**LISS DTP PhD studentship Job Description**

Job title: LISS DTP CASE PhD studentship

Studentship start date: 1/10/2024

+3 (PhD only)

Studentship is available full-time and/or part-time

Application deadline: 18th February 2024

**Studentship project title:** Placemaking and mental health in refugee camps: An ethnography of asylum seekers’ lived experiences in the UK

**Supervisors:** Dr Francesca Meloni, Prof Hanna Kienzler

**Non-HEI Partner:** Helen Bamber Foundation, Prof Cornelius Katona

**Job Description**

We are currently inviting applications from prospective students for an ESRC funded CASE PhD studentship on “Placemaking and mental health in refugee camps: An ethnography of asylum seekers’ lived experiences in the UK”. The studentship is available at King’s College London (KCL) across the School of Education’s Centre for Public Policy Research, the Department of Global Health and Social Medicine, and the ESRC Centre for Society and Mental Health. The successful candidate will work under the guidance of Dr Francesca Meloni and Prof Hanna Kienzler, in partnership with the Helen Bamber Foundation and Prof Cornelius Katona.

**Project description**

This study examines the role and importance of placemaking for asylum seekers’ mental health living in camps (i.e., contingency accommodation) in the UK. Focusing on asylum seekers’ lived experiences, it aims to analyse: 1) how asylum seekers living in camps make a place for themselves; 2) how they perceive that the camp living conditions affect their everyday lives; 3) how they perceive that the camp living conditions affect their mental health and wellbeing; 4) what spaces, relationships, and services asylum seekers see as important for influencing their mental health and wellbeing. The study investigates these issues through an ethnography combining participant observation with narrative interviews and creative methods with asylum seekers and key stakeholders (e.g., health professionals; community organisers). The use of ethnographic and creative methods will enable an in-depth description of the complexity of asylum seekers’ everyday experiences and the relationships between placemaking and mental health.

**For more information on the project**

<https://liss-dtp.ac.uk/project/placemaking-and-mental-health-in-refugee-camps-anethnography-of-asylum-seekers-lived-experiences-in-the-uk/>

[**The Centre for Public Policy Research**](https://www.kcl.ac.uk/research/centre-for-public-policy-research-cppr)

The Centre for Public Policy Research is an interdisciplinary research centre committed to collaborative working. Its research develops critical analyses of social change and social in/justice in education and other policy sectors to inform national and international policy debate, social activism, and personal, professional and organisational learning. The Centre has expertise in sociology, anthropology, cultural studies, history and applied philosophy and in participatory, creative and arts-based methodologies.

[**Department of Global Health and Social Medicine**](https://www.kcl.ac.uk/ghsm)

The Department of Global Health & Social Medicine is a unique interdisciplinary community of students, teachers and researchers. Together, they explore the complex social determinants of health, illness and ageing. Ranked among the top 10 sociology departments in the UK, their internationally recognised expertise, consultancy work and contributions to policy development are utilised by a myriad of organisations and networks. By connecting social scientists, biomedical researchers and clinicians, the Department delivers research-led teaching that investigates the ways in which advances in biomedicine and biotechnology are changing expectations on life and health, as well as the nature of medical practice.

[**ESRC Centre for Society and Mental Health**](https://www.kcl.ac.uk/csmh/about/about-us#:~:text=Our%20vision%20is%20to%20develop,social%20change%20in%20mental%20health.)

The ESRC Centre for Society and Mental Health brings together a unique mix of disciplines and expertise to conduct innovative social science research on the impact of rapid social change in mental health. It aims to improve our understanding of the complex interrelationships between society and mental health, create platforms enabling new collaborations between disciplines and with societal partners, and work closely with users, communities, practitioners, and policy makers to design and assess novel evidence-based strategies for prevention and intervention.

[**Helen Bamber Foundation**](https://www.helenbamber.org/)

The Helen Bamber Foundation, based in London, is a UK human rights charity providing holistic care - including therapy, medical advice, legal protection, housing, and welfare – to asylum seekers and refugees who have survived torture, trafficking, and other forms of extreme human cruelty. It has extensive experience of conducting policy-relevant research on refugees and their mental health, in collaboration with universities and community organisations.

**Selection criteria**

**Essential**

* Master’s degree in a relevant social science subject (e.g., social sciences, anthropology, sociology, psychology, global health) at distinction or at least high merit level.
* Knowledge of at least three of the four major ESRC core research methods areas - social theory, qualitative methods, quantitative methods, and research design – through completion of appropriate Masters level modules or equivalent.
* Analytical skills.
* Commitment to research integrity, creativity, and collaboration.
* Strong understanding of and keen interest in migration, refugee studies and mental health.
* Experience of conducting qualitative and/or ethnographic research in the field of migration and/or mental health; and ability to engage people in research on potentially sensitive topics.
* Ability to work both independently and as part of a team.
* Organisational and time management skills and ability to work to tight deadlines.
* Excellent communication and writing skills.
* Ability to liaise with a range of stakeholders.

**Desirable**

* Experience of grassroot work with asylum seekers and refugees.
* Experience of working in partnership with community organisations and asylum seekers to co-develop and co-deliver impactful research.
* Experience of using creative research methods.
* Experience of disseminating research outside academia.
* Proficiency of languages other than English to facilitate ethnographic fieldwork.

Candidates with experience of forced displacement and/or migration are encouraged to apply. We particularly encourage applications from underrepresented groups in social science.

**Funding**

Funding is available to cover the cost of UK home/domestic fees plus a stipend of for 3 years. \*

If you classify as International student for fees purposes (see the definitions [here](https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/ESRC-020323-InternationalEligibilityImplementationGuidance-TrainingGrantHolders.pdf)), please note that LISS DTP can only fund the UKRI Home Tuition fee from the ESRC grant. The difference between the UKRI Tuition Home fee (£4,712 in 2023/24) and the host Department’s International fee must be found elsewhere. At King’s College, up to 30% of students can receive an International Doctoral Scholar Award (funded by the Centre for Doctoral Studies) which fully funds the difference between the UKRI Home Tuition Fee and International Fee. Please note the LISS DTP will only award up to 5 International CASE Studentship Awards (30% of our total CASE Studentships for 2024 Entry).

**How to apply:**

To apply please send to francesca.meloni@kcl.ac.uk by **Sunday 18th February 2024**:

* **A completed personal statement proforma,** [available here](https://www.kcl.ac.uk/csmh/assets/2024/csmh-esrc-liss-dtp-case-placemaking-personal-statement-for-liss.docx)
This is instead of a personal/supporting statement or cover letter.
* A completed ESRC LISS-DTP CASE application form, [available here](https://www.kcl.ac.uk/csmh/assets/2024/csmh-esrc-liss-dtp-case-placemaking-case-application-form-2024-entry.docx)
* Your CV
* Copies of academic transcripts for all relevant degrees
* Writing sample

Applicants should also complete the online LISS-DTP Diversity monitoring form ([linked here](https://app.onlinesurveys.jisc.ac.uk/s/kings/liss-dtp-diversity-monitoring-for-case-candidates-2023-entry-du)). This is available only to LISS DTP for reporting purposes.

For informal enquiries about the PhD project, please contact francesca.meloni@kcl.ac.uk; about the LISS-DTP application process, liss-dtp@kcl.ac.uk; and about Helen Bamber Foundation and the community partnership, cornelius@helenbamber.org.

Applicants shortlisted for an interview will be notified by Thursday 29th February 2024.

**Key dates**

The deadline for applications is **Sunday 18th February 2024**.

Interviews for the post will be held on Thursday 14th March and Monday 18th March 2024 via MS Teams.

The successful candidate will be asked to complete a DBS check upon commencing the post.

The position will start on October 1st 2024 and be based at King’s College London, UK.