



ESRC Wales DTP Collaborative Studentships 2022

Digital services vs physical outreach: their implications and effects on the financial well-being of welfare recipients

Bangor University - Bangor Business School

Bangor Business School, Bangor University, supported by the ESRC Doctoral Training Partnership for Wales (Wales DTP), invites applications for funded PhD study which is part of a ‘collaborative studentship’, involving liaison with a non-academic organisation, Citizens Advice. The study will commence in October 2022 in Management and Business, exploring “Digital services vs physical outreach: their implications and effects on the financial well-being of welfare recipients”

This research will examine what are the different implications of digitalised services versus physical outreach on welfare recipients’ financial well-being, and how they (re)shape recipients’ profiles and advisory needs. The research question is broad to enable the successful candidate to develop their own question and methodological approach as the project progresses, within the frame offered by the PhD supervisors and Citizens Advice. It is expected that the project adopts a mixed-methods approach. Qualitative data could include interviews with/ observations of Citizens Advice staff and welfare recipients (upon ethical approval and participant consent), case studies and documentation. Quantitative data could stem from (1) Understanding Society: The UK Household Longitudinal Study (Wave1-Wave10/2009-2020) which helps to identify welfare recipients and demographics, income/debt status, and changing profiles, and (2) Citizens Advice datasets to identify trends in issues reported by recipients and case success/failure rates.

The Citizens Advice is a well-established UK charity that provides free help, advice and support to citizens. Citizens Advice plays a crucial role in helping welfare recipients and have had to adapt towards the changing needs and types of citizens and increased demand for their services during years of austerity, the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, and increased changes to welfare programmes in the UK. Such services are provided either by remote (digitalised) or in-person (physical) means. The successful PhD candidate will work closely with Citizens Advice at different stages of the research process to deepen our understanding of the impact of digitised welfare benefit programmes and advisory services on recipients. In addition to

successfully completing a PhD, the candidate will potentially achieve impact by being part of developing effective advisory services models, addressing specific needs of different types of welfare recipients, improving the efficiency of advisory services providers and help inform/develop Government welfare policy/administration and third-sector services.

Bangor Business School is a name synonymous with research excellence. We are consistently ranked amongst the top 25 institutions in the world for Banking research (RePEc, as of November 2021) and scored a GPA of 2.81 in the latest Research Excellence Framework (REF 2014), with 68% of our research output published in 3* or 4* journals. We're also ranked 26th in the UK in terms of research intensity-weighted GPA results (REF 2014), which reflects the high proportion of research-active staff within the School.

Applications are invited from exceptional candidates with a first class or strong upper second-class honours degree, or appropriate Master's degree. Both the University and the ESRC Wales DTP value diversity and equality at all levels and we encourage applications from all sections of the community, irrespective of age, disability, sex, gender identity, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation. In line with our commitment to supporting and promoting equality, diversity and inclusion, and to increase recruitment of currently underrepresented groups, applications from Black British, Asian British, minority ethnicity British and mixed-race British candidates are particularly encouraged and welcomed. We welcome applications for both full and part-time study, either a 1+3 or +3 award dependent on the needs of the successful candidate.

1+3 award: Funding is provided to complete a research training master's degree (one year) and then study a PhD (three years). If you hold or are just completing an undergraduate degree and wish to study for a PhD this award would be suitable.

+3 award: Funding is provided to start a PhD directly. If you have achieved a level of research training that meets ESRC requirements and we are satisfied you are equipped with research skills of sufficient depth and breadth to start the PhD, this award may be suitable.

Please contact Prof Yener Altunbas (abs011@bangor.ac.uk) with any enquiries.

Applications welcomed by 4 February 2022 at noon.

Further details for ESRC Wales DTP Collaborative studentship

This studentship is an 'open' award. Information on this year's research topics for 2022 ESRC

Collaborative Studentship can be found here. Short descriptions of each accredited pathway are available on the ESRC Wales DTP website. The pathway convener for each of the pathways may be able to advise you.

They are:

- Management & Business – Prof Yener Altunbas (abs011@bangor.ac.uk)

WHAT THE STUDENTSHIP WILL COVER

The Studentship Award commence in October 2022 and will cover your tuition fees as well as a maintenance grant (currently £15,609 p.a. for 2021/22 for full-time students, updated each year); and includes access to an additional Research Training Support Grant. There are other opportunities and benefits available to studentship holders, including an overseas fieldwork allowance (if applicable), internship opportunities, overseas institutional visits and other small grants.

ELIGIBILITY

ESRC studentships are highly competitive, candidates should have an excellent academic background in the social sciences, holding a 1st or strong upper 2nd class degree; applications from those also holding a relevant research training Master's degree (or an equivalent background in research training) will be considered for a +3 award. Wales DTP studentships are available to both home and international (including EU and EEA) students. All applicants will be eligible for a full award consisting of a maintenance stipend and payment of tuition fees at the UK research organisation rate. Applicants must satisfy studentship eligibility requirements. For further details see the UKRI web site (<https://www.ukri.org/our-work/developing-people-and-skills/find-studentships-and-doctoral-training/get-a-studentship-to-fund-your-doctorate/>). Successful international student applicants will receive a fully-funded Wales DTP studentship and will not be charged the fees difference between the UK and international rate.

ASSESSMENT

The closing deadline for applications is 12.00 noon on Friday 4th February 2022. Short-listed applicants will be invited to interview, which are expected to take place in late February/early March 2022. After interview, a final short-list of applicants will be put forward to a Panel convened by the ESRC Wales DTP Management Group at which final decisions with regards to studentship award that will be made. In most cases successful applicants can expect to hear by early April 2022.

HOW TO APPLY

Applications can be made here:

https://www.bangor.ac.uk/courses/postgrad/research/apply_research.php.en

The deadline for applications is 12 noon on 4 February 2022. Incomplete applications or applications received after this specified time will not be accepted. The application must contain the following documents:

1. Covering letter: Please address to Prof Yener Altunbas. The covering letter must set out your reasons and motivation for applying to study at Bangor University and the Management & Business Pathway; your understanding and expectations of doctoral study; your academic interests, particularly of those relating to your proposed research. The covering letter should be no more than two pages.
2. Academic / Professional Qualifications: Where appropriate, this should also include proof of English Language Competency (7.0 IELTS minimum).
3. References: All applications require two academic references to be submitted in support. Candidates must approach referees themselves and include the references with their application.
4. Curriculum Vitae: no longer than two pages.
5. Research Proposal: For collaborative studentships, the proposal should build directly on the outline description that has been supplied. The proposal should be up to a maximum of 1000 words, not including bibliographic references. We suggest that you use the following five headings in your research proposal:
 - Your reflections on the title, aims and purpose of the research;
 - An overview of some key research literature relevant to the study;
 - Your proposals for developing the design and methods of the study;
 - A description of potential outcomes of the project for understanding, knowledge, policy and practice (as appropriate to the topic).
 - Bibliographic references

Under the Programmes tab, please select 'Bangor University Advertised Studentships...'

Then select 'ESRC Wales DTP Collaborative Studentship: Business and Management', making sure to add Prof Yener Altunbas to the 'Academic Contact' box. Click Add.