

ARC funded APA(I) PhD Scholarship: Equity in the Australian tax and transfer system

Social Policy Research Centre, University of New South Wales

Applications are invited for a PhD scholarship available from September 2010, to research issues related to equity in tax and transfer systems, in Australia and internationally. Stipend \$27,222 pa for three years. Applicants may also be eligible for the SPRC top-up scholarship of \$5,000 pa for three years. Fieldwork and related research expenses will be funded.

CLOSING DATE: 27 August 2010

REQUIREMENTS

Applicants should hold a good Honours degree (or equivalent) in one of the social sciences such as Politics, Sociology, Social Policy, Demography or Economics, and have some knowledge of statistical analysis of survey microdata.

The successful applicant will develop a PhD project that explores an aspect, or a number of related aspects, of tax and transfer policies as they impact on individuals or families in the Australian and/or international context. This could include a wide range of policy issues, including cash transfers, in-kind support, and direct or indirect taxation as experienced by individuals and families. The term 'equity' can be broadly interpreted, with respect to vertical or horizontal equity, for example gender equity, equity between children or between different family configurations, or equity in a life-cycle perspective. There will be scope to refine and develop the topic in accordance with the successful applicant's interests and disciplinary expertise, in consultation with Professor Peter Whiteford and Gerry Redmond, Chief investigators in the ARC project: *Supporting families: Horizontal and vertical equity in the Australian tax-benefit system in historical and comparative perspectives*.

PROJECT DETAILS

The successful applicant will join a small research team working on the larger ARC project, which is situated in the Social Policy Research Centre, UNSW. The purpose of this project is to analyse reforms to the Australian tax-benefit system since the early 1970s, and examine equity in disposable incomes between different groups of working age people and families, and how this compares with other rich English-speaking countries. Equity in the Australian tax-benefit system has not been systematically examined for more than a decade. The tax-benefit treatment of single people and couples, people with and without dependent children, men and women, and people in and out of employment will be compared using multiple methods. Including model family calculations, analysis of survey microdata, and microsimulation techniques, and will take into account issues such as the costs of alternative policies, and incentives to work.

The Partner Organisations involved in this project are the Australian Government Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs; the

Australian Council for Social Services; the Caledon Institute for Social Policy (Canada); the Institute for Social and Economic Research, University of Essex (UK); and the Institute for Policy Studies (New Zealand). The Project also involves Partner Investigators at the Australian Institute of Family Studies (Dr. Matthew Gray), and in research and academic institutions in Canada (Michael Mandelson), Ireland (Prof. Brian Nolan), New Zealand (Dr. David Rea), the UK (Prof. Holy Sutherland) and the US (Prof. Michael Wiseman).

APPLICATION PROCESS

Please submit:

- a summary of your research interests and experience
- a short statement (100-300 words) indicating what interests you about this PhD topic and how you might approach it
- your *curriculum vitae* including information about academic grades
- the names and contact details of two referees

to Gerry Redmond (g.redmond@unsw.edu.au) and Professor Peter Whiteford (p.whiteford@unsw.edu.au), who can also be contacted for further information about the project and the position.

The SPRC reserves the right not to make an appointment and/or to re-advertise this scholarship.