Funded PhD position available for research on work engagement in health service settings (Start: September 2018)

Discipline: Organisational Behaviour / Health Service Management

Supervisor: Prof. Martin Fellenz

A funded PhD position is available for a suitably qualified candidate to undertake research towards a doctorate as part of a large-scale research project investigating work engagement in health service settings. Funding for this position is provided from a grant to the Principal Investigator, Prof. Martin Fellenz, through a Provost’s PhD Project Award. This competitive and prestigious award offers the successful applicant registration on the 4 year structured Trinity PhD programme in the Trinity Business School. The position is open to EU and Non-EU candidates and includes an annual stipend of €16,000 as well as funding for the relevant EU/Non-EU fees for four years. These doctoral awards are generously funded through alumni donations and Trinity’s Commercial Revenue Unit.

Research context

Work engagement (WE) is a variable of central interest in organisational behaviour, organisational psychology and human resource management because of its demonstrated links to both work performance and staff well-being. While work engagement and other relevant engagement-related constructs have been intensely researched in the last decades, some of the implications of such engagement in complex work settings such as health care have not been sufficiently investigated and understood. The research programme within which this PhD position is located is concerned with the investigation of the impact of work-engagement among health-service employees on staff retention, performance, and well-being, as well as on patient experiences and clinical outcomes.

The basic thrust of this research programme is two-fold: one central interest is the examination of the antecedents and consequences of work engagement in health service settings, with a particular focus on its role in increasing retention, performance and well-being among front-line personnel. Another important focus is the investigation of the impact of work engagement of health-service providers on patients’ clinical and subjective outcomes as well as on their overall participation in and engagement with their treatment. This is likely to involve investigation in health-service settings dealing with chronic illnesses (e.g., kidney disease; diabetes), rehabilitation programmes (e.g., cardiac rehabilitation),...
and/or other clinical and therapeutic settings. At present, different research opportunities and field settings in Ireland and abroad are being considered.

The nature of the PhD project

The doctoral research project the selected PhD student will pursue will be located in the context of this research programme. The complex and emerging nature of this research will provide the successful candidate with the opportunity to carve out a meaningful yet integrated (set of) research question(s) located in one of, or connecting, the two main areas of the research programme. Depending on the interests, experience and skill-set of the PhD student this may primarily focus on the human resource management aspects of this research (for PhD students with primarily organisational/managerial background or), on the link between work-engagement and the clinical and subjective patient outcomes (for PhD students with health-services/clinical backgrounds), or a combination of the two. In consultation with and with guidance from the Principal Investigator, the PhD student will have significant opportunities to bring their own particular interests to bear on defining and developing their specific project. In any case the PhD student will become an integral part of the research team and will be centrally involved in developing a comprehensive systematic literature review of the area, define the project scope, and manage many aspects of the research and the interactions with partner organisations.

The PhD student will benefit from the opportunity to participate in an exciting and timely large-scale empirical research programme. This will involve both independent activities as well as close collaboration with more experienced colleagues on the team. Participation in the multi-disciplinary research will enable them to avail of supervision and support while acquiring, developing and deploying research and project management skills in the context of important activities that include research design; systematic literature review; ethical approval application preparation; data collection, management, and analysis; publication preparation and submission, relationship management with colleagues, partner organisation personnel and participants; project documentation; progress reporting, and many other related skills.

The PhD programme

The successful applicant will independently, but supported and supervised by the principal investigator, produce a designated piece of research in the form of a PhD thesis and follow a set of structured educational components which are central to the effective formation of all doctoral candidates. These components have been designed to support the routine and ongoing work involved in pursuing a programme of research leading to the award of a PhD degree. They provide in-depth learning and development opportunities tailored to meet the needs of PhD students. Details on the structured PhD programme in the Trinity Business School can be found on the School’s website at www.tcd.ie/business/doctoral. In addition
to their own research and doctoral studies, students funded with a *Provost’s PhD Project Award* may be asked to work up to 24 hours per month on the project.

**Requirements for applicants**

Applicants for this PhD position may have a variety of qualifications, experiences and interests. Given the interdisciplinary nature of the research a variety of educational and experience backgrounds will be considered. In general, a good quality primary degree in a broadly relevant area and/or an advanced degree in a cognate area would be expected. In addition, the application of candidates would be strengthened by evidence of:

- Educational background in any area related to organisational behaviour/organisational psychology and/or any health service or clinical discipline
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills
- Highly developed analytical and critical thinking skills
- Independent, responsible and proactive approach to work
- Track-record of successful project management
- Proven interpersonal and leadership skills
- Intellectual curiosity and openness to different disciplinary perspectives
- Experience in health service settings and/or other complex organisational settings
- Insights into clinical/acute, community-based, rehabilitation, therapeutic, or other health and human service environments
- Experience in dealing with patient/client perspectives
- Ability and willingness to travel (the research sites for this project may include locations across Europe and North America)

**Formal applications must be submitted before the end of June 2018, but expressions of interest will be considered on a rolling basis starting in April 2018 until the position is filled which may be before the formal application deadline.** To apply, please email in the first instance a CV detailing your educational, work and other relevant experience along with a statement describing your particular interests in this position to the principal investigator, Prof Martin Fellenz, at mfellenz@tcd.ie (please use the term “Provost’s PhD Project Award” and your name in the subject line). Qualified candidates will be invited for further discussion and will be asked for relevant references. Selected candidates will need to formally apply to the doctoral programme (see the Trinity Business School website and the Trinity College Dublin website for details).

**Trinity Business School**

Business is a long established discipline in Trinity, having been formed as the School of Commerce offering B.A. and B.Comm. degrees in 1925 and transformed into the School of
Trinity Business School

Business Studies in 1962. The 2014-19 Strategy of the University set out a broad vision to become a university of greater consequence, and a key part of this institutional strategy is to grow the international Trinity Business School into a full suite school located in a world class building. As a result, Trinity Business School is in the midst of a transformative high growth strategy and is currently one of the fastest growing Business Schools in the Developed World. It is engaged in significant levels of recruitment of faculty and professional staff and is central part of an €80 million investment in a new state of the art building at the heart of Dublin City. The School is implementing extensive innovation in both undergraduate and postgraduate degrees as well as in a new portfolio of executive education. All of these activities are delivering impactful programmes which are underpinned by personal development, ethical values, rigorous research and cutting-edge expertise from industry and other practice settings.

Trinity College Dublin, the University of Dublin

Trinity College is the oldest university in Ireland, dating from 1592, and one of the oldest and best-known universities in Europe. Today, Trinity is at the nexus of tradition and innovation, offering undergraduate and postgraduate programmes across 24 schools and three faculties: arts, humanities, and social sciences; engineering, maths and science; and health sciences. Spread across 47 acres in Dublin’s city centre, Trinity’s 17,000-strong student body comes from all 32 counties of Ireland, and 16% of students come from outside the country. Of those, 40% are from outside the European Union, making Trinity’s campus cosmopolitan and bustling, with a focus on diversity.

As Ireland’s leading university, the pursuit of academic excellence through research and scholarship is at the heart of the Trinity education. Trinity is known for intellectual rigour, excellence, interdisciplinarity, and research-led teaching. Home to Nobel prize-winners such as scientist Ernest Walton and writer Samuel Beckett, Trinity draws visitors from across the world to its historic campus each year, including to the Book of Kells and Science Gallery which capture the university’s connection to both old and new.

Trinity accounts for one-fifth of all spin-out companies from Irish higher education institutions, helping to turn Ireland into an innovation-intensive, high-productivity economy. That culture of innovation and entrepreneurship is a defining characteristic of our campus as we help shape the next generation of job creators.

Trinity College Dublin World University Rankings

Trinity is the highest ranked university in Ireland, and among the world’s leading higher education institutions. It ranks in the top 1% of research institutions in the world in 17 Essential Science Indicators fields, and is the only Irish member of the prestigious League of 22 European Research Universities (LERU). Trinity attracts more than 50% of the European Research funding coming into Ireland.
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Overall

- Trinity College is ranked 1st in Ireland, and in the top 100 universities in the world by the QS World University Rankings 2016/17.
- Trinity College is ranked 1st in Ireland by the Academic Ranking of World Universities 2016 (by Shanghai Jiao Tong University).
- Trinity College is ranked as 1st in Europe in Entrepreneurship by independent research organization Pitchbook - Graduates from Trinity College Dublin founded more companies than graduates from any other European university over the last five years.

Trinity Business School (TBS)

- TBS is ranked 1st in Ireland, 16th in Western Europe, and in the world top 30 by the Eduniversal Business School Rankings.
- TBS's MBA, EMBA, and MScs in Finance, International Management, and Management are all ranked in the top 10 in Western Europe in their respective categories by the Eduniversal Best Masters Rankings 2015/16.
- TBS's MBA and EMBA programmes are ranked in the top 100 and top 60 in the world respectively by the Economist’s latest Full-time MBA and Executive MBA rankings.