We are currently accepting applications to be considered for School of Psychology funding.

Description of Research Opportunity:
Why do we remember some information easily for the rest of our lives but we forget other information immediately? It is clear that learning depends on the characteristics and processing of information. However, very little is known about how motivational states affect the likelihood of memory retention. Recently, we have shown that activity in the mesolimbic dopaminergic circuit during motivation enhances learning and later memory consolidation processes. My group at Cardiff University will use a multi-modal approach to investigate how motivational states contribute to memory enhancement. In order to translate our findings to real-life learning situations, we are not only interested in the role of extrinsic motivational states (e.g., reward) on memory but also how intrinsic motivational states (e.g., via curiosity or exploration) enhance memory processes. The new state-of-the-art Cardiff University Brain Imaging Centre (CUBRIC) will provide an excellent opportunity to the successful candidate to answer cutting-edge questions in motivation and memory research. Available techniques include structural and functional MRI (3T, 7T, and microstructure 3T), M/EEG, and brain stimulation.

For key publications, please see:
- Gruber et al. (in press). Post-learning hippocampal dynamics promote preferential retention of rewarding events. *Neuron*. (Accepted manuscript will be sent upon request)

For further information please email Matthias Gruber: mjgruber@ucdavis.edu

Award:
The studentship will commence in October 2016, and will cover your tuition fees (at UK/EU level) as well as a maintenance grant. In 2015-16 the maintenance grant for full-time students was £14,057 per annum. As well as tuition fees and a maintenance grant, you will receive a participant allowance of £300 per annum, and conference funding (£100 in Year 1, £600 in Years 2 and 3). You will also receive a computer and office space, and access to courses offered by the University’s Graduate Centre and become members of the University Graduate College.
The successful candidate will have access to a wide range of state-of-the-art research facilities and resources, including a sleep lab, 3T and 7T MRI scanners, EEG/MEG and behavioural testing labs, and high-performance computing cluster (see http://sites.cardiff.ac.uk/cubric/cubric-building/).

Eligibility:
Full awards (fees plus maintenance stipend) are open to UK Nationals, and EU students. International students will typically be eligible for a UK/EU equivalent award only.

School studentship funding is highly competitive. In view of the limited number of awards and the very high standard of applications received, successful applicants are likely to have a very good first degree (a First or Upper Second class BSc Honours or equivalent).

Requirements
The successful candidate will be an enthusiastic individual with a desire to conduct innovative research in motivation and memory. You will have, or expect to gain, a first class/good upper second degree, or a distinction/merit at masters level, in psychology, biology, neuroscience, or engineering/computer science (with good knowledge of human sensory systems). Research experience in psychology, neuroscience and/or brain imaging is desirable but not essential.

You will need to have good written and oral communication skills, and be able to work in a team. You will need to have experience of using standard software for data analysis (e.g., R, Excel, SPSS) and at least intermediate level programming skills (e.g., Matlab, Python).

About Us
We are one of the largest and strongest psychology departments in the UK, allowing us to offer well-resourced research opportunities in all areas of psychology, from neuroscience and brain imaging to social and developmental psychology, compassing both basic science and applied aspects. In the 2014 research excellence framework, Cardiff is one of the UK’s top three universities for its world-leading research in psychology, psychiatry and neuroscience. The school were ranked 40th in the 2014 QS World University Rankings. The School has an Athena SWAN Bronze Award that recognises good employment practice and a commitment to develop the careers of women working in science. Please consult the School's web pages for more information http://psych.cf.ac.uk/.

Cardiff is a thriving city in very close proximity to the beautiful coast and countryside (http://www.breconbeacons.org/). It has a two-hour rail link to London and easy access to airports at Cardiff and Bristol.

For informal enquiries about the project, please contact Matthias Gruber mjgruber@ucdavis.edu. Please note that I am in the process of moving to Cardiff University this summer and I am currently based at the UC Davis (https://sites.google.com/site/researchmatthiasgruber/contact).

For further information please contact Lesley Strabel at Postgraduate Research Enquiries:
Email: Psych-PhD@cardiff.ac.uk; Phone: +44 (0)29 2087 5376;

How to apply:
No separate application is necessary – consideration is automatic on applying for a PhD in Psychology, with an Oct 2016 start date. Please use our online application service at www.cf.ac.uk/regis/general/applyonline/index.html and specify in the funding section that you wish to be considered for School funding.

Application deadline: 16th March 2016.