

**PhD Studentship with the Changing Ageing Partnership (Cap)
Institute of Governance, School of Law, Queen's University Belfast
And
School of Planning, Architecture and Civil Engineering**

New ICT tools to support older people's autonomy and comfort at home

The successful PhD student will be supervised by Dr Karim Hadjri, and will work closely with staff at the School of Planning, Architecture and Civil Engineering, and the Institute of Governance. The details of the final proposal will be developed by the student in line with the findings of the seed grant and the aims of the Changing Ageing Partnership - CAP programmes.

The Changing Ageing Partnership (CAP) was established in December 2005 to improve the quality of life for older people. Funded by The Atlantic Philanthropies the partnership brings together:

- Age Concern Northern Ireland
- Help the Aged in Northern Ireland
- Workers' Educational Association
- Queen's University Belfast

The **CAP Vision** is of *"A strong informed voice capable of challenging and changing attitudes and approaches to ageing."*

Information on Cap is available from the School of Law website:

<http://www.law.qub.ac.uk/schools/SchoolofLaw/Research/InstituteofGovernance/ResearchProjects/>

and from the Cap website <http://www.changingageing.org/>

To be eligible for a DEL studentship, a candidate must:

1. Have been ordinarily resident in the UK (for fees and maintenance studentships) throughout the period of 3 years immediately preceding the start of the studentship (or would have been so resident had the candidate, the spouse or either parent not been employed temporarily outside the UK or the EU).
2. The required academic qualification is a first or upper second class honours degree from a University in the United Kingdom or Ireland, or qualifications considered by the University as equivalent to this standard (any further requirements are stated in the individual detail).
3. Hold the required academic qualification before the start of the studentship.
4. NOT have already gained or completed the requirements of a doctoral degree, in any subject, however funded.

Requirements:

The requirements of this post are that applicants must have a postgraduate degree in Architecture, and have experience of and are competent in the use of qualitative and quantitative research methods, and are advanced computer users (CAD and programming). It is also essential that applicants have experience of writing research reports, are willing to work with older people, and are willing to travel within the UK and Ireland.

Summary of the research plan:

This research builds on the findings of the seed grant “Designing better homes for the ageing population in Northern Ireland” carried out by Karim Hadjri, lecturer at the School of Planning, Architecture and Civil Engineering, and funded by the Changing Ageing Partnership - CAP. This study revealed that further research is needed to improve housing designs with particular emphasis on adaptability of the existing housing stock, and the level of comfort sought by the users.

In line with the aim of the CAP research programme which is “to strengthen the evidence base which informs the development of policy, related to the needs of older people,” this study will be interdisciplinary and will combine architecture, social sciences, and information and communication technologies - ICT, in order to devise tools that will improve the older people’s with comfort, autonomy and independence at home.

The study will also explore the relationship between users, the environment, and new technologies. It will examine in detail, through user participation, the relationship between the existing housing stock and how it can be effectively adapted using ICT tools. These tools are also expected to assist in the design of new purpose-built housing for the ageing population.

Areas of interest will be accessibility, adaptability, comfort, well-being, autonomy, and inclusion. The real needs of the users will be investigated to establish priority areas for improvement, and the tools needed to achieve their development and implementation.

This is a timely proposal given the increasing interest in Ageing research illustrated by the recent UK Research Councils New Dynamics of Ageing and EQUAL interdisciplinary programmes, and the UK Government's aim to promote social inclusion of older people.

For further information please contact:

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Applications should be made online by 4pm on Friday 11 January 2008

See: <http://www.qub.ac.uk/home/ProspectiveStudents/PostgraduateStudents/ApplyingtoQueens>