



AHRC Collaborative Doctoral Partnership (CDP) studentship – Training the Troops: British and Commonwealth Armies, 1939-1945

Start date: 1st October 2022

Application deadline: 1st June 2022

King's College London (KCL) and Imperial War Museums (IWM) are pleased to announce the availability of a fully funded Collaborative doctoral studentship from October 2022 under the AHRC's [Collaborative Doctoral Partnership Scheme](#).

This project examines how the British and Commonwealth Armies prepared and trained to fight a multi-front multinational global war. It will be jointly supervised by Dr Jonathan Fennell (KCL) and Simon Offord (IWM), and the student will be expected to spend time at both institutions, as well as becoming part of the wider cohort of CDP funded students across the UK. The studentship can be taken up either full or part-time. Students should have an excellent academic record at undergraduate level. A master's degree in a relevant subject would be welcome, but it is not a requirement. Those able to demonstrate equivalent experience in a professional setting will also be considered.

Project Overview

The thesis will firstly document the work of the Directorate of Military Training at the War Office, which was responsible for producing suitable doctrine and the ensuing training pamphlets in the British Army. However, the thesis will also have a transnational dimension. It will be both a top down and a bottom up study of training across the British Empire and Commonwealth that fully embraces the lived experience of soldiers, whether they came from, for example, Britain, Canada, India or Africa.

The thesis will pursue four key strands of enquiry:

1. The Organisational and Doctrinal Framework.

The thesis will first analyse the shifting organisational and doctrinal framework that underpinned the training regime. It will document the work of the Directorate of Military Training at the War Office and its equivalents and partner organisations across the Commonwealth. These institutions and teams were responsible, along with commanders in the field and other directorates, such as the Directorate of Tactical Investigation, for developing doctrine, upgrading training pamphlets and implementing suitable training infrastructure and practices.

2. Inter-Theatre Learning.

In the summer of 1944, the British and Commonwealth Armies fielded forces in North-West Europe, Italy, Burma and the South-West Pacific Area. Remarkably, given the geographical distances that separated them, all four of these 'field armies' shared certain behavioural patterns in the way they fought. This was due to formal, and at times informal, transfer of knowledge between theatres. The thesis will explore whether, and to what extent, an efficient and coherent system of inter-theatre learning was put in place during the war years.

3. Training and Combat Performance.

It is axiomatic today that training functions as a cradle for collective action, morale, empowerment, self-confidence, and, ultimately, success in battle. Yet, detailed studies show that this process is rarely linear; intervening variables such as command and leadership can function to enhance the skills and attitudes honed in training or detract from them. An in depth and contextualised understanding of variations in training and their relationship with combat performance is required.

4. The Lived Experience of Training.

Lastly, the thesis will shine a light on, and contextualise, the lived experience of training for soldiers across the Commonwealth/Empire. The organisational skills gained by veterans as a consequence of military training and combat experience played an important role in post-war social and political change. Debates about the causes of de-colonisation have also long engaged with the role of veterans in leading freedom movements. A better understanding of how military training influenced attitudes and skills will, therefore, not only enrich our understanding of the military dimensions of the conflict but also support a more contextualised view of how the post war world emerged from the ashes of six long years of conflict.

Research questions

Key research questions to be addressed include:

- What was the lived experience of soldiers and training across Britain and the Empire and Commonwealth?
- How effective was training for the British and Commonwealth armies?
- How important was the War Office Military Training Directorate in the formation of doctrine for the different Second World War theatres?
- Did the British and Commonwealth formations learn from each other in the different theatres?

It is likely that the student will conduct research at the IWM, the National Archives, the British Library (which contains the records of the Indian Army), the Bodleian Library of Commonwealth and African Studies at Rhodes House, and also it is hoped at archives across the Commonwealth. King's, meanwhile, also has its own archival holdings, particularly the Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives, the Foreign and Commonwealth Library held by KCL's Foyle Special Collections Library and the Hobson Library and Archive at the Defence Academy of the United Kingdom.

Details of Award

CDP doctoral training grants fund full-time studentships for 45 months (3.75 years) or part-time equivalent. The studentship has the possibility of being extended for an additional 3 months to provide professional development opportunities, or up to 3 months of funding may be used to pay for the costs the student might incur in taking up professional development opportunities.

The award pays tuition fees up to the value of the full-time home UKRI rate for PhD degrees. Research Councils UK Indicative Fee Level for 2022/2023 is £4596.

The award pays full maintenance for all students both home and international. The UKRI National Minimum Doctoral Stipend for 2022/2023 is £16,062, plus a London Weighting of £2000/year, plus a CDP maintenance payment of £550/year.

Further details can be found on the UKRI website

<https://www.ukri.org/skills/funding-for-research-training/>

The student is eligible to receive an additional travel and related expenses grant during the course of the project courtesy of IWM worth up to £1000 per year for 3.75 years (45 months).

The project can be undertaken on a full-time or part-time basis.

Eligibility

- This studentship is open to both Home and International applicants.
- To be classed as a home student, candidates must meet the following criteria:
 - Be a UK National (meeting residency requirements), or
 - Have settled status, or
 - Have pre-settled status (meeting residency requirements), or
 - Have indefinite leave to remain or enter

Further guidance can be found here - <https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/UKRI-030221-Guidance-International-Eligibility-Implementation-training-grant-holders-V2.pdf>

- We want to encourage the widest range of potential students to study for a CDP studentship and are committed to welcoming applications from students from all backgrounds. We particularly welcome applications from Black, Asian, minority ethnic (BAME) backgrounds as they are currently underrepresented at this level in this area.

- Applicants should have an excellent academic record at undergraduate level. They should ideally have or expect to receive a relevant Master's-level qualification, or be able to demonstrate equivalent experience in a professional setting.
- Applicants must be able to demonstrate an interest in the museum sector and potential and enthusiasm for developing skills more widely in related areas.
- As a collaborative award, students will be expected to spend time at both KCL and IWM.

NB. All applicants must meet UKRI terms and conditions for funding. See:

<https://www.ukri.org/funding/information-for-award-holders/grant-terms-and-conditions/>

How to apply

Applicants will be assessed on their academic record and research potential. The successful applicant will need to apply direct to KCL's School of Security Studies PhD programme and satisfy its admission requirements.

Applicants should submit via email a curriculum vitae (no more than 2 pages), a sample of writing, a brief letter outlining their qualification for the studentship, transcripts of undergraduate and master's qualifications, and two academic references to Fran Merrifield (pgr-securitystudies@kcl.ac.uk) in the KCL School of Security Studies by **no later than 5pm on 1 June 2022**. Please ensure the subject line of your email appears as 'surname, first name – KCL/IWM Fennell/Offord studentship.'

Please note it is the responsibility of applicants to request references from their referees and ensure that they have been received by this deadline. All documents should be submitted in either a MS Word or PDF format.

Interviews will be held **in late June or July**.

The successful candidate will be eligible to participate in [CDP Cohort Development events](#).