



LSE ESRC Doctoral Training Partnership Collaborative Studentship

The LSE ESRC Doctoral Training Partnership is pleased to offer the following Collaborative Studentship, commencing in September 2025:

Project Title: Refugees and Poverty: Understanding the role of aid programmes

Collaborative Partner: United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA)

LSE Department: Department of International Development

Lead Supervisor: Professor Tiziana Leone, t.leone@lse.ac.uk

Project Description: UNRWA is exploring new programming modalities to support the most vulnerable populations amongst Palestinian refugees in its areas of operation (Lebanon, Syria, West Bank, Gaza, and Jordan). Traditionally, the Agency has attempted to support the most vulnerable (including those in abject poverty) via social safety net programming and long-term emergency food and cash assistance. In the long term, these programmes are unsustainable for UNRWA from a financing perspective. They are also unable to assist refugees in making meaningful transitions out of poverty and ultimately can contribute to longer-term aid dependency.

- The Project aims to develop evidence-based sustainable livelihoods programming, that will help alleviate the overall poverty situation of the most vulnerable refugees.
- This will involve analysing the contribution of a range of existing Agency programmes, including cash programming, microfinance, vocational training, and shelter support programmes.
- The PhD candidate will develop a project on understanding the interface between these programmes, and what combination of programming is likely to strengthen outcomes for refugees.
- The project will be quantitative in nature and the candidate is expected to explore multiple data sources including surveys and administrative data, as well as mobile networks, aiming to integrate the information through data linkage and advanced methods including machine learning and quasi experimental approaches.
- During the Project the candidate can expect to spend a period at UNRWA where there will be an opportunity to work more closely with other UNRWA staff and get a sense of the reality on the ground.



Length of studentship: The studentship will commence in September 2025, with a minimum duration of 3.5 years. The award length offered may differ depending on the successful candidate's experience and training requirements.

Candidate Requirements: Candidates must have already completed a MSc in a related subject (e.g. development, economics, demography, social policy, social statistics) and have experience of advanced quantitative research methods, either gained through study or working experience.

How to apply: It is recommended you discuss your suitability for this studentship with the lead supervisor in advance of making your application.

Further information on the application process and deadlines can be found on the [LSE's ESRC Studentships web page](#). Please note the earlier deadline for applications to the Department of International Development. You should cite the Collaborative Studentship project title above within your application.

The deadline for applications is **18 December 2024**.

Enquiries regarding the application process should be directed to Pam Rolfe, Deputy Head of Scholarships and Financial Support (p.rolfe@lse.ac.uk)