

Placement opportunity for ESRC-funded students

The following information has been provided by the host organisation and outlines the opportunity available. Any queries about this placement should be addressed to the host organisation at the details provided below.

Name of host organisation:	Working with Dementia Network Plus
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Brief description of the host organisation:

[The Working with Dementia \(WWD\) Network Plus](#) is an ESRC, NIHR and Alzheimer's Society funded initiative which aims to address the social and financial inequalities for those affected by dementia in employment. It is a transdisciplinary research network creating an environment where people with lived experience, stakeholders and academics can work together to create research that will shift our current understanding of working with dementia, drive positive change, and enhance labour market experiences for those affected by dementia. The network leads a range of activities including public engagement and awareness raising, funding research projects and supporting meaningful collaboration between researchers and those affected by dementia.

The network is led by the University of the West of Scotland, in collaboration with Northumbria University, Lancaster University, Edinburgh Napier University, the University of Warwick and Wilfred Laurier University.

Placement opportunity available

Project title: Creating Dementia Inclusive Universities

In line with the WWD Network Plus themes, we recognise the importance of creating inclusive workplaces that support and recognise the contributions of people diagnosed with dementia whilst still in work, as well as those who take on caring roles for family members while in employment. As leaders in the field of Working with Dementia, we aim to work within our own institutions to understand how the higher education sector in the UK can become dementia inclusive, exploring what a dementia inclusive university would look like. Universities play a vital role in society, both as academic institutions and making a significant social and economic contribution to their local communities and wider society. Because of this, it is important that universities become dementia inclusive, both as employers but also to demonstrate social responsibility and to create inclusive and welcoming spaces for learning, teaching and research.

This project aims to explore, with key stakeholder groups what a dementia inclusive university would look and feel like. Working across the five collaborating UK institutions, this project will involve a series of focus groups of university employees, students, human resource staff and managers and people living with dementia who regularly visit university

campuses for research, education or other engagement activities. The research will use Nominal Group Technology (NGT), a consensus building method that is appropriate for idea generation and determining priorities on a single issue. NGT generates two forms of data, a ranked list of priorities created and agreed during the group and a qualitative reflection on the priorities. Analysis of qualitative data will be carried out using Reflexive Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2022) and alongside the ranked priority lists will allow us to identify shared values and areas of good practice, alongside barriers to creating a dementia inclusive university. Combined with the contemporary evidence generated by the WWD Network Plus on creating inclusive workplaces for people with dementia, the findings of these focus groups will inform the development of a dementia inclusive universities charter to influence and inform policy and practice across the higher education sector.

Through the existing networks of the WWD Network Plus Team, the student will recruit, organise and facilitate the nominal group technique focus groups. They will have regular supervision sessions with Professor Louise Ritchie, WWD Network Lead and Dr Eileen Harkess-Murphy who will provide training and support on nominal group technique. They will also be supported by the Network manager Dr Laura Lebec and Impact officer, Dr Rachel Allen with facilitation and recruitment. The expected outputs of the project will be a short report that will be published on the WWD website as well as the charter for Dementia Inclusive Universities that will be shared with institutions to encourage adoption. The student will be invited to present the findings of the project at the WWD Webinar series, and be supported to prepare an article to be submitted for peer-reviewed publication.

Skills and experience required for the role

Essential

- Experience or interest in qualitative research methods and analysis
- Attention to detail, ability to problem solve and work on own initiative and as part of team
- Ability to work according to timescales
- Good written and oral communication skills including the ability to deal tactfully and courteously with a range of people and situations

Desirable

- Experience of working with people living with dementia and their families and/or vulnerable or disadvantaged groups
- Evidence of understanding of higher education institutions or similar organisations
- Experience of policy development and/or influencing.

Working arrangements and location of the placement

The opportunity is open to current ESRC-funded students. The placement duration is three months, and can be undertaken on a full-time or part-time basis.

The WWD Network works operates remotely most of the time. The placement is flexible in terms of the base location (UWS Paisley Campus or home-based). There is potential to spend a short period of time visiting and building relationships with staff and students at each of the collaborating UK institutions. The WWD Network will reimburse reasonable travel and sustenance costs for any travel. The student will be provided with a laptop and access to software required for the project by the University of the West of Scotland.

How to apply

Please submit a 2-page CV, a 1-page short covering letter outlining relevant experience and skills and motivation for applying, and an ESRC placement and funding permissions form to: WWDNetworkPlus@uws.ac.uk

Closing date: 30th April 2026

Duration of placement: 3 months

Start Date: negotiable from 1st June 2026.

Recruitment process

The host organisation is responsible for processing the applications received for this opportunity and applications will be processed as follows:

All applications will be reviewed by the WWD team against the eligibility and assessment criteria, in line with our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion. Shortlisted applicants will be invited to attend a 30 minute virtual interview with the WWD Team.

We are happy to accommodate reasonable adjustments. Please contact us if you require any adjustments to support your participation in the application and interview process.

Host contact details

Any queries about this opportunity should be addressed to the host organisation.

For informal discussion about this opportunity please contact
louise.ritchie@uws.ac.uk