

ESRC funded PhD studentship on disproportionality in police use of force

Supervisors: Prof Jon Jackson and Prof Jouni Kuha, Department of Methodology

Secondary supervision: Dr Kristzian Posch, UCL Department of Security and Crime Science and Institute for Global City Policing

Non-academic partner: College of Policing

We are seeking applications for a PhD studentship in the area of police studies based in the Department of Methodology at the London School of Economics and Political Science. This studentship will commence in September 2021 and it is open to full-time as well as part-time students. The studentship is offered as either a 1+3 MSc/PhD programme to applicants in possession of upper second class honours (2:1) degree in social science, or a +3 MPhil/PhD programme to applicants in possession of a high-level pass in a Master's degree in an appropriate subject from a UK university or its equivalent elsewhere. The studentship is part of the ESRC Doctoral Training Partnership at the LSE.

This is a collaborative studentship, with the non-academic partner being the College of Policing, the professional body for everyone who works for the police service in England and Wales. The purpose of the College is to provide those working in policing with the skills and knowledge necessary to prevent crime, protect the public, and secure public trust. It is expected that the research programme of the PhD will be developed in collaboration with the College of Policing and that during the tenure of the award, the student will spend time working with the College of Policing, either virtually or on the premises.

Focus of the studentship

There is evidence that people from Black communities in England and Wales are disproportionately more likely to have force used against them by police officers, particularly firearms and Tasers. For change to happen, we need to understand why this happens. Working at LSE with UCL and the College of Policing, the successful applicant will use advanced quantitative techniques to make an important contribution to this issue of real social and political significance.

Disproportionality is a problem throughout the criminal justice system. A number of studies have highlighted problems relating to courts, policing (e.g. stop-and-search) and prisons. Yet we know little about racial inequity in police use of force.

The role and authority of the police is intimately linked to the use of force. The ability to 'move along' individuals and groups, stop and search suspicious persons, intervene in riots and fights, or perhaps most of all, having the power to do so – the very potential for this recourse – is central to the role of the police. The recognized (albeit often unexercised) power to forcefully attend to diverse matters and inflict sanctioned violence, even death, is part and parcel both of effective policing and public support for it.

The police capacity for force is not, therefore, "bad". Force is both necessary and constructive to effective policing. Yet, trust, legitimacy and moral authority are lost when force is applied inappropriately and, perhaps particularly, disproportionately. Understanding when, how and why this occurs is vital for any effort to improve police-public relations in the affected communities

How to apply

Applicants should submit a CV and a two-page covering letter to methodology.research@lse.ac.uk by **17:00 GMT on 11 December 2020**.

We especially encourage UK citizens from BAME backgrounds to apply. The scholarship can cover either the 1-year MSc (Social Research Methods) and 3 years of the PhD, or 4 years of the PhD.

In the covering letter you should set out what interests you in studying for a PhD in the Department of Methodology at the LSE, with co-supervision in UCL's Institute of Global City Policing, and why you value the collaboration with the College of Policing.

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to interview, and the successful applicant will be required to complete LSE's formal online application before **14 January 2021**.

Before applying for this studentship, please ensure that you meet the academic requirements for admission to the programme and can provide evidence of your English proficiency. Details of the relevant academic and English language entry requirements and information about the admissions process and necessary supporting documents can all be found at www.lse.ac.uk/graduate. More information on studying for a PhD in LSE's Methodology Department can be found at lse.ac.uk/study-at-lse/Graduate/degree-programmes-2021/MPhilPhD-Social-Research-Methods.

Informal inquiries about the collaborative studentship should be directed to Professor Jon Jackson at j.p.jackson@lse.ac.uk.