Project title: Inclusive design of buildings, places and other designed things from a disability perspective

Research Theme: Design

Key words: Inclusive design, design practices, ethnography

Supervisory team: Rachael Luck, Stephanie Taylor, Clara Manchini

Project Highlights:
- to advance the inclusive design of more accessible environments
- to develop innovative analytic techniques in design that acknowledge the social aspects of lived-experience
- to advance disability-led participatory engagement in design processes.

Overview:
This research enages with the central concern of making the designed environment and other designed things more accessible for people’s different capabilities, to redress the longstanding disequilibrium in access to and positive experience of the world we all inhabit.

The project is inter-disciplinary with the intention to advance the ways that we design for people’s different capabilities. The research will explore how social meanings can radically impact on and transform the everyday experience of the designed world and the built environment in particular, for example, through studying the effects of interventions and breaching experiments on everyday lived experiences. Design, as an area of inquiry, will be approached drawing on recent writing and research insights on the lived-embodied, socially shaped experience of problematic spaces, places and other designed things (Boys 2014, Luck 2017).

Methodology:
The research will involve participant observation and ethnomethogically-informed ethnographies of the everyday living practices of people with disabilities. It will explore affect laden meanings and affective practices through observational research and the an analysis of digital data.

Further reading:
Further details:
Students should have a strong background in design and enthusiasm for inclusive practices in the designed world. Experience of qualitative research is essential and a particular enthusiasm for the study of people’s lived experience and social practices. The student will join a well-established team researching inclusive design through social practices at the Open University.

Please contact Rachael Luck - Rachael.Luck@open.ac.uk for further information.

Applications should include:
- A 1000 word cover letter outlining why the project is of interest to you and how your skills match those required
- an academic CV containing contact details of three academic references
- an Open University application form, downloadable from: http://www.open.ac.uk/students/research/sites/www.open.ac.uk.students.research/files/documents/Application%20form.docx
- SELTS IELTS test scores where English is an additional language (Secure English Language Test Score).

Applications should be sent to STEM-EI-Research@open.ac.uk by 19th February 2018