The successful candidate will also be expected to:**
- be well informed about the methodologies and principles of systematic reviews and meta-analyses. Optimally this should be documented (publication or support letters of unpublished works) by working on similar methods within a team or independently.
- at least basic experience in conducting statistical analyses with SPSS, Comprehensive Meta-analysis or similar programs.
- be able to work within a team, learn from others, and share his/her experience with others (co-supervise students)
- proactive, be able to work independently, and stick to timelines
- apply for funding, work on publications, and present his/her work at internal and external meetings
- excellent German and English language (reading and writing)
- confidence in working with essential IT Programs such as PowerPoint, Excel, etc.

**What we can offer you:**
- A flexible work schedule allowing you to balance work and family
- A broad range of further education and professional development programmes
- An occupational health management model with numerous attractive options, such as our university sports programme
- Supplementary pension scheme (RZVK)
- Discounted tickets on local public transport services (‘Jobticket’)

We look forward to receiving your **meaningful online application** (in a PDF file) by 31.03.2022 to Rima.obeid@uks.eu. Please include the reference number W2044 in the subject line of the e-mail.

If you have any **questions**, please contact us for assistance. Your contact:
Frau Prof. Dr. Rima Obeid
Rima.obeid@uks.eu
Tel.: 068411630711

The Saarland University is an equal opportunities employer. In accordance with its policy of increasing the proportion of women in this type of employment, the University actively encourages applications from women. Women are given preference in cases of equal suitability, ability and professional performance.

We welcome applications regardless of gender, nationality, ethnic and social origin, religion/belief, disability, age, and sexual orientation and identity.

Applications from severely disabled persons will be given preferential consideration in the event of equal suitability. Part-time employment is generally possible.
Pay grade classification is based on the particular details of the position held and the extent to which the applicant meets the requirements of the pay grade within the TV-L salary scale.

Unfortunately, costs for attending an interview at Saarland University cannot be reimbursed in principle.

When you submit a job application to Saarland University you will be transmitting personal data. Please refer to our privacy notice for information on how we collect and process personal data in accordance with Art. 13 of the Datenschutz-Grundverordnung. By submitting your application you confirm that you have taken note of the information in the Saarland University privacy notice.