

# Accomplishing a Dissertation with Placement

## Introduction

While pursuing my MA in Social Development at the University of Sussex, I secured a placement that aligned perfectly with my dissertation research. This opportunity allowed me to gain invaluable skills and contribute to a program enhancing women's overall well-being. The Andrew Pick Award, which I was fortunate to receive, provided essential support and made this experience possible. I begin by saying: *thank you*.

**Organisation:** Baytree Centre

**Location:** Brixton, U.K.

**Placement Period:** June - August 2024

## Research Overview

My dissertation placement at the Baytree Centre offered a valuable opportunity to contribute meaningfully to one of their programs. The Baytree Centre provides a wide range of workshops and services designed to build confidence, develop new skills, foster networks, and provide access to new opportunities. Over the course of my eight-week placement, I worked closely with the organisation, gaining firsthand insight into its operations and the personal experiences of its participants. Additionally, I played an active role in daily tasks such as supporting workshops, administering questionnaires, and writing internal reports.



## Fund Usage

The bursary provided essential support for my placement, enabling me to cover travel expenses, provide snacks and workshop materials, and offer appreciation vouchers for the participants. Through this experience, I interacted with over 25 users and staff members at Baytree Centre, conducting a total of eight in-depth interviews.

## Findings and Going Further

My research not only contributed to the completion of my dissertation but also provided valuable insights to the Baytree Centre. By engaging in the daily activities, I gained a deep understanding of the benefits that users acquire from the services provided, and how these significantly impact the lives of participants. Recognising that this organisation continuously adapts its services to meet the needs of women, my research identified both strengths and areas for potential development, alongside recommendations for future research.

One of the key insights I gained from my time at the Baytree Centre is the critical importance of building ties. As social beings, we benefit in various ways from engaging with others.

*I can genuinely say that this experience has reinforced my interest in pursuing a career in this field, working with women through local organisations to create a positive impact on their lives.*