*The Erasmus School of Health Policy & Management (ESHPM) offers the position of*

**PhD student**

**Improving health state valuations through behavioral economics (1.0 fte)\***

**The organisation**

The Erasmus School of Health Policy & Management (ESHPM)of Erasmus University Rotterdam (EUR) is leading in the Netherlands with its educational and research activities targeted at policy and management issues in health care.

The school offers a bachelor programme, two master programmes, a research master programme, and post-academic educational programmes and courses.

At ESHPM, research and educational activities are closely intertwined. Knowledge and experiences of various scientific disciplines such as economics, law, social-medical sciences, organisational science and public administration are brought together and applied to the health care sector. This multidisciplinary approach to education and research is unique.

ESHPM is located in the Bayle Building (J) at campus Woudestein of Erasmus University Rotterdam and has strong ties to the Erasmus School of Economics. Currently, approximately 950 students are engaged in one of our programmes and 150 people are employed at ESHPM. Internationalisation is highly valued at ESHPM. The number of students, teachers and researchers from abroad has risen significantly over the past years and have enriched our programmes.

**Description of the project and position**

In this project, supervised by Dr. Arthur Attema and Prof.dr. Werner Brouwer the PhD student will work on the methodological underpinnings of the quality-adjusted life years (QALY) model. The QALY is an often used outcome measure in the context of economic evaluations in the health care sector. It is used in allocation decisions in countries like the UK and Netherlands. It allows health states to be valued, based on preferences of individuals for different health states, on a scale from 0 (dead) to 1 (perfect health). Both its theoretical underpinning and empirical measurements of health state preferences were importantly based on expected utility theory, which has been shown to be descriptively flawed. This raises important issues regarding the validity of the QALY measure and QALY weights.

Hence, in the proposed research, the candidate will conduct experiments to test how this model can be further improved to reflect the most recent insights from behavioral economics, including (correcting for) loss aversion and probability weighting. The focus will be on strengthening health state valuation methods, which aim to assess the specific weights (on the 0-1 scale) of particular health states, such as the time tradeoff (TTO) and standard gamble (SG).

Regarding the TTO, the influence of loss aversion will be studied, while for the SG, research into the feasibility of replacing the probability equivalence with the lottery equivalence approach will be performed. The research will be reported in peer reviewed articles, jointly forming a PhD thesis.

**Requirements**

This PhD position is financed by the China Scholarship Council of the Chinese government, conditional upon the selected candidate being granted the Scholarship by the Council. Only candidates with a serious interest in and strong affinity with the Chines language and culture qualify for this position. The successful applicant for this position is expected to have a recent or almost completed Master’s degree in (health/behavioral) economics or econometrics. The ideal candidate has a strong economic and psychological intuition with knowledge of the experimental economic approach. Computer skills should include EViews, STATA, R, SPSS or similar statistical software. Knowledge of programming languages is a plus. Applicants must have excellent communication and writing skills in English: an IELTS score of 7.0 (minimal sub-score of 6.0 for Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing) or aTOEFL score of 100 is compulsory (minimal sub-score of 20 each for Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing).

**Appointment and salary**

We offer a position as PhD student at EUR. The PhD student is appointed for a period of 4 years. Preferred starting date of PhD appointment is **September 1st, 2020. In case the successful applicant has been rewarded the CSC-scholarship, r**emuneration will be in accordance with the CSC guidelines. The CSC-scholarship also covers health insurance, international airfare and living expenses. The stipend is 1350 euros for 48 months. For more information, see <https://www.eur.nl/en/prospective-csc-phd-candidates>. There are generous opportunities for additional education.

**Applications and more information**

For more information about this position, contact dr. Arthur Attema ([attema@eshpm.eur.nl](mailto:attema@eshpm.eur.nl); +31-10-4089129). Qualified applicants should send a letter of motivation, curriculum vitae, diploma and the names and contact details of two references by email to dr. Arthur Attema and to Ms. Selano Li: [euccchinaoffice@eur.nl](mailto:euccchinaoffice@eur.nl). The Erasmus University China Center (EUCC) will first assess and submit the following documents to the Admission Office: your Bachelor-Master degree (in relevant subject area and to be accredited by Nuffic), your Master degree score list (all documents should be in English and by an official authorized institute), and a sufficient TOEFL or IELTS score (see above). If you satisfy these requirements, you will enter the recruitment phase. The deadline for application is March 10th, 2020.

\*Acquisition based upon this vacancy is not appreciated.