



## **Reducing Drug Policy Harms Through Police-Led Reform ESRC DTP Collaborative Studentship**

### **University of Birmingham and Release**

The Midlands Graduate School is an accredited Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) Doctoral Training Partnership (DTP). One of 14 such partnerships in the UK, the Midlands Graduate School is a collaboration between the University of Warwick, Aston University, University of Birmingham, University of Leicester, Loughborough University and the University of Nottingham.

The University of Birmingham as part of Midlands Graduate School is now inviting applications for an ESRC Doctoral Studentship in association with our collaborative partner Release to commence in October 2019.

In 2018, the office of the Police and Crime Commissioner of the West Midlands announced proposals to address drugs policing. Drawing on concerns over the rising costs of drug related crime estimated at £1.4 billion in the region, the office of the Police and Crime Commissioner stressed that 'real changes' were needed to address not only drug-related crime, but also rising levels of drug-related deaths. Suggested changes include investing in Heroin Assisted Treatment and broader Naloxone provision alongside schemes to divert people away from the Criminal Justice System. Similar diversion schemes for people who use drugs have been introduced in the Durham, Avon & Somerset and Thames Valley forces. These developments all vary in scope and practice and there is a challenge around harnessing the evidence base for the efficacy of these changes.

Working closely with academics from the University of Birmingham and Leicester, alongside legal specialists from Release, the UK's centre of expertise on drugs and drug laws, applications are invited for a doctoral project looking at the origins of the impetus for police-led law reform and provides an overview of cases where new approaches have been adopted to address the drug problem. In doing so, it considers some of the barriers and facilitators to more widespread police-led diversionary policies elsewhere. It will highlight the contextual similarities and differences between reforms and seek to assess the impact of these schemes on police resources, re-offending and measures of drug policy-related harm.

Some experience of contemporary debates in UK drugs policy and policing will be advantageous.

### **Application Process**

To be considered for this PhD, please complete the Collaborative Studentship application form [available online here](#) alongside a 2 page cover letter and a CV and along with two references email this to [sosppgr@contacts.bham.ac.uk](mailto:sosppgr@contacts.bham.ac.uk)

**Application deadline: Friday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2019 at 5pm**

**Midlands Graduate School ESRC DTP**

Our ESRC studentships cover fees and maintenance stipend and extensive support for research training, as well as research activity support grants. Support is available only to successful applicants who fulfil eligibility criteria. To check your eligibility, visit:

[www.mgsdtp.ac.uk/studentships/eligibility/](http://www.mgsdtp.ac.uk/studentships/eligibility/).

Informal enquiries about the research or Department of Social Policy, Sociology and Criminology prior to application can be directed to Dr Mark Monaghan [m.monaghan@bham.ac.uk](mailto:m.monaghan@bham.ac.uk).