

JOB OFFER
PhD position in Leadership Development
Department of Economics, Management and Leadership
In collaboration with Maastricht University, Faculty of Psychology and Neuroscience
Project LEAP-2
Publication: 04/03/2025

OFFER DESCRIPTION

The Department of Economics, Management, and Leadership at the [Royal Military Academy](#) offers a fully funded, four-year doctoral position in leadership development research (Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior). Starting in September 2025, this role is ideal for those passionate about leadership research and eager to contribute to this field. The doctoral candidate will be based at the RMA working with **Sten Delvaux** as the project lead.

Your position

This position is open to a First Stage Researcher and provides an opportunity to pursue a joint PhD between the RMA and **Maastricht University (UM) (Promotor: Ass. Prof. Sjir Uitdewilligen)**. As a PhD student, you will explore leadership development, with a focus on designing, conducting, and publishing research projects. The research process typically involves the conceptualization of the research questions and ideas, data collection, qualitative and quantitative analysis of the data, and writing and presenting of academic papers. The aim is to publish those projects in high-quality academic journals. Additionally, funding is available for conference participation and two research stays at Maastricht University.

The project

When operating in dynamic and unpredictable contexts, leaders must be able to flexibly switch between different leadership styles and behaviors. Yet, there is a lack of knowledge on how leaders can be trained to dynamically adjust their behaviors when the situation so requires. In addition, reliable assessment of such adaptive leadership has been an important issue in research on the construct.

Therefore, the project objectives are: (1) to contribute knowledge on how adaptive leadership capabilities can be objectively assessed, (2) to identify factors contributing to its development, and (3) to design and test an intervention for developing adaptive capabilities in leaders. While your research will be part of the LEAP project (see below), the specific focus of your dissertation remains flexible and will be shaped by your supervisors' guidance.

This position provides a unique opportunity to gain expertise in diverse research methods. In the early stages, the focus will be on qualitative research, while later phases involve quantitative approaches, such as co-designing and conducting behavioral experiments to develop an assessment tool and implementing a randomized controlled trial (RCT) in a real-world setting.

Context

By joining this project, you will help establish the **Research Unit on Leadership (RU-LEAD)** at the RMA. The RU-LEAD is launching a research project called **“Leadership Enhancement and Performance” (LEAP)**, focusing on two main research objectives related to adaptive military leadership: (1) shaping adaptive routines (LEAP-1) and **(2) developing adaptive leaders (LEAP-2)**. To achieve these goals, two PhD students will be recruited—one for each research objective. This job offer pertains to the second research objective (i.e., developing adaptive leaders).

REQUIREMENTS

Specific requirements

- The researcher may be exposed to classified information and will therefore have to obtain the required security clearance. The candidate must consent with the background check required to obtain this clearance, which will be executed by Belgian Defense.
- Employment with the Patrimony requires living in Belgium for the duration of the study.

Your profile

1. An academic Master’s or Research Master’s degree in relevant disciplines, such as psychology, management/business, applied economic sciences. Research Masters are highly valued.
2. Completed the previous degree with an excellent GPA.
3. Passion for scientific research and a strong interest in leadership development.
4. Proficiency in English. Knowledge of French or Dutch is an added value.
5. A solid basis in research skills and academic writing, with enthusiasm for developing skills, applying qualitative and quantitative methods, and adopting open science practices.
6. Proactive, curious with strong communication skills.
7. Excited to present research to scholars and professionals.

WHAT DO WE OFFER?

Contract

- Starting date: September 2025.
- Full-time employment based on an open-ended contract with the Patrimony of the Royal Military Academy (you will not be a civil servant). Note: while your contract will be open-ended, the financing of the contract will be tied to the funding project (4 years). A continuation may be possible, contingent on a positive evaluation and the availability of new funding.
- Wage scale class A1. Note: RMA-Patrimony applies a merit-based research career track, allowing researchers to advance in wage scale based upon annual evaluations.
- Holiday pay.

Extra-legal benefits

- Possibility to benefit from a bilingualism allowance (Dutch/French) following a SELOR test;
- End-of-year bonus;
- Free DKV hospitalization insurance. Possibility of additional affiliation for one or more persons living under the same roof: spouse, child(ren) (50% of the price per additional member);
- Bike allowance / Free public transport (home-work commute);
- Meal vouchers (6€ / day);
- Free access to campus sports facilities outside working hours;

- On-campus restaurant and cafeteria with democratic prices (discount on the daily menu);
- Flexible working hours within the 38-hour week;
- Teleworking possible with allowance (2 days / week max);
- Holidays:
 - 29 days holiday / year from the 1st year of contract (then from 45 years: +1 day holiday every 5 years)
 - 1 week OFF every year between Christmas and New Year's Eve (independent of the annual balance of holidays).
- Advantages and interesting offers thanks to the Benefits@work card (discounts, vouchers...);
- Entitlement to services offered by the 'Office Central d'Action Sociale et Culturelle de la Défense' (OCASC): among others holiday centres, discount on travel organised by the tour operator...;
- Possibility to benefit from the nursery funded by Belgian Defence (subject to availability).

SELECTION PROCESS

Application deadline: 4 April 2025

Please send by email:



- CV
- Scan of your ID card (both sides)
- Letter of motivation
- Official copy of your grades (full transcripts of BSc and MSc)
- Contact details of at least one reference

To Sten Delvaux (sten.delvaux@mil.be) and Prof. Sijr Uitdewilligen (Sijr.Uitdewilligen@Maastrichtuniversity.nl), with erm-deao-rsw@mil.be in Cc.

Please ensure that the project reference "LEAP-2" is clearly stated in the subject line of your email. (N.B. LEAP-2 = LEAP research objective 2: developing adaptive leaders).

We will review applications starting 4 April 2025. Online interviews are expected to follow in late April, with preselected candidates notified in advance of their interview date and time.

If you have any further questions about this position, feel free to reach out to us.

 Excited to hear from you: Take the LEAP with Us! 

WORK LOCATIONS

1. Main work location: **Royal Military Academy**, Avenue de la Renaissance 30, 1000 Brussels, Belgium.
2. Collaborating university: **Maastricht University**, Minderbroedersberg 4-6, 6211 LK Maastricht, Netherlands.