Discipline: Politics, International Relations, Sociology, Anthropology

Northeastern University London
Fully Funded PhD Scholarship x2

Security, Resilience, and Healthcare:
Assessing Social Innovation for Sustainable Futures

Northeastern University London > Politics, International Relations, Sociology, Anthropology

Deadline: 18 March 2024

Funded PhD Project (UK or International Students)

Funding provider: Northeastern University London (NU London)

Subject areas: Politics and International Relations

Project start date: April or October 2024

Supervisors (*lead):
- Dr Diana Bozhilova* (Northeastern University London)
- Dr Sara Raimondi* (Northeastern University London)
- Dr Jonathan Rock (University of Kent)
- Dr Oscar Zhou (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 Overarching Research Area
Title: Security, Resilience, and Healthcare: Assessing Social Innovation for Sustainable Futures

Overview: This research is broadly situated in reference to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the sustainability frameworks of other international institutions' (OECD, WHO…), the strategies of which are geared to fostering resilience, coordination, and to promoting peace and prosperity for people globally and for the planet. The shift beyond the territorial borders of state jurisdiction in areas such as digital healthcare and climate change action is abundantly evident. Whether we look at societal digital transformations or transnational environmental conferences, such as COP, across all levels of the political spectrum, questions concerning the future of human livelihoods and security are prevalent. This research contributes to a gap in the literature where "while social innovation has become a cornerstone of increased competitiveness and… legitimizes public intervention to encourage innovation, the challenges of its effective evaluation are compounded by the higher 'failure' rate implied by many traditional performance measures." (Courtney and Powell, 2020) The project catalyzes new collaborations that focus on cutting edge research.

Methods: The above framework is organised in two PhD projects and we invite applications to either one (candidates can express their preference in the Cover Letter, and the allocation will be finalized during the selection process).

PhD Project 1 (led by Dr Diana Bozhilova; Dr Jonathan Rock Rokem):
Exploring climate justice and sustainability issues can be approached through a variety of conceptual frameworks and methods. Conceptual frameworks include governance- based approaches (such as governance by network, formal and informal governance), liberal international regimes, social justice theories (procedural, distributive justice), green political

thought (critical theory, ecological ethics), etc. The project is inherently interdisciplinary because as Dispesh Chakrabarty (2009) writes, the "crisis of climate change calls on academics to rise above their disciplinary prejudices, for it is a crisis of many dimensions" (p. 215). The project relies on mixed-methods research approaches – qualitative and quantitative analyses. The main research question which this project posits is to what extent longitudinal and spatial data analyses can help us understand how certain events trigger actor responses on climate and social justice. These drivers of development can be embedded within different national and international governance reference frameworks in order to map out responses onto specific targets and target indicators of sustainable development (such as the SDGs framework), helping us build a much more informed and synergetic landscape of the politics and policies affecting international development. The unit of analysis can vary depending on the framework selected by the project (e.g. can range from the organization through to state and supranational actors, and/or include one or multiple level games).

PhD Project 2 (led by Dr Sara Raimondi; Dr Oscar Zhou):
The delivery of effective healthcare has been historically regarded by states as the foundation for resilient, productive and sustainable economies and societies. Healthcare sustainability (HS) appears today as one of the key pillars of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), whereby the internationalisation of healthcare practices and services is creating more demands around the regulation, sustainability, efficiency and security of healthcare. The PhD project will look at ways in which the increasing digitalisation of healthcare provision at a domestic and international level affects political and power dynamics, and at the challenges and opportunities that such transformation bears on key aspects of social and political life, focusing on the following questions: what are the implications of the digital transformation for the citizen/patient and government relations? How does this transformation affect the shaping of the patient subjectivity via the increased digitalisation of key areas of patients' bodies, health, and lives? The research can be approached through a variety of conceptual frameworks and methods: biopolitics (exploring apparatuses aimed at generating digital data about human bodies in the efforts "to control, manage, engineer, reshape, and modulate the very vital capacities of humans as living creatures"); behavioural studies (whereby the digital transformation in health is claimed upon the possibility of "empowering patients", who become not only users and consumers of health services, but are also able to have an active role in the process, as "digitally engaged patient"); security and surveillance studies (interested in how states and private companies can manipulate data of citizens-patients, as digital health data become primary resources for commercialisation and commodification through big enterprises); social justice frameworks (whereby the digitalisation of health often reinforces existing social inequalities: geographical location, state of health, socioeconomic status influence digital technology use; and differences based of gender, age, disability, class and ethnicity – or the intersection of those).

The successful candidates will:

- Have a proven, strong educational background in political science, human geography, environmental science, management, the sciences, 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 in March/April 2024. Candidates are welcome to contact the NU London supervisors with informal enquiries before the application deadline: diana.bozhilova@nulondon.ac.uk , 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 7 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, and an annual stipend including additional London allowance (set at UKRI rates) for 3.5 years. For the 2023/2024 academic year the total annual stipend is £20,622. Annual increments will be in line with UKRI rates.

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

How to Apply
Please send 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 **"PHDDS0224"**