

Northeastern University London Fully Funded PhD Scholarship in Politics and International Relations

The Biopolitics of the Climate Crisis

Northeastern University London > Faculty of Politics and International Relations

Deadline: 16 October 2023

Funded PhD Project (UK or International Students)

Funding provider: Northeastern University London (NU London)

Subject areas: Contemporary Political Theory, Biopolitics, Sustainability

Project start date: 29 January 2024

Supervisors (*lead):

- Dr Sara Raimondi* (Northeastern University London)
- Dr Iain MacKenzie (University of Kent)

Aligned programme of study: PhD in Politics and International Relations

Mode of study: Full-time

Northeastern University London

As part of a major investment, Northeastern University London (NU London) has multiple, fully-funded PhD studentships available to accelerate its interdisciplinary research in the humanities, social sciences, and computing, maths, engineering and natural sciences. Each scholarship is fully-funded for three and a half years (UKRI rates) and includes full course fees, an annual stipend (including an additional London allowance) and associated costs, such as training.

NU London is both a UK university governed by UK higher education regulations, and the European campus of Northeastern University – a large, top-tier research intensive, Boston-based institution. Founded in 1898, Northeastern University is known for its high-impact research, aimed at solving problems across the globe. Interdisciplinarity, experiential learning, and connection to partners beyond academia are at the heart of the Northeastern University ethos. Northeastern received \$230.7m of external research funding in 2022, and is the recognized leader in experience-driven lifelong learning. It has campuses across the

United States and Canada (in Boston; Charlotte, North Carolina; Portland, Maine; Oakland, California; San Francisco; Seattle; Silicon Valley; Arlington, Virginia; the Massachusetts communities of Burlington and Nahant; Toronto and Vancouver). Whilst the PhD will be a UK qualification, students will have the opportunity to engage with and visit the Northeastern University network overseas as part of their London-based doctoral studies, providing a truly unique and highly sought-after dimension to their research training.

The Project

The term 'biopolitics', reinvented by the French philosopher Michel Foucault in the 1970s, captures those approaches that look at biological life (of individuals and populations) as the key interest of political control and management. Biopolitical studies across disciplinary have analysed how biopolitical techniques have entered many spheres of life of governing societies, from health, to reproduction, to transportation and movement and urban design, and, more recently, the increasing measurement of dimensions of life (individual and collective) through data extraction via the digital sphere. Biopolitical analysis has also been concerned with the attribution of differential value to forms of life, through the production of differential spheres of vulnerability, precarity and exclusions that maintain the 'healthy' life of the body politic.

Recently, the rapidly worsening climate crisis has offered another demonstration of the intersection of life and politics, as the continuation of life on Earth becomes contingent on political decisions, which, in turn, will affect forms of life both in their minute detail (diet, consumption, habitation etc.) as well as at the macro-level of population displacements and eradication of forms of life. The PhD would seek to contribute to this necessarily growing area of study around the intersection between biopolitics and the climate crisis by advancing a double direction of enquiry: first, how the concepts and theoretical tools of biopolitics (from governmentality, control, surveillance, data extraction but also intervention into the biological life of individuals and societies for 'productive' aims of regulation and governance) can help understand and explain shifts in modes of governance induced by the climate crisis. Second, how contemporary practices related to the climate emergency help enhance, stretch and further develop the original conceptual toolkit of biopolitics by taking into account new questions.

The PhD project could thus invite inputs at multiple levels and angles of analysis such as: (1) theoretical interventions aimed at expanding the concepts and theories of biopolitics to accommodate the new theoretical horizon of the climate crisis; (2) applied research explaining how present problems related to the ecological crisis put the question of the value and treatment of modes of 'life' at the centre of governing concerns (such as in their effects on consumptions; lifestyles; impact on societies in vulnerable geographical areas); (3) empirically-driven analysis of policies developed in relation to the climate emergency, in interventions such as governmental or institutional regulations of aspects of life such as diet, transport or housing and how the extraction of data for purposes of governing can also be explained via such framework.

The successful candidates will:

- Have a proven, strong educational background in history or a related subject (see eligibility criteria)

- Be excited and inspired by the proposed project area.
- Be a self-starter.
- Have good communication skills.
- Have an inquiring mind and be willing to challenge themselves.

The successful candidates will benefit from a brand-new campus on the banks of the River Thames next to Tower Bridge. This is an interdisciplinary, vibrant research environment with international collaboration and networking opportunities and dedicated research space. It will form the hub of a highly experienced, multi-institution supervisory team from NU London, Northeastern University and the University of Kent. In addition, successful candidates will benefit from the unique connection to the wider Northeastern University network in North America, providing a range of additional research opportunities and learning resources.

Shortlisted candidates will be interviewed by the end of October. Candidates are welcome to contact the NU London supervisor with informal enquiries before the application deadline: PhD Proposal - Biopolitics (sara.raimondi@nulondon.ac.uk)

Eligibility

- Bachelor's degree in a relevant subject - 2:1 or 1st (essential)
- Master's degree in a relevant subject (optional)

English Language requirements:

If applicable – IELTS 6.5 overall (with a score of at least 6.5 in each individual component) or equivalent.

Nationality

Applications are open to UK and international students. Please indicate if you are likely to require a visa on your application. We are unable to support visa costs.

Funding

This scholarship covers the full cost of tuition fees, an annual stipend and an additional London allowance (set at UKRI rates) for 3.5 years. For the 2023/2024 academic year the annual stipend is £20,622. Annual increments will be in line with UKRI rates.

International travel

Students will have the optional opportunity to travel to Northeastern University in North America to further their research training and experience.

How to Apply



Please submit a CV and a Covering Letter stating how you meet the requirements and why you are interested in the proposed research project by clicking on [this link](#). Please reference your application “**PHDCC0923**”