

M4C Collaborative Doctoral Award (CDA)

PROJECT TITLE				
Cross-Cultural Experiences of Grief and Bereavement through a Creative Lens				
LEAD INSTITUTION				
Name of HEI institution	Coventry University			
Lead regional city	Birmingham <input type="checkbox"/>	Coventry <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Leicester <input type="checkbox"/>	Nottingham <input type="checkbox"/>
PARTNER ORGANISATION				
Name of organisation	Cruse Bereavement Support			
URL for organisation website	https://www.cruse.org.uk/			
THE RESEARCH PROJECT				
<p>To enable M4C to promote the CDA project effectively on the DTP website please can you present the information for applicants about the CDA project under the following headings:</p> <p>Project: Please ensure that the project title and project description will make sense to all readers, keep the title and description as clear and straightforward as possible.</p> <p>Process: Clearly articulate the expectations of the methods of research required to develop the project.</p> <p>Place: Focus the marketing text on telling potential applicants what will be expected of them, who they will be working with and how they will be supported.</p> <p>Person: Broadly identify the desirable knowledge, skills and experience applicants should have without using language which will discourage qualified and talented applicants.</p>				
Project				
<p>Working with Cruse, the UK's leading bereavement charity, this project investigates and compares the experiences of grief and bereavement of two distinct cultural/ethnic communities within the West Midlands. It aims to give a voice to traditionally underrepresented groups in social research, obtain new understandings of diverse experiences of grief and bereavement, and inform effective bereavement care.</p> <p>The data for this project will come from two sources. The first will be interviews with bereaved individuals from two distinct communities, in which participants reflect on their experiences and understandings of grief and loss. The second will take the form of creative outputs (e.g. art or creative writing), produced by the participants through involvement in workshops. Details will be negotiated with Cruse depending on the workshops already on offer and the interests of the successful applicant. The research questions are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are the similarities and differences between the two communities in terms of how they experience, conceptualise, and communicate grief? 2. What insights can an analysis of participants' creative outputs provide into the experience of grief? 3. What are the implications of RQs 1 and 2 for the provision of high-quality bereavement care to the specific groups in particular, and in a culturally diverse society in general? <p>The project's expected outcomes are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to further cross-cultural understandings of grief, arriving at a deeper understanding of what it is to grieve and exploring what can be learned from other cultures' attitudes toward and responses to grief; 				

- to give participants the opportunity to showcase their creative work, in the form of an exhibition, anthology or similar, in order to contribute to breaking down taboos around grief and bereavement;
- to create a set of research-informed recommendations and associated training materials, produced for and in collaboration with Cruse and disseminated more widely, around how communities and individuals in a culturally diverse society can best support those who are grieving.

Process

The project's methodology will be qualitative in nature. Interview transcripts and creative outputs produced by the participants will be analysed using metaphor analysis (e.g. PRAGGLEJAZ 2007, Steen et al. 2019, Falck & Okonski 2022), alongside thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke 2012) to capture any other points of interest. The focus on metaphor has been chosen due to its power to provide insights into personal experiences. Metaphors are commonly used when communicating personal or abstract concepts (Semino 2011), and analysing their structure and entailments has been shown to provide important insights into the way these concepts are being experienced.

Place

The award holder will be based at Coventry University, where they will work with the lead supervisor, Dr Sarah Turner. The second supervisor, Professor Jeannette Littlemore, is based at the University of Birmingham. Dr Turner and Professor Littlemore have collaborated extensively on projects focusing on how people draw on metaphor to describe experiences of grief and bereavement, and their research has informed guidelines and training materials for various professional groups. The student will therefore be well supported in developing the skills needed to complete the project.

The award holder will work closely with Cruse Bereavement Care, where they will be supported and supervised by Clinical Director Andy Langford. Through this partnership, the student will be supported with participant recruitment, and will receive training to help them to work with bereaved individuals in a compassionate and understanding manner.

A minimum three-month placement with Cruse will take place throughout the project. It is expected that the student will: undertake bereavement training; shadow Cruse staff in the delivery of creative workshops to develop the skills and confidence to lead these themselves; and get involved in existing campaigning and outreach initiatives to gain the skills necessary to prepare the project-specific outreach activities and training materials towards the end of the studentship.

Person

The successful applicant will:

- be interested in learning about people's lived experiences of grief and bereavement, through interviews and creative practices;
- ideally have a background in English Language or Linguistics; prior experience of metaphor analysis is desirable but by no means necessary;
- ideally have some experience of qualitative research.

The specific groups under consideration, and the exact nature of the creative outputs produced through the workshops, can be negotiated based on the award holder's interests and background. It would be advantageous for the award holder to have some preliminary ideas about what they might be interested in exploring.

We very much look forward to hearing from interested applicants, and welcome any questions.

HOW TO FIND OUT MORE. Please email the lead university supervisor if you want to find out more about this CDA project.

Lead HEI Supervisor:	Dr Sarah Turner
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Lead HEI Supervisor Email:	Sarah.Turner@coventry.ac.uk / ad0091@coventry.ac.uk
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