

## HEC Liège is looking for a PhD Researcher (M/F) on “Organizational and Human Challenges of Industry 4.0”

(ref. HEC-DL2103)

The **HEC Digital Lab**<sup>1</sup> is the transdisciplinary platform within HEC Liège, spearheading research and education in digital technologies. As part of its expansion, it is now looking for a PhD researcher for an exciting, innovative research project on:

### *Organizational and Human Challenges of Industry 4.0*

The project is sponsored by various industrial leading organization, interested in developing a better understanding of the organizational and human challenges of the transition towards Industry 4.0. This, in order to take full advantage of its associated opportunities and leverage effects on their competitiveness.

Thus, this project will provide a unique opportunity to the selected candidate to conduct high-impact, relevant research and to provide innovative recommendations on the topic, while acquiring practical knowledge within a business setting.

A brief project description is given below. However, the specific research topics will be refined once the candidate has been selected.

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Our overarching aim is to acquire deeper insights on the organizational and human challenges of the Industry 4.0. Indeed, one of the main results on which many recent studies on “the industry of the future” agree, is that the key issue of the transition to the Industry 4.0 is not necessarily related to the technological factors, but rather to the organizational and human challenges and opportunities. The objectives of this research are therefore:

- to deepen this observation which underlines the crucial role of organizational and human factors;
- to better understand these organizational/human issues in the regional context of Wallonia;
- to identify innovative solutions and recommendations for companies wishing to take advantage of the opportunities of Industry 4.0.

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<sup>1</sup> Visit us on <https://www.digitallab.be/en/>

Depending on the doctoral student's specific research interests in relation to this theme, all or part of the following questions will be explicitly integrated into the candidate's doctoral work:

- Which work organization should be favored to make the most of Industry 4.0? What are the key issues/challenges in the evolution of organizational models and work practices related to Industry 4.0?
- What are the expected skills of production operators in the industry of the future? How to anticipate, prepare and manage this transition in the needed skills?
- Which kind of "digital culture" should be developed to promote this transition of industrial companies to industry 4.0 models? Under what conditions?
- How to manage the transition to industry 4.0? Which change management approach to favor in the regional context? How to involve workers when a company wants to evolve towards new organizational/industrial models based on the "factory of the future" principles?
- How do such realities differ in different contexts, for example between large companies and SMEs? Can specific issues, requiring customized solutions, be associated with more particular contexts? Which ones?

In order to grasp these issues and challenges, as well as to propose detailed and relevant solutions, the doctoral research will suppose the realization of case studies, anchored in the reality of Walloon businesses<sup>2</sup>.

## JOB DESCRIPTION

If selected, you will have the opportunity to:

- Be part of a leading and dynamic business school, located at the heart of Europe;
- Be involved in the LENTIC<sup>3</sup> research team, internationally recognized for its expertise on the organizational and human challenges of digital transformation projects;
- Attend a world-class doctoral training program at various Universities in Belgium and also overseas in Summer Schools;
- Be exposed to real-world business challenges;
- Work full-time on ground-breaking research as there is no teaching load;
- Represent HEC Liege at international scientific conferences.

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<sup>2</sup> We refer here to the 'Digital Wallonia' strategy and more specifically its *Industrie du Futur* programme.

<sup>3</sup> Visit us on <http://www.lentic.be>

## YOUR PROFILE

- You have a strong Master's degree in a field relevant to the project (business engineering, management sciences, human resource management, or other related disciplines);
- You have a strong interest in studying the issues/challenges of digitalization (especially in the industrial sector);
- You have an appetite for research and a good analytical/critical mind;
- You master qualitative and quantitative research methodologies;
- You are autonomous and have good organizational skills;
- You are willing to regularly disseminate and publish research results;
- You have very good English written/spoken communication skills (Fluency in French is an asset –especially for fieldwork– but is not mandatory).

## CONTRACT & SALARY

This is a full-time position for four years (an initial two years' contract + two more years upon positive evaluation). The salary will be set according to the doctoral researcher salary scale of the University of Liège under grant holder status (i.e., approximately 2.100 € net per month, fixed over the entire period). The candidate will ideally start in October 2021.

## APPLICATION PACKAGE

- Cover letter showing your motivation and eligibility for the PhD position;
- CV showing your past experience and expertise in the PhD area if any;
- An example of your written academic work, if any;
- A copy of your undergraduate and postgraduate degrees;
- A recommendation letter, to be sent directly by the person recommending you.

Interested candidates should send their application material (a single compressed folder containing all files) **by email** to Dr. Nicolas NEYSEN, HEC Digital Lab ([nicolas.neysen@uliege.be](mailto:nicolas.neysen@uliege.be)) as well as to Prof. Dr. Olivier LISEIN ([o.lisein@uliege.be](mailto:o.lisein@uliege.be)) and to Prof. Dr. François PICHAULT ([f.pichault@uliege.be](mailto:f.pichault@uliege.be)), LENTIC.

Applications should be received **by August 15, 2021 at the latest**.

Incomplete applications will be automatically rejected. Further information can be obtained by sending an email to Prof. Olivier LISEIN ([o.lisein@uliege.be](mailto:o.lisein@uliege.be)).

## ABOUT HEC LIEGE

HEC Liège<sup>4</sup> is the management school of the University of Liège. HEC Liège is one of the leading Belgian university business schools for graduate and postgraduate programs with more than 115 full-time faculty members and researchers and more than 2500 students. HEC Liège is a dynamic institution that heavily promotes an active pedagogy leading students to contribute actively to their own education. The international vision of HEC Liège translates into multiple research activities in management and economics, numerous partnerships with worldwide companies and universities, and growing internationalization of its programs and faculty.

HEC Liège is located in Liège, Belgium's third largest city, and the largest agglomeration of the French-speaking Walloon region. At the heart of Europe, Liège is the third inland port of Europe and the seventh freight airport in Europe. Recognized for its quality of life and its rich historical heritage, Liège is ideally situated within the Meuse-Rhin Euregio, 30 km from Maastricht (the Netherlands) and 60 km from Aachen (Germany). It is less than 1.5 hours away from Cologne, 2.5 hours from Paris and 4 hours from London by high-speed train (TGV) starting from the new magnificent train station designed by the renowned architect Santiago Calatrava.

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<sup>4</sup> Visit us on <http://www.hec.uliege.be/en/home>