

# THE UNIVERSITY *of York*

## Department of Social Policy and Social Work

### International Centre for Mental Health Social Research Doctoral Studentship

Application deadline: 23.59 on 30<sup>th</sup> August 2013

Interviews: During w/c 9<sup>th</sup> September 2013 at the University of York

Studentship commences: October 2013

#### PhD studentship

This PhD studentship will be based at the [International Centre for Mental Health Social Research](#) in the [Department of Social Policy and Social Work](#) at the [University of York](#).

The studentship pays Home / EU tuition fees for 3 years of full-time study for a PhD and an annual maintenance grant at the standard Research Council rate (in 2013/14 this will be £14,142). Funding will also be available for research expenses. Students from outside the EU are welcome to apply but they will need to self-fund the additional tuition fees for overseas students (information about fees for overseas students can be found at <http://www.york.ac.uk/study/postgraduate/fees-funding/fees-2013-2014/>).

All students will need to meet the English language requirements for the Department of Social Policy and Social Work (IELTS 6.5 overall, with a minimum of 6.0 in each component).

This studentship provides an opportunity for an individual with interest and expertise in mental health social research to join a new collaborative research centre and help to shape its future. The successful candidate will be supported and encouraged to design and undertake their own original empirical research project, within one of the Centre's research themes. Candidates are encouraged to include an international dimension to their project, which may be facilitated by our international collaborators, although research plans will need to be agreed with the Centre Director to ensure they are feasible within the funding available.

Applicants will be considered on the basis of their:

1. Prior academic achievements (the minimum qualifications required are a Bachelors degree of 2:1 or equivalent and a Masters degree passed at merit or above in a relevant subject)
2. Prior research methods training (included as a substantial portion of prior undergraduate or postgraduate education)
3. Research proposal (please see below for further information about this)
4. Career plans (this studentship is suited to a candidate wishing to pursue a career in mental health social research)

#### International Centre for Mental Health Social Research

Mental health problems affect one in four of us during our lifetime and they present a significant global economic and social burden. Treatment for conditions such as severe depression, bi-polar affective disorder or psychosis usually comprises medication or psychological therapy. However, these are either unavailable (especially in many low or middle income countries) or unable to address social problems which contribute to the cause or continuation of serious mental health problems. Evidence of the effectiveness of social interventions which tackle common problems such as inadequate social support is emerging, but research is hampered by the limited integration of insights from social science into mental health research.

The International Centre for Mental Health Social Research (ICMHSR) brings together [researchers at the University of York](#) with [researchers from Australia, USA, Europe and India](#) to undertake a unique research programme applying social science to mental health practice. The collaboration explores the role of social problems in the cause and course of mental health problems, and develops and evaluates innovative ways of tackling them. This includes validating research tools for use in different cultures, supporting local practice-based research, and evaluating approaches such as working with social networks and communities. ICMHSR researchers share knowledge across boundaries with the potential for significant global impact.

The work of ICMHSR researchers fall within four broad overlapping research themes as applied to mental health and well-being:

- Social determinants and outcomes
- Social and policy interventions
- Social networks and communities
- Care and support

### **Postgraduate Research Training**

The student will have access to the expertise of ICMHSR researchers at the University of York and its international collaborators. Additionally, the student will have access to all University of York and Department of Social Policy and Social work resources: computing, library, training, and social and academic networks. These include the lively PhD student community in the department, staff-student departmental seminars and ICMHSR research seminars.

The student will be included in collective ICMHSR activities and will be exposed to a number of other on-going research projects to gain additional experience in mental health social research. In addition to support from the Centre Director, who will supervise the PhD research, ICMHSR researchers and collaborators may be able to connect the student with local authority, health and voluntary sector mental health service providers who may be willing to host the research project.

The student and their supervisor will develop a training plan at the start of the PhD. In addition to the student-supervisor relationship and the support of ICMHSR members and collaborators, the student will have access to a wide range of training provision through departmental, University and outside courses (subject to agreement with the Centre Director). This will provide support in all the skills critical for this studentship such as quantitative and/or qualitative data collection and analysis, and software training.

### **PhD proposal**

A 2,500 word research proposal is required in the application which includes the following:

#### **1. Research question**

Please state the question clearly and concisely.

#### **2. Background**

Please outline the background to the study, including the relevant policy and practice context. Include relevant research in the topic area and highlight why the research question is important and timely. Please include a list of references at the end of the proposal. These will not be included in the word count.

#### **3. Method**

This is the most detailed section of the proposal. Separate your text using sub-headings such as design; setting; sample; procedures and analysis. Try to be as specific as possible in what you plan to do. If you are

using more than one method you will need to describe each separately. Include a timetable for your research including the full three years of the PhD.

#### **4. Ethical considerations**

Briefly state what you consider to be the main ethical considerations of the proposed research and how you plan to address them.

#### **5. Budget**

Please estimate the cost of your proposed research, including items such as participant fees, travel & subsistence or any other direct costs incurred in the conduct of the research.

#### **6. ICMHSR research theme**

Please state which ICMHSR research theme your project fits within and how it will include an international dimension (unless previously stated).

#### **How to apply**

Applicants for the studentship need to meet all the requirements for PhD study at the Department of Social Policy and Social Work, University of York. More information about studying for a PhD in Social Policy and Social Work can be found at <http://www.york.ac.uk/spsw/postgraduate/phd/>.

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You must apply online through the University of York online application service. For instructions and a link to the online application, please go to: <http://www.york.ac.uk/spsw/postgraduate/apply/>. Please search for 'social policy and social work PhD' in the online application system and select the 3 years full-time PhD option.

[Alternatively, click here to go direct to the application form.](#)

Please fill out all the sections of the online application service with the following stipulations:

- When asked 'How do you intend to finance your studies?' please insert 'This application is for the International Centre for Mental Health Social Research PhD scholarship'
- When asked to name a 'Preferred supervisor or research group, or field of research', please insert 'Martin Webber, ICMHSR'
- In the 'Research proposal' section, please write your proposal in the format specified above.
- When asked for a personal statement, state why this studentship and the research you would like to undertake is important to you, and how undertaking this PhD ties in with your future career plans. You have up to 1,000 words for this statement and please note that this is an important element of the selection process.
- You will need to supply two academic references. It will greatly assist the application process if you are able to upload these by 9<sup>th</sup> September so an offer can be made as soon as possible after the interviews.

**For any queries on this studentship please contact the ICMHSR Director, Martin Webber by email to [martin.webber@york.ac.uk](mailto:martin.webber@york.ac.uk).**