

## **Leverhulme Doctoral Scholarships at the LSE on ‘The Challenge of Escalating Inequalities’**

LSE is offering six prestigious Leverhulme Doctoral Scholarships for PhD study in any Department whose research addresses ‘The Challenge of Escalating Inequalities’. Students will apply to specific Departments and will also be affiliated to LSE’s International Inequalities Institute which opened in May 2015. You will be part of a dynamic research culture exploring the links between the economic dimensions of inequalities with their social, cultural and political aspects to systematically assess whether and how inequalities might be hardening in mutually reinforcing ways. As well as being supervised by experts in your home Departments, you will also be actively mentored by a group of leading scholars who all have outstanding records of research on escalating inequalities.

The Leverhulme Doctoral Studentships will pay full UK/EU fees and a stipend equivalent to ESRC rates for three years. You will be the third of three cohorts to be funded by the Leverhulme Trust.

Topics may cover any aspect of economic, social, cultural and political aspect of inequality, in any part of the world, addressing whether, why and how such inequalities are intensifying. Students may propose to use quantitative, qualitative or mixed methods. Please see Notes for Applicants for more details

Please see notes for applicants below for further information

Deadline: to be considered for these studentships you must apply to LSE by 9<sup>th</sup> Jan 2017. Applicants who apply through normal LSE procedures will also be considered.

## **Notes for applicants**

These notes will outline:

1. The general rationale for this programme
2. The three themes which you will need to link your research interests to.
3. The organization of the programme
4. The application process
5. The key LSE staff involved in this programme
6. The wider resources that doctoral students at the LSE will be able to access.

### **1: Rationale: LSE as the Centre for Inequalities Research**

Escalating inequalities between and within nations have been recognized by academics and political commentators alike as posing fundamental challenges to well-being, solidarity, social cohesion, and sustainable growth. The World Economic Forum has recently highlighted income disparity as one of its principal risks to economic and political security as well as the widely discussed book by Thomas Piketty, *Capital in the 21<sup>st</sup> century*. Contributions such as these have transformed concerns with poverty, disadvantage and exclusion, characteristic of policy and analytical discourse during the 1990s and 2000s, into the awareness that it is the relationship between all social groups, including the beneficiaries of economic change, which need to be subject to critical analysis.

This is the challenge which is paramount to many social scientists across the LSE. In 2012-13, as part of its Strategic Review, all academic staff at the LSE were asked, 'which three big issues facing the world do you think the School should seek to solve?' The topic of inequalities was placed first, ahead of climate change (with the inequalities related topic of 'poverty' coming third). Accordingly, the LSE established a working group to develop an initiative on inequalities formed with representatives from the departments of Anthropology; Economics; Gender; Geography and Environment; Law; Media and Communications; Sociology; Social Policy; and Statistics. This generated closer connections between ongoing research clusters working within Departments, and launched a number of new initiatives, the most important of which are a cross-departmental MSc in Inequalities and Social Science which will admitted its first cohort of students in 2015, and the creation of a new International Inequalities Institute (III), which opened in May 2015.

Our doctoral programme therefore works within a very dynamic environment. The overarching aim of this doctoral programme is to redress the lack of an account of the mechanisms that link the economic dimensions of change with their social, cultural and political dimensions at the global level. This is a key challenge which Piketty leaves hanging: if we are seeing a return to the economic inequalities of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century 'belle époque', are we also seeing the resurgence of a new kind of social and cultural elite which has affinities to the aristocracy? A major problem in addressing this issue is the current lack of engagement between research in economics and in other social science disciplines, a stand-off which is attributable to the different methodological specialisms and theoretical

trajectories of these disciplines and which disables effective debate and syntheses.

We will therefore support research on the social processes and social relations that are generating contemporary economic inequalities, whether they are significantly different to those of the past, and what implications they hold for the future. We will consider whether the intensification of economic inequalities in many parts of the globe is also translating into a process of wider social closure, or whether by contrast it is associated with the potential for more meritocratic and inclusive forms of social, geographical and cultural mobility. We will assess what the wider implications of inequality might be for a range of outcomes and what kinds of political interventions might affect it. We will explore how changing policy and political regimes are related – if at all – to the heightening of inequality, how technical change, and the proliferation of cultural and educational capital might be associated with economic differentials.

We will support research on whether the rise of the ‘super wealthy’ has also seen the development of a new closed ‘elite’ class and how economic inequalities are associated with inequalities of class, gender, race, ethnicity and age. We will examine how accumulation in certain parts of the world might also be associated with global labour regimes based on the exploitation of workers in the South that produces new forms of marginalization and generates intractable clusters of poverty at the bottom tiers of society.

Our programme therefore lays the platform for a new distinctive inter-disciplinary approach to the challenge of inequality. Part of our distinctive approach at the LSE will be to question established Euro-American paradigms, often narrowly defined in orientation, by bringing experiences and perspectives from across the globe to bear.

We focus our concerns into three related themes: firstly, the need to bring new philosophical, theoretical and methodological approaches to inequality based on research conducted all over the world, to bear on measurement and analysis; secondly, the need to bring forms of economic modelling further into debates with political economy; and finally to develop research on the intergenerational reproduction of inequality which writers such as Pierre Bourdieu and Thomas Piketty have made central. We place all these challenges within a systematic framework which places national specificity in a wider comparative frame and institutes genuine collaboration and dialogue between sociologists, geographers, anthropologists, economists, historians, media researchers, political scientists and lawyers.

## **2: Research themes.**

We focus our concerns into three broad themes.

Faculty and students will interact in seminars and workshops so that there is a process of mutual learning and exchange within the context of the activities of the III more generally, so that the students – as well as their supervisors and mentors – can place their research on a wider canvas.

The three themes are:

*a) Ideas of inequality*

Much existing research on inequality relies on formal modelling of standard inequality 'variables'. We aim to encourage deeper scrutiny of the underpinnings of such analysis by encouraging enquiry into the intellectual and conceptual underpinnings of measures of inequalities, in their historical, cultural and geographical contexts. These inquiries will then assist innovative research using improved measures. Key issues include:

- What role different social actors and groups (from political elites and the media to social movements) have played in generating knowledge of, or silencing attention towards, different kinds of inequality, including contestations over its very nature and meaning.
- How and why ideas about the measurement of inequality have developed (for instance, statistical measures of inequality, their regional, national and international dimensions and the development of debates over them).
- How different methodologies (from statistical modeling to ethnographic research) for the study of inequality have emerged, what their limitations in specific contexts might be, and new strategies for their development.

*b) The political economy of inequality*

A major challenge is to link forms of economic analysis, based in technically sophisticated econometric modelling, with a fuller understanding of the political systems more generally. We will therefore seek to explore how political institutions shape the way in which democracy affects inequality (for better or worse); and what kinds of political interventions shape and challenge forms of inequality across time and space, with emphasis on both redistribution and predistribution. We will explore the role of macro and micro economics, as well as that of finance, at local and national level, and via the global economy. The specific themes will be

- How and why international, governmental and non-governmental social institutions, create, perpetuate or mitigate inequality.
- The role of technological progress as well as globalisation in shaping the operation of labour markets within and outside companies; the interaction of these processes with the development of education and training; the rapidly changing role of gender; and the political frameworks pushing and constraining these forces and their effects on inequality.
- The changing role of social movements, religious movements, and revolutionary struggles in challenging or reproducing inequality.
- The role of welfare regimes, education and health provision; tax arrangements; minimum wage provisions; labour laws; international human rights and gender norms;

Anti-discrimination laws, battles over media resources; and utopian egalitarian communities in addressing and undermining inequality.

*c] The reproduction of inequality*

Our final theme will focus on how accumulation and inheritance of inequality operate over time and across space, and how these might generate escalating inequalities (as Piketty suggests). Using rigorous quantitative data, as well as ethnographic and qualitative perspectives, we will place centre-stage novel explorations of the social relations that reproduce inequality. Research in this theme will examine

- The forms and drivers of intergenerational links in advantage and disadvantage, including in economic positions between generations, through both economic and non-economic transfers.
- The role of different social classes in reproducing inequality (both elites but also the poor), cultural ideas and processes of political capture and opportunity hoarding as they play out across time and space, and the role of the media in generating exclusion.
- The relationship between inequality and poverty and processes of exploitation, oppression, social exclusion, stigma and discrimination
- The contribution of ethnographic approaches and the development of new qualitative measures of inequality that focus on the degrees of insecurity experienced across classes and how this affects decision making during the life-course.

In addressing these themes we will build a collective competence and critical engagement on the use of economic models, other statistical perspectives, and qualitative methods. This will be a major part of building a collective ethos around the implications of serious interdisciplinary social science research for our understanding of the conditions under which, and the means by which, inequality is reinforced or reduced. We will equip the students to reflect on the virtues and pitfalls of the multitude of ways in which this question has been addressed in different places in the past and projecting possibilities for the future, including an understanding of the roles of policy, legislation, and politics in supporting or reducing inequality. Students will critically examine a range of interventions including: economic policy in production and redistribution such as taxation, income support and social security measures; educational, social care, health and welfare policy; the structure of political institutions, and the re-distributive opportunities, incentives and constraints which they create; equalities and anti-discrimination law; challenges to inadequate media representations of specific inequalities; and social movements and revolutionary struggles.

### **3: The organisation of the Leverhulme Doctoral programme**

The programme will be co-ordinated by Profs Nicola Lacey and David Soskice, in association with the theme conveners listed below. Each student will be allocated a mentor drawn from this group, in addition to his or her departmental supervisor/s. The mentor, who will need to be from a different Department to the student, will develop a programme of engagement in workshops and seminars linked to the themes in negotiation with the students and their supervisors. At the end of each year mentors will conduct an appraisal of the student's engagement in the programme of inter-disciplinary activity which will feed

into a review of the arrangements more generally. Students will have (as a minimum) a termly review meeting with their Supervisory Panel Mentor.

### Programme Structure

Teaching will have three components:

In the first year of the programme for the 2017-18 cohort there will be a fortnightly core cross-cohort interdisciplinary seminar for the Leverhulme students (and a small group of other doctoral students with funding from other sources who also working in this area). There will be 10 of these through the academic year, with the first term seminars introducing a range of approaches and methods in the study of inequality, and the second term seminars discussing student projects. In the remaining years of the programme (so in the 2018-19 academic year for 2017-16 cohorts), there will be monthly meetings. These will take the form of presentation and discussion of on-going research by the students in the cohort, followed by informal discussion; the discipline-based doctoral training provided by each student's home department; and bespoke provision in specialist areas coordinated by the student's Panel mentor, in consultation with his or her departmental supervisor, drawing on the disciplines which most effectively contribute to analysis of the student's research questions.

In order to build a collaborative, cross-disciplinary experience for students, the Leverhulme Doctoral Scholarship students will also:

- Be encouraged to audit the MSc Inequalities and Social Science's core course to cover aspects of inequality from cross-disciplinary perspectives (if they had not already taken the MSc itself, in the case of later cohorts).
- Take part in regular workshops in later years (in addition to their commitments in their 'home' Departments).
- Organise a Master Class on inequalities in which they discuss the work presented by various academics involved in this initiative as well as with invited external guests.
- Organise an annual Inequalities Conference in which they would present their research to each other and to academic staff with the aim of forging further cross-disciplinary discussions.

Students who receive these scholarships will also be invited to take part in the activities of the PhD Academy which was launched in October 2015. The Academy is responsible for overseeing interdisciplinary programmes for PhD students, running student-led interdisciplinary initiatives and offering professional development and careers advice to doctoral candidates. The Academy is based in a dedicated suite of rooms in the LSE library where students have access to staff who help to manage the PhD programmes, teaching space and social space.

### **4: The application process**

You should apply through normal LSE channels to specific departments, and indicate that you wish to be considered for a Leverhulme Doctoral Scholarship and which of the three themes above that your proposal addresses. Departments will apply their normal admissions criteria and allocate potential supervisors (who will if appropriate be from more than one department). All Departments will be eligible to put forward students for the Leverhulme awards if their proposals address any of the three themes. You will also be considered for

other sources of funding unless you indicate that you only wish to be considered for a Leverhulme Doctoral Scholarship.

If selected by Departments to go forward for consideration for a Leverhulme award, you will be asked to submit a further personal statement in which you lay out their capacity to address the specific theme, indicate your interest in working in an interdisciplinary environment, and, if you wish, provide details of personal financial hardship they might face in studying for a PhD. This will be sent, alongside your proposals, with a letter of departmental support for the candidate, and information on their financial background to a panel chaired by the Nicola Lacey and David Soskice, and comprised of other theme conveners.

Departments will only be allowed to submit one main and one reserve candidate in any one year to ensure that each cohort will contain a genuine inter-disciplinary mix. Criteria which the panel will use to select students include:

- Endorsement from a department that they meet the normal admission criteria.
- An assessment that the research proposal addresses one of the three themes identified above in an original way and that the candidate will work well within an interdisciplinary framework.
- At least three of the scholarships will be awarded to students with proposals to study beyond Euro-America.

Although decisions will not be made on the basis of financial hardship alone, such factors might be used by the panel as contextual information to assess the overall merit of the applicant.

### **5: Key academic staff**

Nicola Lacey FBA, School Professor of Law, and Social Policy; <http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/law/staff/nicola-lacey.htm>. Nicola is an expert on crime, punishment and inequality; legal and political conceptions of equality; law and gender. She has supervised 16 doctoral students to completion, several of them working across departments including law, history, sociology, social policy, the European Institute and the Gender Institute, and her former doctoral students include academics at the Universities of Bogota, Durham, Haifa, Leeds, Sydney, City University, Goldsmith College and the School of Oriental and African Studies. She had a Leverhulme Major Research Fellowship from 2006-9.

David Soskice FBA, School Professor of Political Science and Economics, <http://www.lse.ac.uk/government/whosWho/profiles/dwsoskice@lse.ac.uk/Home.aspx> David is an expert in the political economy of advanced capitalist societies; offering training in economics in general and the economics of inequality in particular for students not trained in economics. He has supervised more than 20 doctoral students to completion at LSE, at Oxford University, and at Duke University. In addition, in conjunction with Professor Peter Hall (Harvard, Centennial Professor at LSE), he informally supervised 10 Harvard/MIT students in a cross-disciplinary PhD programme on the Varieties of Capitalism in the research unit which he directed at the Wissenschaftszentrum zu Berlin, and co-funded by Harvard

Sir John Hills FBA, Professor of Social Policy, co-Director of the International Inequalities Institute and Chair of the Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion

<http://www.lse.ac.uk/researchAndexpertise/experts/profile.aspx?KeyValue=j.hills%40lse.ac.uk> John currently supervises three students and has successfully supervised ten doctoral students and offers supervision in areas including the evaluation of social policies in different countries including social security, pensions, social care, housing, and redistribution, and on the measurement of inequalities and their development in economic and non-economic dimensions. He chaired the UK government's National Equality Panel (2008-2010). His recently completed ESRC Professorial Fellowship led to his contributions to *Wealth in the UK: Distribution, accumulation and policy* (Oxford, 2013) and to *Good Times, Bad Times: The welfare myth of them and us* (Policy Press, November 2014)

Dr David Hope, Researcher at the International Inequalities Institute. David is a political scientist who works on the comparative political economy of advanced democracies. His specific areas of interest include growth models, macroeconomic imbalances, inequality and redistribution, and electoral politics. David's current research aims to map out the complex set of interrelationships between the distribution of income, national growth models, varieties of capitalism and political systems.

Gareth Jones, Professor of Urban Geography,

<http://www.lse.ac.uk/geographyandenvironment/whoswho/profiles/gajones@lse.ac.uk> Gareth has applied political economic approaches to urban change, violence and insecurity, and youth identities in Latin America and to elite lifestyles in Southern Africa. He is presently supervisor to 4 students and has supervised 17 students to completion and is currently working on an ESRC-NWO-DfG grant on urban poverty and violence in the Americas.

Insa Koch, Assistant Professor in Law and Anthropology.

<http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/law/staff/insa-koch.htm> Insa is interested to bring anthropology into dialogue with criminology, legal theory and socio-legal studies. Her current project is concerned with cuts to legal aid, and its implications for access to justice in the UK. She has recently been awarded an ESRC grant as part of a larger research team led by Professor Deborah James at the LSE looking at how the withdrawal of public funding from the advice sector is reconfiguring relations between the market, society and the welfare state in the UK and selected European settings.

Anne Phillips, Graham Wallis Professor of Political Science in the Department of Government.

<http://www.lse.ac.uk/government/whosWho/Academic%20profiles/aphillips@lse.ac.uk/Home.aspx> Anne Phillips is a leading figure in feminist political theory, and writes on issues of bodies and property, democracy and representation, equality, multiculturalism, and difference. Her research interests are feminist theory; the body; multiculturalism and cosmopolitanism; the human and humanism. She recently published 'The Politics of the Human' (Cambridge University Press), based on the Sir John Seeley lectures she gave at the University of Cambridge in 2013. She is currently working on a paper on 'Democratising in Non-Democratic Contexts', exploring the politics of gender parity in contexts of legal pluralism, and drawing on her recent research visit at the Stellenbosch Institute for Advanced Study (STIAS), South Africa.



Aaron Reeves, Associate Professorial Research Fellow in Poverty and Inequality at the International Inequalities Institute. <http://aaronreeves.org/> Aaron's research is focused on understanding the causes and consequences of social, economic, and cultural inequality across countries. He is a sociologist with interests in public health, culture, and political economy; examining inequality through a number of different lenses and using a variety of methods. To date, his work has broadly been in three areas: 1) the political economy of health, 2) the political and cultural consequences of the mass media, and 3) the cultural politics of class. Prior to joining the LSE III, Aaron was Senior Research Fellow in the Department of Sociology at Oxford University – where he was also a research fellow at Nuffield College.

Mike Savage, Martin White Professor of Sociology and co-Director of the International Inequalities Institute. <http://www.lse.ac.uk/sociology/whoswho/academic/savage.aspx> He has long-standing interests in social class inequalities, and on their inter-relationship with gender, age and locality. He has been an exponent of 'cultural class analysis' which has sought to use Pierre Bourdieu's thinking to update analyses of social class, and was one of the Directors of the BBC's *Great British Class Survey* and his recent books include *Social Class in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* and *Identities and Social Change in Britain since 1940: the politics of method*.

### **5: Resources for doctoral training at the LSE.**

Students will benefit more generally from the School's outstanding research environment. As one of the ESRC's 21 recognised doctoral training centres the LSE provides a range of advanced methodology training for its PhD students, with a well-developed infrastructure of training and provision for research students at School level, provided by the Academic and Professional Development Division (APDD) and for research methods and skills training by the PhD Academy and the Methodology Department., research skills, ethics, academic publishing, writing a research grant proposal, research project management, writing for the media, managing supervisors, viva preparation, as well as a pleasant environment for informal meetings and seminars available to all LSE doctoral students. The Teaching and Learning has also developed its own Higher Education Academy accredited Postgraduate Teaching Certificate; in recent years some 70 research students a year have enrolled on this course. The Language Centre offers a range of foreign language courses at different levels, specifically designed for the social sciences and language support in English for Academic Purposes. The LSE Careers Service has a dedicated PhD Careers Advisor, and offers specially-designed lunchtime sessions on converting PhDs into commercial activity, one-to-one advice sessions and tailored sessions for students in specific disciplines. The Centre for Learning Technology and Innovation provides further skills training for PhD students in new technologies for research purposes,

The research environment is enhanced by the outstanding resource of the LSE Library – the British Library of Political and Economic Science – which HEFCE designated in 2008 as one of only five National Research Libraries in England. The Library holds over 4 million items covering the social sciences; it has an extensive government publications collection, unique collections of statistical publications of national governments and intergovernmental organisations throughout the world. The Archives Division holds a rare book collection and over 1400 archive collections supporting research across the social sciences. The acquisition

of the Women's Library in 2013 significantly enhances the library's relevance for inequalities research. Leverhulme students also benefit from the sponsored international exchange programmes that the LSE runs for its PhD students organized as part of the School's alliances and joint ventures with key overseas partners, including 'institutional partnerships' with Sciences Po in Paris, Columbia University in New York, Peking University in Beijing, the University of Cape Town and the National University of Singapore.

LSE has an extensive Postgraduate Travel Fund which provides support to students who are invited to present a paper at a conference – in the UK or elsewhere. The School fund can support 70% of the cost, up to an annual maximum for each student of £1,000. The School also has hardship funds in the event of an unexpected event affecting a student's financial situation – e.g. an accommodation crisis.