



DPhil studentship on the Internet and Political Science at Oxford University

The Internet, Political Science and Public Policy: Re-examining Collective Action, Governance and Citizen-Government Interactions in the Digital Era

The Internet, Political Science and Public Policy is a new three-year programme of research directed by Professor Helen Margetts, funded through the ESRC Professorial Fellowship scheme. The aim of this research is to assess where political science understanding, knowledge and theory should be re-examined and developed in light of widespread use of the internet; to develop methodologies to study on-line behaviour including use of the Internet to generate new data and experiments; and to build theory and understanding of internet-mediated interactions at both individual and organizational levels.

First, the project will re-examine the logic of collective action, assessing the impact of reduced communication, co-ordination and transaction costs; the changing nature of leadership; and the effects of real-time social information on political mobilization. This part of the research will involve conducting laboratory and field experiments into online behaviour, investigating the effect of different information environments on propensity to participate.

Second, the research will develop the Digital-era Governance model (Dunleavy, Margetts et al, 2006) for newer 'Web 2.0' applications and other technological developments such as cloud computing, investigating where such applications have brought citizens into the 'front-office' of government. The research will re-examine the nature of citizen-government interactions in this changing environment, examining the impact of internet-based mediation on information exchange, transparency and citizen participation in policy-making. This part of the research will involve a comparison of government's online presence in eight countries, using webmetric techniques, and in-depth qualitative analysis of governance models, using elite interviewing in the countries covered, and documentary analysis.

The research programme includes a three-year DPhil studentship to support a doctoral student in Oxford to work as part of the team that will carry out this research, commencing October 2011. This award will cover an allowance for training/conferences, tuition fees and a tax-free stipend of £12,940 per annum,

subject to satisfactory progress. There is flexibility for the student's thesis project to fall into either or both of the two main research themes of the work, collective action or digital-era governance. Please note that UK and EU citizens are eligible for the studentship award only. However EU citizens would only be eligible for the fees only award.

Applicants should have or expect to receive a mark of at least 67% or an equivalent level of distinction relevant in one of social science Masters degree (such as political science, economics, sociology, public policy or psychology). Strong research training in quantitative and qualitative methods (particularly statistical analysis); an understanding of political systems and governmental and non-governmental organizations; and a proven interest in e-government and online politics are essential. Knowledge and understanding of the experimental method; some familiarity with the interpretation of webmetric and social network data; willingness to learn and undertake new methodologies such as data-mining and link analysis; and experience in elite interviewing will be an advantage.

The application deadline for this studentship is **Friday 18th February** and interviews are planned for the week of 7th March.

You will need to apply for both the programme and this studentship via the main University graduate application form, and pay an application fee of £50. The application form, all supporting materials required for the programme (including references) and payment must be submitted by the 18th February. To access the application form and application guide please visit our online prospectus at www.ox.ac.uk/graduate/apply.

On the application form, in the section headed 'Departmental Studentship Applications', you must indicate that you are applying for a studentship and enter the reference code for this studentship "11OII01ESRC".

Please send any further informal queries to Professor Helen Margetts
helen.margetts@oii.ox.ac.uk

About the Oxford Internet Institute

OII is a leading world centre for the multidisciplinary study of the Internet and society. As a department of Oxford University's Social Sciences Division, we offer a DPhil (doctorate) in 'Information, Communication and the Social Sciences'. The programme develops the qualities and transferable skills necessary to excel in teaching, research, policymaking, or business, including abilities to design new

technologies and to predict and analyse their impacts. Further information is available from the department's website:

<http://www.oii.ox.ac.uk/>

More information about studying at Oxford University is available from the University's Graduate Studies Prospectus:

<http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/postgraduate/studying/>

Further guidance on ESRC studentships is available from the ESRC website at

<http://www.esrc.ac.uk/ESRCInfoCentre/opportunities/postgraduate/Guidance.aspx#0>