

The Faculty of Business and Law is looking to build on the University of Northampton's distinctive values around social impact and the location of its new £330 million campus in the heart of Northampton by encouraging world quality research in areas that will have a strong local impact. As part of this initiative, the Faculty is delighted to announce three fully funded PhD studentships (one of them in tourism, please see below). These posts will add to the Faculty's growing Postgraduate Research Student community, comprising both PhDs and DBAs.

The University of Northampton is committed to research that not only generates new knowledge, but is also designed to help improve people's lives and the environment. This social impact philosophy was recognised in 2013 when we were the first university in the UK to achieve AshokaU Changemaker Campus status. The University also has a strong reputation for supporting our doctoral students which was recognised in positive feedback in the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) that saw the University ranked second for satisfaction with progression and third for satisfaction with resources.

- **What about Northamptonshire: Towards a new approach on memorable and meaningful tourism experience (STU19010)**

Northamptonshire is at the very heart of England and often referred as the 'Rose of the Shires' (Visit Northamptonshire, 2019). Despite its close proximity to Oxford, Cambridge and even London, and the variety of natural resources and historical landmarks, the county is relatively unknown on the tourism map of Britain. According to Visit Britain (2019), Northamptonshire has been visited by 249, 460 in 2018 (- 8.90% compared to 2017) with business tourism and Visiting Friends and Relatives (VFR) tourism dominating the figures. A very small percentage (12.49%) belongs to travel for holiday purposes which clearly indicates the marginal role of recreational tourism in the county. Although there have been various marketing, branding and advertising campaigns in the last few years aimed at improving the destination image of the county such as Northamptonshire Britain's Best Surprise (Northamptonshiresurprise, 2019), the number of visitors and tourist expenditure have failed to significantly boost Northamptonshire's economy. It is evident that the county needs an innovative and more experiential approach not only to attract visitors to the county but also to facilitate a more active and engaging consumption of tourism resources. This implies the adoption of a new experiential approach to tourism management and development aimed at providing a more memorable and meaningful tourist experience.

Tourist experiences are arguably different from everyday experiences (Cohen, 1979; Graburn, 2001) and they often rely on emotions, memories and meanings attached to places (Larsen, 2007). As defined by Stamboulis & Skayannis (2003), tourist experience represents an interaction between destinations and tourists in which the former is the site of the experience while the latter is the actors. In the context of the 'experience economy' (Pine & Gilmore, 1999), providing a diverse and meaningful tourist experience has become an essential component of destination competitiveness and a critical success factor for destination management.

The main purpose of this research is to focus on visitors' perceptions and their tourism experience in Northamptonshire. The study seeks to explore the reasons why Northamptonshire is not a particularly appealing tourism spot, investigate the patterns of tourist consumption and explore new creative, innovative and entrepreneurial approaches to provide meaningful and memorable tourist experience. The study has the following objectives:

- To assess the competitiveness of the Northamptonshire's tourism potential by an evaluation of the spatial, environmental and cultural resources of the county
- To explore the patterns of tourist consumption and investigate the dimensions of tourist experience from a visitors' perspective
- To provide realistic and practical advice on the establishment of innovative tourist experiences in Northamptonshire and justify their potential economic and social impact

Specific Project entry requirements:

Applicants should have qualifications in a related discipline such as Tourism, Economics, Marketing, Human Geography, Business and Entrepreneurship. Previous experience with using quantitative methods/mixed methods will be considered as a strong advantage.

Supervisory Team:

For further information or an informal chat please contact:

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Start Date: 19th October 2020

Application deadline date: 30th January 2020

Interview date: Week commencing 16th March 2020

General requirements

The successful candidates will have adequate knowledge of research methods and the ability to develop qualitative and/or quantitative approaches as required. The selected candidates will be expected to attend conferences and publish academic papers during their period of funding.

Applications are welcomed from candidates with a recognised first or upper second-class honours degree or Master's degree from a UK university or International equivalent in a relevant subject area. Evidence of English Language proficiency (IELTS 7 overall, with no less than 6.5 in any element, or equivalent) is required if your first language is not English.

Additional Information: go to our [Postgraduate Research Information](#) page for more information on all of these opportunities

Funding: The successful candidates will receive a tuition fee waiver and a bursary at UK research council rates (currently £15,009 per annum) plus £1,000 (cumulative) as a research expenses budget to support travel and conference attendance.

Duration of award: 3 years

Eligibility: This funding is open to UK, EU and international students.

Informal enquiries: please email the relevant supervisor as listed above

To apply: visit <https://www.jobs.ac.uk/job/BXL362/the-university-of-northampton-faculty-of-business-and-law-phd-studentships>

Kind Regards,

Dr Nick Naumov

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