

Research Assistants Sought for *Children, Media and Conflict Zones* Lab at Penn State for Summer and Fall 2020 – Summer Application Deadline: May 2,2020

The *Children, Media and Conflict Zones* Lab, created through the Rock Ethics Institute *Children, Youth, and Media in International and Global Conflict Zones* Initiative, explores how media may be used to play meaningful roles in conflict zones. Given that demographically, children and youth are most impacted by armed conflict, the initiative and lab focus on exploring best practices for using media (as artifact, intervention, and content) to aid and empower children and youth. More information about the lab may be found here: <https://bellisario.psu.edu/research/centers/children-media-and-conflict-zones-lab>

The lab is seeking Research Assistants (RAs) for 2020-2021 to work in the *Children, Media and Conflict Zones* Lab. The current application cycle applies to Summer 2020 and/or Fall 2020, though interested applicants may also apply early for Spring and/or Summer 2021. **Selected applicants will assist with projects exploring (1) the role media may play in helping or empowering children and youth in conflict zones internationally, (2) how refugee youth use media technologies to navigate their education, displacement, and conflict within global human rights contexts, and/or 3) how media interventions influence conflict zones and/or refugee children's political opinions, inter-group attitudes, and/or age them biologically.**

Involvement in the lab will provide opportunities to learn about major debates surrounding refugee youth, educational access, social media, communication rights, public opinion, social-psychological and biological effects, and understanding about and practice in research methods. Separate of that, there may also be opportunities to become involved in public outreach. The RAs will work directly with **Yael Warshel, Assistant Professor in the Bellisario College of Communications, Rock Ethics Research Associate, and Affiliated Faculty of International Affairs, Comparative and International Education, and African and Middle East Studies.**

Required Skills: Excellent (1) English writing and editing skills, (2) organizational skills, (3) ability to understand academic articles and summarize them in written form, and (4) ability to search Online library and other databases and synthesize relevant information retrieved. **Additional preferred skills in one or all of the following:** (1) fluency in Spanish, Arabic and/or French (2) ability to make sense of and manipulate basic statistical data, (3) excellent video editing skills, preferably in Final Cut Pro, (4) prior transcription experience, (5) prior translation experience, (6) prior coordination, outreach and/or event planning experience, and (7) background in international affairs, political science, ethics, education, communications or related fields.

To achieve the initiative's goals, RAs will analyze secondary literature and related statistical data to provide theoretical frameworks and background for several of the lab's projects, including to situate primary data. Literature to be analyzed include that about (1) comparative international, global, conflict, gender, family, youth and children studies, to map theoretical frameworks about children, youth, media and international and global conflict and promote relevant policy and practice, (2) education, media, technology and communication rights, to be used for situating educational, lifestyle, and media-use decisions made by Sahrawi refugee youth, and/or (3) inter-group communication and psychological and biological stress. RAs fluent in Spanish, Arabic or French, may be asked to read relevant academic literature in their respective languages and synthesize into English. Those fluent in Spanish and/or Arabic may also be asked to (4) work with primary data collection, e.g. by assisting with translation and transcription of previously conducted interviews with Sahrawis and by helping to conduct future interviews. Finally, RAs may be asked to (5) coordinate lab meetings and/or events to promote policy-relevant outreach.

Dependent on selected applicant's unit and relevant other considerations, students will receive directed research or internship credit for a full course (equivalent to 3 units of credit in most departments/schools/colleges) for involvement in the lab.

If the aims of the initiative appeal to you and you're interested in getting involved or want to know more, please contact Professor Yael Warshel at ywarshel@gmail.com

The deadline to submit applications for Summer 2020 is May 2, 2020. (Deadline for Fall or thereafter is May 15, 2020)

Interested applicants are required to submit the below information by the deadline:

- (1) Short statement of interest in the initiative (1 to 3 paragraphs sufficient).
In your statement, list whether you are applying for a Summer and/or Fall 2020 RAship and/or for a later date in 2021 (including any preference for more than one time period), degree you are working towards, year, and program of study; and briefly explain what about the lab or which specific projects are of interest, including as they relate to your own background and expertise.
- (2) CV
- (3) Transcript (unofficial is fine)
- (4) Your summer 2020 and projected courses and schedule through Summer 2021
- (5) Names of 2-3 faculty references
- (6) One writing sample (this will be used to assess relevant secondary research, reading and writing skills. Writing sample subject matter is not important).

Upon review of application materials, those passing to the next stage will be interviewed via Zoom for final decision-making.

In addition to advancing their assigned projects individually and collaboratively on a weekly basis, those selected will be expected to also attend weekly lab meetings. For the duration of Summer 2020, and as needed into Fall 2020 and so on, all collaborative work and meetings will be held via Zoom or other electronic means out of strict precautions against the spread of COVID-19.