



# Queen Margaret University

## CENTRE FOR APPLIED SOCIAL SCIENCES

### **PhD Bursary Competition Centre for Applied Social Sciences**

Applications are invited for a research training bursary (i.e. A PhD plus Doctoral Certificate in Researcher Enhancement and Development). CASS Research Centre sits within the School of Arts, Social Sciences and Management at Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh. Applications are invited on any topic related to CASS's current research, but our topics for 2022 bursary applications are:

- BUR 22-10 Explorations of memory and belonging in experiential environments**  
(Dr Rebecca Finkel and Dr Stephen Darling)
- BUR 22-11 Equal Rights of Access to Environmental Justice in Scotland**  
(Dr Eurig Scandrett and Dr Stanley Nwankpa)

The successful applicant will be working within a highly skilled team of subject experts and will receive:

- full waiver of tuition fees.
- an annual stipend of £15,609 lasting 3 years for full-time study.
- a research budget of £2000 to cover project expenses and travel.

In addition to this bursary opportunity, CASS welcomes applications for co-supervision of students registered at other institutions or with external funding at any time. Self-funded and externally registered students would have more flexibility in the topic of their research and should contact relevant potential supervisors.

The deadline for applications is Friday 11 March 2022. [Visit our Bursary Competition web page for more information.](#)

## **BUR 22-10**

### **Explorations of memory and belonging in experiential environments**

This PhD draws upon cross-disciplinary scholarship from psychology and critical events studies, developing new understandings of individual/collective memories as they relate to experiential environments. Experience at cultural events is often emotional, linked to (re-)negotiation of identity and Bourdieusian ideas of status, habitus, and socio-cultural capital. Additionally, there are dynamics of power that are prevalent in such environments regarding event programming, participation, access, and inclusion. Therefore, different perspectives of experience influence memory.

This research seeks to answer the question 'Are people remembering the same things from events? And if not, why not?' This refers to diverse experiences – how they are remembered and by whom. There is also scope to extend this research into the digital event landscape, comparing the relationship of memory and experience between physical places and online spaces and how dis/emodied realms have an effect on memories.

Methodological approaches could employ mixed methods, as aligned with these subjects: quantitative methods for memory research and qualitative storytelling-centred research for experiential investigation. However, we are open to other options and look forward to hearing ideas for creative approaches.

This research is novel, as it cross-pollinates from distinct disciplines; as such, it has the potential to make an impactful contribution to both fields. For example, it can help to inform event design and production by applying attendees' memories of experiences to improve perceptions of safety, accessibility, and inclusivity. Also, it can contribute to understanding of individuals' cognition regarding memory and perceptions of events, which sets itself apart from bodies of work that have been conducted on cultural or collective memory for specific experiences, and, thus, there is the exciting opportunity to advance knowledge, both applied and conceptual.

What sorts of knowledge and skills are we looking for in an applicant?

- Innovative ideas about how an understanding of memory can help to inform how we think about creating recollections of lived experiences
- Basic research skills in qualitative and/or quantitative research and a willingness to learn and apply skills from both approaches
- Interest in critical event studies and/or psychology and a willingness to learn more about how these disciplines can be combined in praxis
- Dynamism and enthusiasm to drive these ideas forward

Your proposal should detail relevant interdisciplinary literature you might draw upon as well as outlining your proposed research design for the study outlined above.

**Research Centre: Centre for Applied Social Sciences**

**Supervisory team: Dr Rebecca Finkel and Dr Stephen Darling**

## **BUR 22-02**

### **Equal Rights of Access to Environmental Justice in Scotland**

QMU is seeking applications for a bursary-supported PhD that will explore access to environmental justice in Scotland, working in collaboration with the Environmental Rights Centre Scotland (ERCS).

#### **Background**

Environmental sustainability and social justice are two of the six core values in QMU's strategic plan, and this is embedded in many of the activities at QMU including research. The current institutional Research and Knowledge Exchange (KE) Strategy makes specific reference to "how we take action on local and global environmental challenges and promote more sustainable research and KE practices". This project seeks to make such action relevant to communities most affected by environmental injustices. The UK is a signatory to the UN Aarhus Convention on Access to Justice in Environmental Matters. The Scottish Government will be consulting on the Human Rights (Scotland) Bill scheduled for 2022 which will include the human right to a healthy environment and has funded the Environmental Rights Centre for Scotland ([ERCS](#)) Rights Worker through its Equality and Human Rights Fund.

#### **Research Methodology**

This project would employ a participatory action research methodology, working with a community (or communities) facing locally unwanted land uses in Scotland, who are connected to the Environmental Rights Centre for Scotland (ERCS). It will seek to identify barriers to accessing justice on the environment and how they can be overcome, particularly for minority groups. The project would work alongside ERCS's Rights Worker 'to advance the human right to a healthy environment for equality groups through engagement, education and advice'. The research will be of practical use to the communities and will inform ERCS's legal advocacy work to secure concrete progress on environmental rights in Scotland.

#### **Training**

This PhD project will equip the candidate with essential skills in public sociology including dialogical analysis, critical thinking and critical analysis, and problem-solving. As well as benefiting from the training provided by QMU's graduate school and support from the Doctoral Candidates Association (DCA), the candidate will also develop skills in research and academic writing through participation and presentations in research seminars at QMU and at other academic conferences. Links to relevant community interest groups, ERCS and any other local rights groups, to provide outreach and engagement opportunities will be facilitated under the supervision of Dr Eurig Scandrett who has led environmental justice research at QMU for over 15 years and is a recognised authority in this field.

#### **Person Specification**

Applicants should have an excellent postgraduate degree in sociology/any relevant social sciences/humanities discipline **OR** a first degree in any social science/humanities discipline with some experience of working with communities. Applications should also exhibit a strong interest in public sociology/environmental justice.

Your proposal should detail relevant literature you might draw upon as well as outlining your proposed research design for the study outlined above.

**Research Centre: Centre for Applied Social Sciences**

**Supervisory team: Dr Eurig Scandrett and Dr Stanley Nwankpa**