



The  
University  
Of  
Sheffield.



**CITY College**  
An International  
Faculty Of  
The University.

# SEERC – Call for PhD Applications 2013-2014.



## **PhD Studies at SEERC – Call for Applications (Deadline: 14/6/2013)**

### **1. The PhD programme**

The PhD programme is run jointly by the University of Sheffield and the International Faculty CITY College, under a joint supervision scheme. The programme is hosted by the South East European Research Centre (SEERC), a Research Centre of the University's International Faculty based in Thessaloniki, Greece.

At SEERC there are currently two possibilities for a PhD degree:

**A) Full Time programme.** The duration is 3 years (with a 4<sup>th</sup> year available for writing up the thesis) and it requires full time commitment on the part of the PhD student, which means that one would have to be physically present at SEERC premises located in Thessaloniki.

**B) Part Time programme,** with duration 6 years (with 2 years available for writing up). To be eligible for a part-time PhD the candidate should be able to prove significant experience in the selected field. In this case, the PhD student has the obligation for a minimum of two visits to Thessaloniki annually for supervision purposes. All other communication with supervisors occurs via e-mail and telephone.

Students applying for full-time positions on the programme must have an excellent academic record and should normally possess a Master's Degree.

Part-time students are expected to be mid-career professionals with strong educational and professional backgrounds and normally in possession of a Master's degree. Applicants for part time positions must submit proposals that demonstrate a clear linkage between their current work and their PhD topic.

Part of the PhD programme involves the Doctoral Development Programme (DDP). The DDP concerns both Full Time and Part Time Student. Its main target is to enhance and broaden the range of skills of the PhD candidates. Further information on the DDP can be found at the following link: <http://www.shef.ac.uk/ris/pgr/ddportal>

### **2. Tuition Fees**

The current fees for PhD studies (academic year 2012-2013) are **8100 British pounds annually** for full-time study and **4050 British pounds** for the part time programme (a small increase is expected every year on fees. Exact figures will be given to successful applicants).

### **3. Fee Waivers**

Once again this year, the University of Sheffield and CITY College will be offering a small number of fee waiver positions for students to read for a PhD **through SEERC in Thessaloniki**. The fee waivers are offered to applicants with outstanding academic

records and the process is highly competitive. **Please note that fee waivers are only given to the candidates applying for Full time studies.**

More information on the terms of reference of the Fee waivers can be found at the following link:

[http://www.seerc.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=7&Itemid=60](http://www.seerc.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=7&Itemid=60)

#### 4. Submission process

We accept proposals from qualified students for Full-time or for Part-time study. **Priority will be given to proposals that address one of the specific research topics as listed in the table below** (for detailed description, please see section 6).

<b>Research Track 1: Enterprise Innovation and Development</b>	
Topic 1:	The Impact of Neuroscience and Behavioral Economics on Marketing
<b>Research Track 2: Information and Communication Technologies</b>	
Topic 2:	Engineering Emergence in Artificial Distributed Systems for enabling Monitoring Networks for Health Care Systems or for Energy and the Environment
<b>Research Track 3: Society &amp; Human Development Psychology, Politics, Sociology, and Education</b>	
Topic 3:	Self-disgust: exploring the interface between cognition and emotion in depression

**Applications on other topics are also welcomed as long as they are in line with the research performed at SEERC. Prospective applicants are advised to check SEERC's Research Track Activity at:**

[http://www.seerc.org/index.php?option=com\\_entities&view=track&Itemid=68](http://www.seerc.org/index.php?option=com_entities&view=track&Itemid=68)

In order to apply, PhD candidates need to download the **Application Form** along with the **Guidance Notes** from SEERC's web site<sup>1</sup>, complete the application, and then send, by post, one copy to SEERC and one copy to The University of Sheffield.

Please note that incomplete applications will be disqualified from the process. Candidates have to ensure that all supporting documentation is included in the application. The application form and supporting documents should be accompanied by a **Research Proposal** and an updated **CV**. **The CV and the proposal of the PhD candidate should be sent electronically also, by e-mail at [phd\\_admission@seerc.org](mailto:phd_admission@seerc.org)**

The **Research Proposal** should be typed, the length should be about 1,500 – 2,000 words (6 to 8 pages) and should include the following:

- a) Title of the proposed thesis

---

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.seerc.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=5&Itemid=59](http://www.seerc.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=5&Itemid=59)

- b) Reference to one of the Specific Research Topics (section 6)
- c) Proposed mode of work (full time or part time)
- d) Proposed source of Funding: Fee Waiver (Full time Only), Personal funding, funded by any other institution/organization e.t.c.
- e) Background to research topic
- f) Specific problem(s) to be examined
- g) Methods of research proposal, plan and timetable of work
- h) Resources available and required (if any)
- i) Any other information in support of your proposal
- j) The proposal should include correct literature citations and a brief bibliography

**All applications should be submitted by 14/6/2013 (postmarked).** Please note that the complete application forms need to be sent to **both** SEERC and The University of Sheffield at the **same** time by ordinary post.

**(PLEASE NOTE THAT ON THE ENVELOPE/FOLDER SHOULD BE CLEARLY WRITTEN "SEERC-SHEFFIELD DOCTORAL PROGRAMME APPLICATION FOLDER")**

Moreover, **an electronic version of the Research proposal and the CV should be sent by 14/6/2013 by email to SEERC at [phd\\_admissions@seerc.org](mailto:phd_admissions@seerc.org).**

Incomplete applications missing one or more documents or failure to submit the hard copies of the application by post (i.e. submission only of the proposal in electronic form) to SEERC and to the University of Sheffield will result to the application's disqualifying.

The possible outcomes of your application are:

- Acceptance to read for a PhD
- Acceptance to read for a PhD with a fee waiver (FULL TIME candidates only)
- Rejection

All candidates will be informed on the outcome of the evaluation procedure, which will involve an interview at SEERC premises with the proposed supervisors.

<b>A step-by-step guide to submitting your application</b>	
Step 1:	Read in detail the requirements from this Call for Proposals
Step 2:	Download the <a href="#">application form</a>
Step 3:	Read the Guidance Notes for completing it
Step 4:	Prepare Research Proposal and an Updated CV according to Guidelines
Step 5:	Prepare supporting documents for inclusion in the application pack
Step 6:	Send by post 1 copy of the application documents to SEERC and 1 copy to the University of Sheffield. Do this by <b>14/6/2013</b> (post stamp as proof of validity of the application).

Step 7:	Send by <b>14/6/2013</b> the Research proposal and the updated CV by e-mail to <a href="mailto:phd_admissions@seerc.org">phd_admissions@seerc.org</a>
---------	---

## 5. English Language Requirements

For the above Research Topics please see the English language requirements for prospective postgraduate students at The University of Sheffield:

<http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/postgraduate/info/englang>

## 6. Research Topics

### **Topic # 1: The Impact of Neuroscience and Behavioral Economics on Marketing**

The previous decade has presented the scientific community with landmark discoveries in the area of neuroscience. This progress resulted in numerous projects being funded worldwide in an effort to understand the human brain more closely. Nevertheless, these developments have not stayed restricted solely to the field of neuroscience. There has been evidence on the creation of a neuroculture - an impact that neuroscientific research has on other, even unrelated, areas of study. Moreover, the research in the area of behavioral economics has embraced this new found knowledge in an effort to investigate and understand the human behavior. This project will investigate how the neuroscience impacts marketing and what effect this interdisciplinary cooperation has on reshaping the field of marketing. It will focus on discovering whether there is a need for redefining some of the pillar frameworks in the area of marketing and consumer behavior, in the light of the existing knowledge from neuroscience and behavioral economics. Such approach will investigate a new perspective from which practitioners should exercise marketing, but more importantly, it will provide academics with more comprehensive understanding of the science of consumer behavior and marketing. As a result, it is expected that this research will contribute to the creation of a solid ground for the future research perspectives and new developments in the area of marketing.

### **Topic # 2: Engineering Emergence in Artificial Distributed Systems for Engineering Emergence in Artificial Distributed Systems for enabling Monitoring Networks for Health Care Systems or for Energy and the Environment.**

The last two decades the complexity or scale of some applications rose so fast that soon humans will not be able to handle. Distributed architectures offer better scalability and utilisation of resources. Therefore it seems natural that in recent years systems operating within distributed environments have experienced considerable growth in size and diversity. The last years there is a trend to be inspired by natural systems by introducing bio-inspired properties and behaviours, so that a distributed environment could become a complex adaptive system, in the sense that adaptation, resilience and self-organization will emerge as a result of simple interactions between peers. In parallel, an increasing part of the world-wide energy supply is coming from

distributed generation of electricity of different sources of electric power. The aim of this work will be to investigate all the above mentioned areas and propose a bio-inspired solution based on a set of emergent self-optimising structures and processes which will be the major catalyst for efficiency, scalability and adaptability in a (fully) distributed monitoring network. The case study that will be used to demonstrate the applicability of the approach should be taken either from Helathcare systems or from the energy and environment domain. E.g. could be a monitoring sensor network that requires no human interaction, it is autonomous and the application field to be for hospitals, health care systems, smart homes or buildings, waste management etc.

### **Topic # 3: Self-disgust: exploring the interface between cognition and emotion in depression.**

Disgust is increasingly recognised as playing a significant role in a range of mental health problems, such as specific phobias, contamination-based obsessive-compulsive disorder, eating disorders and post-traumatic stress disorder. Disgust itself is a heterogeneous construct, and recent research has discovered an important mediating role for disgust directed at the self – ‘self disgust’ – in depression, particularly in mediating the connection between dysfunctional depressive thoughts and depressive symptoms (Overton et al., 2008; Simpson et al., 2010). However, the relationship between thoughts and emotions in this context has yet to be explored. In particular, what happens at the interface between depressive thoughts and dysfunctional emotions (self-disgust) is unknown. This project will explore this relationship using subjects drawn from the general population, which our previous research suggests express depressive thoughts at a range of intensities. In addition to exploring the connection between thoughts and emotions at ‘baseline’, we will also use techniques for manipulating those thoughts (intensifying or reducing). Emotions will be measured both by self report and also by physiological indices (facial expressions, heart rate, skin conductance, EEG measures). Studies will be directed at the following questions: How ‘automatic’ is the relationship between depressive thoughts and emotion, and is there a temporal offset between thoughts and their emotional consequences? How pure is the connection between thoughts and emotions – i.e., do depressive thoughts only give rise to self-disgust, or are they also accompanied by other emotions (basic and/or complex)? Is the relationship between thoughts and emotions unidirectional, or do dysfunctional emotions, once generated, have the power to change cognitions? Is it possible to generalise the discovered rule of connection between thoughts and emotions beyond depressive thoughts? For example, how is the connection between thoughts and emotions affected when thoughts are disordered, as in schizophrenia?

The interface between thoughts and emotions has received comparatively little attention and the interface between depressive thoughts and self-disgust virtually none. This is an important omission, given that current psychological therapies for depression, including cognitive behaviour therapy, are only moderately successful (reviewed by Simpson et al., 2010). A better understanding of the cognitive-emotional interface will help to reshape existing therapies, and by an increasing emphasis on emotion (more or less ignored in current therapeutic regimes) may pave the way to new types of therapy. Self disgust itself is receiving an increasing amount of attention as it is discovered that it plays a role in an expanding range of mental health problems. As a consequence, we anticipate that the work will have considerable

impact at the clinical level and is likely to be of interest to a wide range of clinical non-clinical psychologists.

Overton P. G.; Markland F. E.; Taggart H. S.; et al. (2008) Self-disgust mediates the relationship between dysfunctional cognitions and depressive symptomatology. *Emotion*, 8: 379-385

Simpson J.; Hillman R.; Crawford T.; et al. (2010) Self-esteem and self-disgust both mediate the relationship between dysfunctional cognitions and depressive symptoms. *Motivation and Emotion*, 34: 399-406.



The  
University  
Of  
Sheffield.



**CITY College**  
An International  
Faculty Of  
The University.



**South East European Research Centre**

24, Proxenou Koromila Street  
54622, Thessaloniki, Greece

Tel: +30 2310 253478

Fax: +30 2310 234205

[contact@seerc.org](mailto:contact@seerc.org)

<http://www.seerc.org>