

# Gendergraduates

## Fellowships for MARIE CURIE Early Stage Training

TRAINING PROGRAMME  
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## Project Overview

This is an Marie Curie Early Stage Training project in the interdisciplinary area of gender and women's studies in the humanities and social sciences. Partners of 7 institutions with proven record of high expertise in gender research and education will jointly train and exchange PhD students. The training structure is: core curriculum of structured courses, some jointly taught by the partners, intensive training sessions, research seminars with emphasis on issues of interdisciplinary methodology, targeted tutorials and individual supervision sessions. Gender Studies is defined according to the standard definition area adopted by the EU: the study, analysis and evaluation of the factors that affect the social, cultural, economic, intellectual and scientific status of women and minorities.

Gender as a historical and cultural product affects personal identity, but also is a principle of organization of social structures and institutions; gender forms the basis for normative values and socially enacted meanings and representations. Gender Studies addresses theoretical and practical aspects of scientific research to contribute to a better understanding of the factors that delay the implementation of changes in the status of women and minorities. This field consequently involves also men and it defines “women” as a category that includes differences of culture, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation and age. Synergy is created between this EST and networks of Gender Studies that have been officially recognized by the European Commission (the Socrates Thematic Network ATHENA, coordinated by host), to ensure a prominent European dimension. The methodology is inter-disciplinary and involves both quantitative and qualitative comparative training methods. The EST gives high priority to the interest of the students and proposes a structured and monitored training programme. Quality is assured through: written course evaluation, faculty level control, annual progress assessment, personalized training programme, regular supervision and mentoring.

## Research & Training

The fellowship aims at the creation of a high-level European research environment, which means that:

- the students will be exposed to the most advanced theoretical and methodological developments in their research area;
- the students will also be encouraged to take classes and present results outside their program and in mainstream disciplines and in other relevant research areas;
- each student will make a personalized research training and career plan, which will attempt to draw an exhaustive list of all his/her training needs;
- all efforts will be made to create a high-level research environment through a string of closely connected seminars and tutorials, which are monitored by a tightly coordinated team;
- one-on-one interaction with the students will be encouraged, but so will be group work, sharing and comparing of data;

- consequently a great investment in academic presentation skills, giving and receiving positive feedback and criticism will be given, through a number of seminars and tutorials;
- supervision and feedback are crucial components of any training: accordingly a tutor will be appointed to supervise the overall course of study and to monitor progress and eventual problems of each student;
- effective and regular contact with the chosen supervisor be a compulsory aspect of the EST.

An effective mentoring system is central to this EST, which means:

- encouraging common training, or students to learn from one another, to present their work and give and take critical feedback;
- encouraging transfer of expertise not only vertically (from the instructors), but also horizontally, from student to student. Here the link between the Ph.D. students, the post-doctoral fellows and the final year MA research students is of the greatest importance, i.e., providing a mentoring system with older and more experienced students;
- exposing the students to the best minds in their field, through highly selective master classes and intensive courses with international experts, i.e.: provide role models.

The training programme has 4 major components:

- 1) Structured training through a core curriculum of compulsory thematic courses, jointly taught by all partners. In addition there will be a structured research training programme.
- 2) A personalised training programme will be put in place for each participants by month 6 of the fellowships.
- 3) Research Training Programme
  - 3.1. Research seminar on gender methodology. This includes intensive training sessions taught by partners throughout the year.
  - 3.2. A year long seminar on inter-disciplinarity in gender research.
  - 3.3. A semester-long Research design seminar
  - 3.4. Tutorials offered by staff members
  - 3.5. Gendergraduates seminar
- 4) Individual Ph.D. supervision sessions with supervisor and mentoring session with post-doctoral fellows.

## 1 Compulsory Thematic Course Outline

Students must prepare for each course by studying all previously listed reading materials and/or completing preliminary assignments. The seminar-format enables students to forge direct links between their own research and the course contents. Assignments are also designed to be immediately relevant to participants' projects.

Courses provided by the host organization:

- Introduction: NOISE intensive course
- Theories of Sex/Gender

- Gender Mainstreaming and Equal Opportunities: The Complementarity of Equality and Diversity
- Gender and Welfare States in an Era of Globalization
- The Linguistic Turn
- The Body in Feminist Theory and Practice
- Interpreting Gender and its Intersections: Analyzing Texts in Feminist Social Science Research
- Gender, Ethnicity and Postcolonial Critiques

In addition, intensive courses will be provided by the following participants: Hull, Linköping, Ljubljana, Lodz, Frankfurt and Bologna.

## 2 Intakes and personalized training programme

A personalized training programme will be drafted by the fellow in conjunction with the senior staff members, in such a manner as to reflect the qualifications, needs and expectations of the fellow, as well as the qualifications of the host institution.

## 3 Research Training Programme

### 3.1 *RESEARCH SEMINAR ON GENDER METHODOLOGY*

This year-long research seminar (3 hours per session) is coordinated by a senior professor in cooperation with the partners. It has a systematized reading programme.

The aim of the seminar is:

- 1 To offer a research environment in which students can reflect on their research topic at a meta-discursive level, with special emphasis on methodological issues and perspectives
- 2 To offer recent critical texts of interest to research students, so as to bring their knowledge up to date. The reading material is meant to sparkle the debate on the latest developments in gender theories and their relevance for the ongoing research
- 3 To establish a horizontal system of exchanges and feedbacks by drawing together different individual researchers and stimulate exchanges and feedback

### 3.2 *INTERDISCIPLINARITY AND GENDER RESEARCH*

This is a year-long seminar jointly taught in cooperation with the partners in the project, which explores different theories and practices of inter-disciplinarity in gender research. It aims to provide an exhaustive overview of different methods as well as theoretical traditions of interdisciplinary research.

- 1) The seminar presents cases of methodological good practice by encouraging presentations by experienced scholars. Issues related to objectivity, but also to the self-reflexivity of the researchers will be discussed.
- 2) Questions will be raised as to the ethical implications of researchers' involvement in gender work, especially in cases that concern inter-cultural and multicultural research areas.

### 3.3 *RESEARCH DESIGN SEMINAR*

This aims to provide the students with complementary skills in communication, presentation and discussion of written material and in giving structured feedback. Students will be trained to develop three crucial research skills: firstly, to structure in writing and to defend orally a research proposal, an application or a synopsis of a scientific paper in English. Secondly, this seminar tests students' proficiency in academic English, computer and IT skills. Thirdly, students are trained to prepare a submission for a scholarly article and to undergo the standard referring procedure.

#### *3.4 TUTORIALS*

Tutorials are flexible training environments with selected students working with a specialist, with a list of relevant literature and assigned work. Sessions can vary between weekly or monthly discussions. The students discuss - either individually, or in groups of two or three - their research problems and challenges. Tutorials thus provide an occasion for testing and practicing bibliographical skills. The tutorials are taught by experienced researchers and by visiting scholars.

#### *3.5 GENDERGRADUATES Seminar*

In conjunction with the NOISE Summerschool there will be an intensive seminar in which the fellows will present and give feedback on their own research work.

#### **4. Individual Coaching by selected supervisor(s).**

Ph.D. students are expected to work on an individual basis with a senior academic staff on a specific area of research. The candidates will work with their supervisors in accordance with prevailing practice in their country. Annual evaluations will be made collegially of these sessions.