



*For the European Research Council (ERC) funded project:*

*“Race Matter: the absent presence of race in forensic identification”*

**3 PhD positions in Anthropology of Science(full-time)**

**are offered:**

**General description**

The Amsterdam Institute of Social Science Research (AISSR) and the Department of Anthropology at the University of Amsterdam are looking for 3 PhD candidates who will participate in the ERC funded research project “*Race Matter: The absent presence of race in forensic investigation*”, directed by Dr. Amade M’charek.

The Department of Anthropology is one of the departments of the Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences (FMG). Research and education are carried out by special institutes. Research takes place under the aegis of the AISSR, a multidisciplinary research institute, the biggest one of its kind in the Netherlands and possibly in Europe. The broad scope and pluralism of our education and research programmes are inspired by and reflect a strong degree of internationalisation.

Links:

1. [Amsterdam Institute of Social Science research \(AISSR\)](#)
2. [Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences \(FMG\)](#)
3. [Department of Anthropology](#)

**Vacancy Type**

3 PhD candidates, full-time positions of 38 hours per week or 1.0 FTE

**Project Description**

This project examines race in forensic identification by focusing on practices of giving a face to an unknown individual, a suspect or a victim. Although the face is generally viewed as the ultimate individual identifier, in practice individuality cannot be achieved without situating an individual in a population. The question is whether and how population gets translated into race.

The chief objective of this project is to explore a) how technologies of identification rely on and reiterate racial ways of understanding differences; b) how the version of race enacted in the process changes as knowledge travels across forensic sites; and c) which mechanisms contribute to the absent-presentness of race.



The 3 PhDs will focus on different technologies of identification through in-depth multi-sited ethnographies: (1) genetic facial phenotyping (e.g. the inference of facial form, hair, skin and iris colour from DNA); (2) craniofacial reconstruction (based on the skull); and (3) facial composite through sketching or photofit. Each of these technologies will be the focus of 1 PhD project. Ethnographies will be conducted throughout the full chain of forensic evidence making from the R&D laboratories to the forensic institutes, police stations and the courtroom. Across these sites the focus is on how knowledge travels and identities get translated.

The project will make an original contribution to the anthropology of science and the anthropology of race in particular, by following knowledge around and attending to the ways race gets made and unmade in practices.

### **Tasks**

- Conduct ethnographic field research.
- Write and complete a PhD dissertation within four years
- Participate in the AISSR PhD programme
- Participate in conferences, workshops, seminars and other scholarly activities.

### **Requirements**

PhD candidates should have the following credentials:

- Relevant experience with ethnographic field research, ideally also with material semiotics.
- Well versed in STS theories and methods, such as Actor Network Theory and post-colonial studies.
- A completed MA degree in anthropology, science and technology studies, post-colonial studies or related fields such as qualitative sociology or human geography.
- Excellent written and spoken English and ideally also Dutch linguistic skills.
- Ability and interest to work in a team.

### **Further information**

For more information please contact the principal investigator, Dr. Amade M'charek.

E-mail: [a.a.mcharek@uva.nl](mailto:a.a.mcharek@uva.nl)

Personal profile: [Dr. Amade M'charek](#)

Project website: [More on the project \(see the FaceRaceID tab\)](#)



## Appointment

The full-time appointments will be for a period of four years (12 months plus a further 36 months contingent on a satisfactory performance during the first year), starting 1 April 2015. The gross monthly salary will be € 2,125 in the first year and € 2,717 in the fourth year, based on a full-time position (38 hours per week), plus 8% holiday allowance and 8,3% end-of-year allowance. This is in conformity with the Collective Labour Agreement of Dutch Universities.

## Job application

Applications by email only. These should include the following documents:

In a single PDF file:

- I. A motivation letter (maximum 400 words)
- II. A full curriculum vitae
- III. A preliminary proposal outlining the candidate's own research proposal in relation to the broader project, based on one of the three face-making technologies indicated above in the project description. This proposal should include information on relevant literature, research questions, methodological strategies and theoretical implications (maximum 2.000 words).
- IV. Names and contact details of three references

In a separate, single PDF file:

- I. Two writing samples (thesis and/or essay or and/or article), which provide evidence of ethnographic fieldwork experience and ability to theorize.

All correspondence will be in English. Applications must be sent as e-mail attachments to [application-antr-fmg@uva.nl](mailto:application-antr-fmg@uva.nl) before February 28, 2015. The subject of the e-mail message and the attachment must consist of the text "FaceRaceID + applicant's last name". The file with the writing samples needs to have 'sample' added to the last name.

A selection of candidates will be interviewed from March through April 2015. The appointments will start in May 2015.