

M4C Collaborative Doctoral Award

Project Title				
Relational practices and the Tavistock Institute Archive: embodiment and social engagement				
LEAD INSTITUTION				
Name of HEI institution		Coventry University		
Lead regional city		Birmingham <input type="checkbox"/>	Coventry <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Leicester <input type="checkbox"/>
PARTNER ORGANISATION				
Name of organisation		The Tavistock Institute of Human Relations		
Website URL		https://www.tavinstitute.org/		
THE RESEARCH PROJECT				
<p>This PhD project presents a unique opportunity to develop arts practice-led research based on the archives of the Tavistock Institute, an organisation with over seventy years supporting progressive social change in the UK and abroad. The collaboration with C-DaRE will engage the latest developments in dance research, particularly embodied methodologies.</p> <p>Since 2015, the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations (TIHR) has supported an innovative strand of work focussed on opening up its archive, a significant collection of documents reflecting the development of TIHR's qualitative action-oriented social science, to new research interests. The archive constitutes an extraordinary record of social change in the UK and abroad over the last seventy years, offering deeply reflective commentaries and analyses of relational practices that bring together problem centred 20th century psychoanalytic thinking with more field-based social science. Examples of projects held within the archive include the <i>Civil Resettlement Project (1942-7)</i> supporting the transition of WW2 prisoners of war to civilian resettlement, and projects designing new care settings for the disabled e.g. <i>Ministry of Health Disability Project (1965-7)</i>, <i>Attitudes towards the Handicapped (1976-80)</i> and <i>Care for Carers (1987-8)</i>. By summer 2021, its 'born digital' collection will bring the archive holdings up to 2006.</p> <p><i>Opening the TIHR Archive</i> is a programme focused on working with cultural practitioners to make sense of the archival material in the present day and bring this into a transformative relation with the Institute's current projects. Within TIHR this has led to a new strand of work, <i>Art and Organisation</i>. This strand recognises the artist's role as societal change agent and the value of new concepts and methods emerging from arts practice-led research that focus on the experiential dimension of social and human relations. These archives, currently housed in the Wellcome Collection Library, contain records that document the Institute's unique multi-disciplinary approach to the study of relational practices (e.g., in community cohesion and organisational development). TIHR has been working with the archive since 2015, opening it up for outside researchers. Some of this work has experimented with creative modes of accessing the archival content including participatory site-specific performances with East-15 Acting School, the 'Deepening Creative Practice' learning programme and a series of public 'Social Dreaming Matrices'. TIHR is committed to furthering this kind of experiential archival research as a dynamic, excavational process, exploring questions around relational practices,</p>				

how they are created, learned and practised and their potential to catalyse new ways of knowing. This is particularly necessary in this time of profound epistemic re-organisation and the recognition of our interdependencies.

This project aims to extend this creative practice-led research in the TIHR archive through a focus on **embodiment**. The aim of collaborating with C-DaRE on this project is to engage with the latest developments in dance research, especially new transdisciplinary practice-led research into embodied modes of enquiry. Since its beginnings in the 1990s, practice-led research in dance has focused on the knowledge contribution of bodily practices and experience. This approach, which draws on current studies of the entanglement of perception and action, has now matured at C-DaRE where, rooted in dance research, embodied forms of enquiry are applied in the context of transdisciplinary projects. Further, recent advances in dance research in relation to its own history have revealed ways that experiential, embodied approaches can provide essential tools for accessing and studying the contents of dance archives. Pairing C-DaRE with TIHR lays an ideal foundation for this project to further develop such innovative archival and embodied methodologies.

The candidate will access, analyse and interpret the TIHR archives through creative, embodied practices with the aim of activating new possibilities for learning about relational practices. While this project remains open to different research axes within this wider frame, it would suit a practitioner-researcher interested in developing new embodied methodologies for archival practice and in the socio-political potential of such methodologies for disrupting hegemonic narratives. Of particular interest would be archived organisational interventions that challenged attitudes in society such as those surrounding diversity, equality and accessibility, for example, *Attitudes towards the Handicapped* (1976-80); *Joint Enterprises in Social Services* (1978-1984). A central focus could be on how embodied approaches might interact with and extend on this content.

The candidate will be jointly supervised by TIHR in relation to its archive, *Arts and Organisation* and group relations strands; and by C-DaRE in terms of practice and generic PGR support. Performance and engagement events are envisaged as collaborative outputs between TIHR, C-DaRE and Wellcome Collection.

HOW TO FIND OUT MORE

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