

Three-year PhD studentship in India's Political Economy at King's India Institute

Stipend of £15,000 p.a and Tuition Fees (Home/EU fees only)

Applications will be considered on a rolling basis as they arrive, with the potential for either a September 2016 or January 2017 start-date. Applications will close no later than October 31st 2016 at 5pm and might close earlier if a suitable candidate is identified. Applicants interested in a September start should have submitted all materials by July 15th at the latest.

An exciting opportunity has arisen for a fully-funded PhD studentship in the field of India's Political Economy based at the India Institute, King's College London. The PhD scholarship is funded by the Faculty of Social Science and Public Policy (SSPP) at King's and is linked to an ongoing partnership between King's India Institute, University of California, Berkeley and the Indira Gandhi Institute for Development Research (IGIDR), Mumbai. This partnership brings together some of the foremost political scientists and economists who work on the reciprocal relationship between political structures and economic outcomes in contemporary India. The PhD scholar will be based at King's, enrolled on the PhD Contemporary India, but able to draw on connections across the three principal partners in the network, including participation in network-wide conferences, opportunities to consult faculty at partner institutions and potential affiliation during fieldwork in India with IGIDR in Mumbai. The successful candidate will be invited to join the partners for a network conference at IGIDR, Mumbai in January 2017 (travel/accommodation will be covered).

Potential candidates are invited to submit a research proposal addressing a specific research question within one of the following broad areas that represent areas of research interest for the network as a whole (please note that these descriptions are suggestive not exhaustive):

- What are the causes and consequences of under-employment and low productivity in India today?

While it is widely recognized that India faces a major challenge to produce sufficient decent jobs for its huge youthful workforce, there is no settled empirical consensus on why India has failed to take a more labour-intensive path of industrialization. Some have attributed the weaker performance of India's manufacturing sector to low worker productivity, while others point to rigid labour laws. There is an urgent need for further research to investigate the causes of under-employment: ideologically charged debates about the impact of labour laws on job creation need to be subjected to greater empirical scrutiny; longer term histories of labour politics, education policies and investments in technology or infrastructure in particular sectors require systematic analysis. Given the challenges of mass job creation, the consequences (such as renewed social tensions in urban areas and new forms of politics) and policy responses to under-employment (such as social security, anti-poverty programmes, health and education policies) also require closer scrutiny.

- How does the governance of urban areas affect economic activity and emergent inequalities?

Proposals are invited which address the relationship between urban governance and economic activity understood broadly, including the distributional consequences in terms of the shape of service delivery, accountability and inequality within trajectories of contemporary urbanization in India. Recent years have seen a policy push by the Indian government and parts of the corporate sector towards the creation of 'smart cities' which are supposed to

harness best practices in urban planning, digital and information technologies and public-private partnerships to create new urban ecosystems. The policy rhetoric of ‘smart cities’ focuses on [‘putting people at the centre of the development process’](#). And yet structures of political representation within Indian cities, and the representation of mega-cities within state-level politics in India have been under strain for some time.

Guidance for applicants

We expect research proposals to carefully develop a specific research question with reference to the relevant literature, and to set out a suggested methodological approach. It would not be possible for any single enquiry to cover all of the ground sketched above. Applications that are able to specify a clear, well-justified research question of feasible scope will be viewed more favourably. We welcome enquiries that are interdisciplinary in nature, and we are open to a variety of methodological approaches as appropriate for the proposed subject matter.

Please consult the ‘How to apply’ pages of the King’s India Institute website for information about how to structure your research proposal:

<http://www.kcl.ac.uk/sspp/sga/kii/study/phd/apply.aspx>

Candidates are welcome to list potential supervisors on their application. Final decisions about supervision will be taken after interview. For reference, we anticipate that the supervisory committee of the successful candidate will draw primarily on political economy-related expertise within the India Institute which includes Sunil Mitra Kumar (Lecturer in Economics), Adnan Naseemullah (Lecturer in South Asia and International Relations), Jahnvi Phalkey, (Senior Lecturer in the History of Science and Technology), Louise Tillin (Senior Lecturer in Politics) and in the Department of Political Economy (Amrita Dhillon, Professor of Political Economy). The successful candidate will also be able to draw on expertise among our external partners – including Professor Pranab Bardhan (University of California, Berkeley), Professor R Nagaraj (IGIDR) and Professor Sripad Motiram (IGIDR).

During the first year of registration at King’s, the student will focus on preparing an upgrade document to allow them to progress from MPhil to PhD candidacy. In the second year, the student should plan to undertake fieldwork in India. The student will have the opportunity to be affiliated with the Indira Gandhi Institute for Development Research (IGIDR) in Mumbai and receive guidance from relevant experts at IGIDR, meet other students, as well as enjoy the potential to discuss their evolving research. The third year will be devoted to writing up the thesis while based primarily in London, and presenting at relevant conferences. The potential for a policy-relevant internship in the UK or India may also be considered during the third year depending on particular student interests.

Eligibility

Applicants should hold a first degree and Masters in a relevant subject area (including Political Science, Economics, Development Studies, Public Policy, History, History of Science and Technology and other relevant subjects). Prior methodological training will be an advantage, although the student will be able to avail of additional training via the ESRC-funded King’s Interdisciplinary Social Science-Doctoral Training Centre (KISS-DTC).

Applicants can be of any nationality but must note that the scholarship covers only Home/EU fees (£4600 in 2016-17). Non-home/EU students would need to be able to demonstrate an ability to pay the remainder of fees at the full international fee rate (see details [here](#)).

Application Process

Applicants should make their application for the PhD Contemporary India through the [admissions portal](#), attaching a research proposal that addresses the guidelines set out in this document. Please note on the application that you are applying for the PhD scholarship in India's Political Economy. Applicants are asked to contact their referees in advance and ask them to submit their references promptly.

For further details about this scholarship please contact Dr Louise Tillin (Louise.Tillin@kcl.ac.uk) or for questions related to the PhD programme at King's India Institute contact PhD convenor, Dr Sunil Mitra Kumar (Sunil.Kumar@kcl.ac.uk). Please note that we cannot provide feedback on unsuccessful applications.