

The Professor Sir Richard Trainor PhD Scholarships 2017-18

Project Title: Languages of left politics: a digital study of the Fabian Society's publications, 1940-2016

Partner Organisation: Fabian Society

King's is now inviting applications for one of the Professor Sir Richard Trainor PhD Scholarships in the Department of History at King's College London in collaboration with the Department of Digital Humanities and the Fabian Society. The scholarship will commence from October 2017 onwards and is open to new incoming PhD students only.

Project Description:

This scholarship is part of a broader project tracing changing conceptions of state power and political and social change since World War II. In doing so, it will pioneer a digital approach to the study of recent political history, tracing patterns and shifts in political thinking in the aggregate, rather than focusing on a small number of individuals and texts as scholars tend to do now.

The successful candidate will particularly trace the trajectory of left politics. The focus will be on the publications (over 5 million words) of the most important centre for the production and dissemination of left-wing thinking in Britain, the Fabian Society. Research will analyse trends in those documents, plotting the rise and fall of particular themes and ways of thinking about political action in particular. How, for example, do left thinkers think about the changing nature and role of the state? The successful candidate will also trace the influence of, and influence on Fabian texts by examining the relationship with other strands of political discussion: journalism, government documents, and political speeches. The end result will be a major revision of our historical understanding of the major themes and arguments of left thinking since the 1940s. With left-leaning policy organisations such as the Fabian Society currently reappraising their work, this historical understanding will powerfully underpin policy work now.

The studentship will involve significant use of digital tools to examine political texts. However, training in their use will be provided. The successful candidate will only require a basic degree of IT competence, and the desire to learn further.

The studentship involves the use of Fabian Society archives, joint supervision by Fabian Society staff, and participation in Fabian events. The successful candidate will also have access to work space at the Fabian Society as well as King's.

Bringing together the study of political thought and practice, and the analysis of textual data using rapidly developing techniques, the studentship offers an excellent stepping stone for a range of careers in academic, the policy world and beyond.

The Department of History was ranked 5th of all UK History departments in the 2014 REF with 86% of our research activity assessed as 'world leading or internationally excellent'. It is a research-led department with a strong reputation for contribution to scholarship, teaching and practice. The Department is located on the Strand Campus of King's College London where the studentship will be based.

Supervisors:

Lead Supervisor: Dr Jon Wilson

Second Supervisors: Dr Tobias Blanke

Partner Organisation Supervisor: Andrew Harrop

Application documentation: applicants must complete and submit:

- a CV
- personal statement explaining why they would be suitable (maximum 500 words)

to graduateschool@kcl.ac.uk by 11:59pm (UK BST) on 7 May 2017. The subject line of the email should read 'RT Scholarship 1718 – *[include the relevant project title]*'

All documents should be submitted as a single pdf.

Two academic references **must** be received by the deadline for the application to be eligible. Candidates are responsible for instructing referees to submit their references to graduateschool@kcl.ac.uk using the subject line 'RT Scholarship 1718 – *[name of applicant]*'.

Selection: Please note that as part of selection, short-listed candidates will be invited for interview.

Funding Details: The scholarship will provide an annual payment of £15,000 which can be used to cover tuition fees and/or living costs.

Length of Award: 3 years (PhD)

For further information about the position please contact Dr Jon Wilson at jon.wilson@kcl.ac.uk.