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| Title of studentship: | ERC VariKin: Cultural Evolution of Kinship Diversity |
| Faculty/School/Department(s) | Department of Archeology and Anthropology |
| Location | Bristol |
| Salary/stipend | Full fee cover (Home/EU) plus £14,296 |
| Hours | Full-time |
| Contract (temp/perm) | |
| Closing date | 30 April 2016 (Interviews will be conducted in May) |
| Start date | 19 September 2016 |

The project:

Why do human societies differ in who they class as family? Why are cousins called the same terms as siblings in some languages and not others? Can we tell what kinship systems existed in the past? To answer these questions a PhD position is offered in the five-year European Research Council Starting Grant project entitled "VariKin: Cultural Evolution of Kinship Diversity" led by Dr Fiona Jordan in the Department of Archaeology & Anthropology at the University of Bristol. The PhD studentship is a full-time fixed term position of 3.5 years.

The VariKin Evolution project will take a cultural evolutionary approach to understanding cross-cultural kinship diversity in a large number of the world's societies across multiple language families. The PhD student will use comparative phylogenetic methods developed in evolutionary biology to understand diversity and apply these to cultural and linguistic data. The aim is to understand how kinship terms and systems evolve through time, and to relate patterns of change to wider social and cultural phenomena. There will be an opportunity for the PhD student to pursue a secondary project in collaboration with other team members working on the corpus linguistic analysis of kinship talk, and how children acquire categories of kinship.

Candidates:

Candidates should have a disciplinary background in a science or social science, demonstrate an aptitude for computational and quantitative methods, and be familiar with cultural evolutionary research. Training in phylogenetic comparative methods will be given but some prior familiarity or experience would be preferable. You should fulfil the entrance requirements for a Department of Archaeology & Anthropology MPhil/PhD.

The student will conduct their research under the primary supervision of Dr Fiona Jordan at the University of Bristol. The VariKin project team is multidisciplinary, spanning anthropology, linguistics, and psychology and this is an opportunity to be part of an exciting new research group—the Evolution of Cross-Cultural Diversity (excd.lab)—and a Department expanding in four-field anthropology.

The successful candidate will:

- Have a disciplinary background in a science or social science such as anthropology, biology, psychology, sociology, linguistics or another relevant field.
- Demonstrate an aptitude for and/or experience with computational and quantitative skills.
- Be familiar with cultural evolutionary research methods. Training in phylogenetic comparative methods will be given but some prior familiarity or experience would be preferable.
- Display a genuine interest in cultural diversity and human kinship, and ideally, have familiarity with the anthropology and/or linguistics of kinship.
- Be enthusiastic about working in a multi-disciplinary team and demonstrate evidence of interest or activities beyond their core discipline.
- Fulfil the entrance requirements for a Department of Archaeology & Anthropology MPhil/PhD i.e. hold an M-level qualification in a relevant subject as well as an undergraduate degree at 2:1 or 1st class (or equivalent). See further details on requirements here: <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/study/postgraduate/admissions-statements/archanthpgr.html>
- Show evidence of experience in conducting independent research to completion, including skills for identifying and articulating a research programme, obtaining and synthesising relevant knowledge, analysing data, and writing and presenting results for dissemination.

How to apply:

Please also make an online application for this project at <http://www.bris.ac.uk/pg-howtoapply>. Please select Archeology and Anthropology on the Programme Choice page and enter details of the scholarship when prompted in the Funding and Research Details sections of the form.

Please quote **PhD Cultural Phylogenetics** on your application and provide the required documentation at time of applying, noting the following carefully:

Please provide your **CV instead of a Personal Statement**.

This studentship is to work on a specific project, and therefore for your **Research Statement, you should provide a 600-word (no more than two sides of A4) Statement** that contains:

- Your research and disciplinary background to date that is relevant to the project. This should include a brief personal statement, your engagement with key literature in cultural evolution and kinship, any relevant research experience, and your skills and facility with quantitative/computational methods in general and phylogenetic methods in particular.
- A brief outline proposal (including data, possible outcomes, and importance) that specifies a research question in kinship diversity of interest to you, which could be answered using phylogenetic comparative approaches.

Please also provide a **Writing Sample** (ideally around 3000 words, no more than 5000 words) that demonstrates your ability to communicate academic ideas and research in scholarly fashion. This may be a coursework essay, a section of an undergraduate dissertation, or a published or submitted manuscript.

For enquiries please contact Dr Fiona Jordan (fiona.jordan@bristol.ac.uk) quoting "PhD VariKin" in the subject line.

Candidate requirements: A pass at M level (or international equivalent)

Funding:

Contacts: artf-pgadmissions@bristol.ac.uk