

‘Disability Rights Expanding Accessible Markets’ (DREAM)

Appointment of two Early Stage Researchers (Marie Curie Fellows) (Full-time, fixed term for three years, available from 1 September 2010)

An opportunity exists for two outstanding early stage researchers to join an internationally leading research team at the Centre for Disability Studies, University of Leeds (UK), to receive supervision for the preparation of a PhD thesis, and to benefit from the combined resources of a major international training network (DREAM).

As Marie Curie Fellows, suitably qualified and experienced researchers will receive generous benefits, including a fixed salary/living allowance in the region of €36,500 per year, plus mobility, travel or career exploration allowances according to the Marie Curie Framework 7 requirements for Early Stage Researchers¹. Individual allowances may vary according to personal factors (such as family status and place of origin) and are calculated in Euros. They may vary, or be adjusted, according to the prevailing rate of Euro/Sterling exchange. There are strict eligibility and residency requirements that must be met.

Each researcher will be appointed on a full-time, fixed-term contract at the University of Leeds for a period of three years, which may include a six-month internship at an associated partner organisation in the DREAM Network. Availability to travel (including internationally), for the purposes of the research and training activities, is a requirement for these posts.

The research

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD,) imposes legal obligations on States Parties to promote and achieve accessibility across the board for people with disabilities. This includes areas as diverse as access to Information and Communications Technologies and consumer goods and services more generally, access to employment, having legal capacity to act and take decisions, and access to independent living. Accessibility can be achieved through a variety of means, including by ensuring that goods and services meet Design for All requirements, that effective non-discrimination regimes (which include reasonable accommodation) are established, and that inclusive social and economic policies and legislation are developed. All Member States of the EU and the EEA have signed the Convention and many, including the European Union itself, have already ratified or concluded it. The researchers working on the DREAM project will examine how the rights contained in the CRPD can be transformed into practical applications.

Each researcher in the project will be employed by one of the partners in the Initial Training Network. The DREAM Network consists of the National University of Ireland, Galway, Technosite (Spain), Maastricht University (Netherlands),

¹ <http://ec.europa.eu/mariecurieactions>

University of Leeds (UK), NOVA Norwegian Social Research (Norway), the University of Iceland and Swiss Paraplegic Research. In addition, it includes eight associated partners, including leading civil society groups, in which researchers may also spend some of their time. These include the European Disability Forum, Interights, Mental Disability Advocacy Centre, the European Group of National Human Rights Institutions and Digital Europe.

We offer a unique, research environment where leading academics will integrate trainee researchers into their research teams according to a structured training programme. Academic partners within the Network will support the researchers to work successfully towards a PhD defence at their host institution. The following two vacancies are available at the University of Leeds.

State policies and the private sector

The CRPD places obligations on States to protect and promote disabled people's rights and equality in all areas of life. These include areas with significant implications for social policy and the Convention challenges the frameworks and benchmarks that have been used to monitor and evaluate social policies in European countries in the past. This is not simply about legislation and mechanisms of enforcement but also about understanding what works in practice. Understanding best practice, and how to evaluate it, is also essential for both the public and the private sectors in their roles as employers and as providers of goods and services. However, employers and service providers may also perceive tensions between (a) their compliance with legislation or good practice in non-discrimination and reasonable accommodation, and (b) their productivity and competitiveness. These tensions are potentially more marked for the private sector, and particularly where there may also be historic resistance to State intervention and regulation. A key challenge for social policy is to understand what works in facilitating private sector engagement in the provision of equal opportunities to disabled people as employees and customers, beyond mere legal compliance. The focus for the two early stage researchers hosted at Leeds will be the challenges for public policy in its interaction with the private sector.

Effective employment policies for disabled people in the private sector (ESR5)

The researcher (DREAM ESR 5) will focus on the implementation of policies supporting employment for disabled people in the open labour market. Article 27 of the CRPD makes it clear that States have responsibilities to prohibit discrimination in recruitment, employment, career advancement and working conditions; to protect equal opportunities; to ensure access to guidance and training; and so on. Whilst States have their own responsibilities to employ disabled people in the public sector, what of the relationship between disabled people, the State and private sector employers? The Convention requires States, in addition to prohibiting discrimination, to 'Promote the employment of persons with disabilities in the private sector through appropriate policies and measures, which may include affirmative action programmes, incentives and other measures'. But what kinds of policies, measures and incentives are appropriate or effective? How do private sector employers adopt, adapt, negotiate or resist State interventions that promote or require rights? What roles do private companies, State agencies and disabled people play in innovating and producing knowledge about what works in the private sector? What impact do EU policies have and how does the situation compare in different European countries? The research project will engage private sector employers and disabled people's organisations to evaluate the effectiveness of public policy approaches and to make recommendations.

Effective consumer policies for disabled people in the private sector (ESR7)

The researcher (DREAM ESR 7) will focus on implementation of policies supporting equal access for disabled people as consumers of goods and services available to the general public. Article 9 of the CRPD highlights State responsibilities to identify and eliminate barriers to accessibility through minimum standards and guidelines, training, assistance and support, and so on. In addition to the responsibility of public sector service providers, the Convention (Article 9.2b) requires States 'To ensure that private entities that offer facilities and services which are open or provided to the public take into account all aspects of accessibility for persons with disabilities'. But how is this best achieved? How do private

sector providers adapt, negotiate or resist State interventions that promote or require accessibility rights? What roles do private companies, State agencies and disabled people play in innovating and producing knowledge about what works in the private sector? What impact do EU policies have and how does the situation compare in different European countries? The research project will engage private sector service providers and disabled people's organisations to evaluate the effectiveness of different public policy approaches and to make recommendations.

Applications and enquiries

Before applying, please study carefully the eligibility criteria applying to Marie Curie 'Early Stage Researchers'; the requirements applying to the DREAM Initial Training Network; and the requirements applying to appointment at the University of Leeds. Applications failing to meet any of these requirements may be rejected without further screening.

Formal applications should be sent to the DREAM Initial Training Network consortium (**not** to the University of Leeds) Any personal information or evidence submitted may be shared with members of the DREAM Supervisory Board as well as with the University of Leeds.

Closing date: Friday 31 March 2011

Details of the application process and more information about the DREAM ITN will be available at: www.nuigalway.ie/dream or can be obtained by emailing dream@nuigalway.ie

Applications should be of the highest standard. With reference to the CV, **the covering letter** should be used to clearly highlight how the applicant's specific qualifications, skills, experience and achievements match the opportunity provided by the defined projects at Leeds.

Applicants for the two Leeds posts should also include **an outline proposal of 3-4 pages** setting out their own ideas and approach to achieve the project aims. This may include, for example, the suggestion of new research questions; reference to relevant academic literature and theoretical orientation to the research problem; the description of qualitative or quantitative methods that could be used to answer the research questions; proposals for the sampling and selection of particular countries or business sectors as case studies; proposals for the involvement of disabled people as stakeholders in the research; proposals for enhancing the dissemination and impact of the research findings.

Final decision will be taken by the University of Leeds, in consultation with the DREAM Supervisory Board. Potential applicants for either of the two positions at Leeds are therefore strongly advised to make **pre-application enquiries** to:

Professor Mark Priestley

Director, Centre for Disability Studies, University of Leeds, LEEDS, LS2 9JT, UK

tel: +44 113 343 4417

e-mail: m.a.priestley@leeds.ac.uk

Eligibility for the posts at Leeds

The key features of the Marie Curie scheme are to support initial training (for early stage researchers) and their mobility (from one country to another). Therefore:

Applicants must meet the Marie Curie definition of an 'early stage researcher'. They must be within the first four years (or full-time equivalent) of their research careers. In practice, this means they should **not** have obtained any degree before 31 August 2007 that would formally entitle them to enrol for a doctorate (either in the UK or in their own country). In general, this is usually a suitably qualifying Masters degree.

Applicants for the two posts at Leeds may be a national of any Member State of the European Union, of any Associated Country or of any other third country, but they may **not** be a national of the United Kingdom (in the case of dual nationality they must not have resided in the UK since 1 September 2006).

Applicants, of any nationality, must **not** have resided or carried out their main activity in the UK for more than 12 months between 1 September 2008 and 31 August 2011 (short stays such as holidays are not taken into account).

As an exception to the general rule, a researcher holding UK nationality could be considered if s/he can provide **evidence** testifying that s/he has legally resided and had his/her main activity in a 'non-associated third country' for at least three years between 1 September 2007 and 31 August 2011.

Acceptance to study for a PhD at Leeds

Selected applicants for the two positions at Leeds must receive a provisional offer of a place to study for a PhD from the University of Leeds before commencing in the post, and an additional application will be required for this purpose. As a minimum requirement you will need to have an excellent first degree, and normally a Masters degree, relevant to research in the social sciences and/or disability field, including credits in research training. Evidence of a minimum English language score (TEOFL/IELTS) will be required before the starting date.

Potential candidates are strongly advised to seek acceptance for a place on the PhD programme of the School of Sociology and Social Policy at the University of Leeds **before** making their application to the DREAM consortium. Please contact Jess Lewis j.s.lewis@leeds.ac.uk for details of the evidence required, stating clearly that your PhD application is connected with the Marie Curie DREAM project supervised by Professor Priestley.

Successful applicants for the two posts will be members of University staff and will be eligible to enrol for supervision and examination of their PhD thesis without the payment of a student fee during the three-year period of their employment (registration or examination fees for additional years may be payable if the PhD thesis is to be submitted after the fixed period of employment).

Suitably qualified applicants who are accepted for a PhD place but who are not selected for the advertised posts may be eligible to retain their offer on the PhD programme at Leeds and therefore to apply for alternative scholarship competitions or fees bursaries, subject to negotiation and the available resources of the host department.

Employment at the University of Leeds

Selected applicants for the two positions at Leeds must meet the requirements for appointment at the University of Leeds, in addition to the eligibility requirements of the Marie Curie Initial Training Network. They must receive an offer of employment from the University of Leeds before taking up the post, and an additional application form will be required for this purpose.

The two researchers will be located in the School of Sociology and Social Policy (within the Faculty of Education, Social Sciences and Law) under the auspices of the Centre for Disability Studies research group, and supervised by Professor Mark Priestley (each will also have a co-supervisor for the purposes of their PhD candidature). As PhD candidates they will be members of the Faculty Graduate School and benefit from its training opportunities as well as from training opportunities provided by the School, the wider University and the DREAM project partners.

The School of Sociology and Social Policy is one of four in the Faculty, the others being the School of Law, the School of Politics and International Studies and the School of Education. The School has a very strong research profile, scoring particularly highly in the proportion of its published work judged as 'world leading' in the UK's 2008 Research Assessment Exercise. It is expected that applicants will have the potential to contribute within this quality profile.

The School's research is organised around a small number of clusters or centres, of which disability studies is one key area. The Centre for Disability Studies is an established international leader for research and education in the field and incorporates the work of numerous staff and research students working in different departments and faculties across the University.

The successful applicants will be employed by the School of Sociology and Social Policy with the title of 'Marie Curie Research Fellow' and will be paid a salary in GBP Sterling, equivalent to the European Commission's current rates of allowance for Marie Curie Early Stage Researchers working in the UK, net of employers deductions.

Right to work in the United Kingdom

Under Home Office / UK Border Agency regulations, employers who wish to appoint a worker from overseas who does not already hold the right to work in the UK under an immigration category (other than those holding Tier 2 certificate status) are required to demonstrate that they are unable to recruit a resident worker. Applications from candidates who require Tier 2 immigration status to work in the UK are welcome and will be considered alongside all other applications. However, non-EEA candidates may not be appointed to a post in the UK if a suitably qualified, experienced and skilled EU/EEA candidate is available to take up the post as the employing body is unlikely, in these circumstances, to satisfy the Resident Labour Market Test. For further information please visit the Home office UK Border Office: (<http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/>)

A Criminal Records Disclosure is not required for this position

However, selected applicants who have unspent convictions will be required to indicate this in section 9 of the University of Leeds employment application form and must declare the nature of the conviction to the Recruitment and Administrative Co-ordinator.

Disabled Applicants

We welcome applications from disabled people. The post is located in the School of Sociology and Social Policy (Social Sciences Building). Disabled applicants wishing to review access to the building are invited to contact the department directly. Additional information about access and support for disabled staff may be sought from Disability Services, e-mail disability@leeds.ac.uk or tel + 44 (0)113 343 3927.

Disabled applicants are not obliged to inform employers of their disability status but will still be covered by the Disability Discrimination Act once their disability becomes known.

Data Protection

The information you provide in your application for employment at the University of Leeds will be used to consider your suitability for the post for which you have applied. If your application is not successful the information will be disposed of confidentially after 9 months. If your application is successful and you are appointed, your information and future data will be processed in accordance with the University's Data Protection Code of Practice. A copy of this code can be obtained from either the University's Human Resources Department or by visiting <http://www.leeds.ac.uk/hr/policy/index.htm>

Health and Safety Responsibilities

As an employee of the University of Leeds, you are required to adhere to and comply with the provisions of the Health and Safety at Work Act, related Regulations, and act in accordance with the University's Policy on Health and Safety which can be accessed via <http://www.leeds.ac.uk/safety>

In addition you are also required to co-operate with regard to the implementation of the Health and Safety arrangements and should not interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interest of Health, Safety and Welfare at Work.

For more information on the University and terms and conditions of appointments please visit <http://www.leeds.ac.uk>

To find out what it's like to work at the University of Leeds, view our DVD online at

<http://www.leeds.ac.uk/hr/jobs/dvd.htm>

One of the University's key strategic objectives is to "enhance our international performance and standing".

International applications for staff vacancies are encouraged and valued. Information for international staff moving to the UK can be found at

<http://www.internationalstaff.ac.uk>

Equality and Diversity Statement

The University of Leeds is proud to be a multi-cultural community. We value diversity, and are determined to ensure

- that we treat all individuals fairly, with dignity and respect
- that the opportunities we provide are open to all
- that we provide a safe, supportive and welcoming environment – for staff, for students and for visitors

We recognise that we still have work to do to secure a truly inclusive community, and we are committed to a wide-ranging plan of action to tackle discrimination and to promote diversity.

The Equality and Diversity Statement forms part of the University's Equality and Diversity Policy, which applies to staff and students alike and is available on the University's website at: <http://www.equality.leeds.ac.uk/university-policies/>

The University has published the following policies and codes of practice which are linked to the Equality and Diversity policy. They are also available on the University's website.

The Race Equality Policy

The Disability Equality Scheme

The Gender Equality Scheme

The Code of Practice on Harassment and Bullying

Further information and advice are available from The Equality Service, Telephone: +44 (0)113 343 3927 or by email to equality@leeds.ac.uk.

Pension information

For appointments to academic or professional and managerial grades you will be eligible to join the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS) and will have the option to join the Scheme when commencing employment at the University. Full details of the benefits offered by the Scheme can be found on the USS website www.uss.co.uk, and more information can also be obtained from the University Pensions Department.

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