Empowering family self-efficacy through social tourism
ESRC DTP Collaborative Studentship

Nottingham University Business School and the Family Holiday Association

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.

Nottingham University Business School (NUBS) as part of Midlands Graduate School is now inviting applications for an ESRC Doctoral Studentship in association with our collaborative partner Family Holiday Association to commence in October 2018, who has an interest in social tourism. Social tourism describes the activities of organisations working for greater inclusion of people who are unable to participate in tourism opportunities, through interventions of a well-defined social nature. Applicants should have a background in sociology, psychology, tourism or leisure studies, or other social science field.

Tourism can lead to positive outcomes for individuals and family groups, including relaxation and recuperation, strengthening of family bonds, expanding personal horizons, and geographical, historical and cultural knowledge. However, in the UK, despite being one of the wealthiest nations, around 40% of the population are not able to participate in a simple week’s holiday away from home each year. For many, the main reasons are financial, but these can also include, illness, disabilities, caring responsibilities and others. There is currently no government funding to help support disadvantaged families to access a short, much needed holiday break. There are, however, hundreds of generally small charities working to provide such opportunities for different groups in the UK, providing what is termed ‘social tourism’.

The project will examine how families who face complex multi-dimensional challenges benefit from a break and how the experiences gained contribute to improvements in individual and collective self-efficacy. A range of evaluation studies have identified that these programmes can lead to increases in family and social capital, self-esteem, quality of life and subjective well-being (SWB), and to changes in behaviours, which could yield wider societal benefits. Yet there is little sense of how these outcomes contribute to changes in attitudes and behaviours, such as self-efficacy.

The ultimate aim is to help severely disadvantaged families become more resilient and better able to cope with their financial, health (mental and physical) and situational circumstances. To achieve this, that chosen applicant will be working with the Family Holiday Association, the leading UK charity dedicated to providing short breaks and days out for struggling families, and its wide range of industry partners www.familyholidayassociation.org.uk.
Application Process

To be considered for this PhD, please complete the Collaborative Studentship application form available online here with a covering letter and a CV as well as two references email this to Karen Maltby, Karen.Maltby@nottingham.ac.uk.

Application deadline: Friday 16th February 2018

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/.

Informal enquiries about the research or NUBS prior to application can be directed to: scott.mccabe@nottingham.ac.uk.