



**Postdoctoral Research Associate/Project Manager  
The Jacobs Institute for Innovation in Education**

**JOB DESCRIPTION**

*Title: Postdoctoral Research Associate/Project Manager*

*Organization: SOLES*

*Department: The Jacobs Institute for Innovation in Education (JI)*

*Reports to: Dr. Yaoran Li (Principal Investigator)*

*Location: San Diego office*

*Full-time, temporary, exempt, non-continuing, benefits-based*

*Yearly Salary Rate: \$56,000-62,000*

The mission of The Jacobs Institute is to empower educational dreamers, designers, and leaders through inclusive innovation. Over the past eight years, The Jacobs Institute has established itself as a credible and important voice in K-12 education, particularly in advancing innovation and equity in schools. In collaboration with some of the nation's largest urban school districts, The Jacobs Institute's team of experts partners with educational organizations to understand students' learning and development processes, identify best practices, build capacity and improve student outcomes through research and development, strategic direction, and professional learning.

**GENERAL PURPOSE**

The Postdoctoral Research Associate (project manager) will work on the three-year collaborative project "VisMO" funded by the National Science Foundation on visuospatial skill development and mathematical learning, led by Dr. Yaoran Li of the University of San Diego and Dr. David Geary of the University of Missouri (see <https://www.sandiego.edu/soles/jacobs-institute/research-evaluation/>, for more information). The successful candidate will join a productive interdisciplinary team of scientists, educators, and artists from multiple organizations to develop a first-of-its-kind educational program and curriculum to foster elementary school children's visuospatial skills development using origami. Collaborating with local schools and informal learning organizations, project VisMO consists of design-based research and a rigorous experimental study to explore effective teaching and learning strategies as well as examine the causal link between children's visuospatial skills development and their longitudinal gains in mathematical competencies. This project has a focus on English Language Learners (ELLs), so we specifically welcome researchers who have the expertise and/or are interested in this student population to apply.

The successful candidate will collaborate closely with the PIs and participate in all aspects of this research project, from curriculum design, program implementation, and data collection, to publications. The successful candidate will also serve as the project manager. Under the general



guidance of the PIs, the postdoctoral associate will direct the day-to-day operations of the study, such as guidance to research assistants, compilation of the training and scoring protocols, and communication with the WestEd team and the partner schools on the data collection. Additional responsibilities will include engaging in writing new grant proposals and presenting research results to key stakeholders.

The initial appointment will be of one year, with the possibility of renewal based on performance and funding. The review starts on September 10th. The position is open until filled.

#### SUPERVISION RECEIVED

Working under the general supervision of the principal investigator, Dr. Yaoran Li.

#### SUPERVISION EXERCISED

Serving as a lead worker over research assistants as assigned.

#### KEY RESPONSIBILITIES & DUTIES

- Planning and organizing the resources to successfully complete the project objectives under the direction of the principal investigator.
- Assisting with the curriculum and training material development.
- Coordinating with team members and partners, including the sub-award institution and contractors to develop and implement research plans.
- Conducting data analyses and writing reports and journal articles.
- Participating in presentations and networking opportunities
- Participating in new grant proposal writing and preparation efforts.

#### QUALIFICATIONS

Required:

- Earned doctorate in psychology, education, sociology, or a related field.
- Demonstrated experience with quantitative and qualitative research methodologies.
- Proven ability to write research reports and communicate findings to researchers, practitioners, and lay audiences.
- Excellent organizational, planning, and communication skills.
- Proven ability to follow through with tasks, work independently and meet deadlines.
- This position requires travel domestically, 15-20% time.

Preferred:

- Experience in curriculum development or engaged learning or professional development materials design.
- History of publication in high-impact peer-reviewed journals.

- Experience working collaboratively with a diverse team in a fast-paced environment.

#### Document requirements

- Cover Letter - Please provide a brief description of your relevant research background.
- Curriculum Vitae - Your most recently updated C.V.
- 3-5 references (contact information only)

#### BACKGROUND CHECK

Successful completion of a pre-employment background check is required after a contingent offer of employment is made. The contingent offer may be finalized once the background investigation has been completed and the results accepted by the university.

#### TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT USED

Telephone  
Desktop computer  
Laptop  
Various mobile devices  
Audio recorder  
Various office equipment: printer, copier, etc.

#### PHYSICAL DEMANDS

Limited physical demands, typical of work in an office environment.  
Visual and dexterity demands of computer usage.

#### WORK ENVIRONMENT

Typical office environment with desk, chair, phone, filing cabinets, bookshelves, and desktop computers.

The work environment characteristics described here are representative of those an employee encounters while performing the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

*The duties listed above are intended only as illustrations of the various types of work that may be performed. The omission of specific statements of duties does not exclude them from the position if the work is similar, related or a logical assignment to the position.*

#### Contact Information

Dr. Yaoran Li  
Jacobs Institute for Innovation in Education  
University of San Diego  
San Diego, CA 92110  
yaoranli@sandiego.edu