

AHRC Collaborative Doctoral Partnership (CDP) studentship with National Museums NI

***'A tragedy not to preserve now, while there is still time'* – the establishment of a Folk Museum for Ulster, 1929-1964**

The School of Museum Studies, University of Leicester, in partnership with National Museums NI, invites applications from suitably qualified applicants for a Collaborative Doctoral Partnership (CDP) studentship, funded by the UK Arts and Humanities Research Council, to conduct research leading to a PhD on the theme: *'A tragedy not to preserve now, while there is still time'* – the establishment of a Folk Museum for Ulster, 1929-1964.

Start date: 1st October 2024

Application Deadline: 20th May 2024 at 5pm

Applications received after this date cannot be considered. Candidates will be notified of the outcome of their application by the end of day on the 31st May 2024.

Interviews will take place on **7th June**. All interviews will be **online**.

The School of Museum Studies, University of Leicester, and National Museums NI are pleased to announce the availability of a fully funded (fees and living allowance) Collaborative Doctoral Partnership Studentship from 1st October 2024 under the AHRC's [Collaborative Doctoral Partnerships \(CDP\) scheme](#).

This project will be jointly supervised by Prof Suzanne MacLeod (University of Leicester) and Victoria Millar (Senior Curator of History, National Museums NI) and the student will be expected to spend time at both the University of Leicester and the Ulster Folk Museum, and be part of a wider cohort of CDP funded students across the UK.

The studentship can be studied either full time (4 years) or part time (7 years).

We encourage the widest range of potential students to study for this CDP studentship and are committed to welcoming students from different backgrounds to apply. We particularly welcome applications from minority ethnic backgrounds as they are currently underrepresented at this level in this area.

Students should have a Master's Degree in a relevant subject or be able to demonstrate equivalent experience in a professional setting.

The studentship is open to both home and international applicants.

Project overview

The project aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the establishment of the Ulster Folk Museum and considers whether an understanding of the museum's past can help inform its future. Both material and non-material collections held by National Museums NI will be examined as part of the project in order to build up a picture of the museum's earliest days, from its proposed inception following the opening of the Belfast Museum & Art Gallery in 1929, to its own eventual opening in 1964. Research questions will establish how various factors, from key supporters to political events,

influenced the museum's trajectory, and consideration will be given to how these findings can help inform the museum's strategic approach in the 21st century.

The project comes at an opportune time as the museum begins an ambitious 'Reawakening' programme, designed to expand its role as a heritage and environment resource. Proposals include an iconic new Culture Hub, welcoming visitors to the museum and providing new exhibition spaces that will allow the museum to be better explained and open up opportunities for new research and content. A fuller understanding of the museum's establishment and development is central to this work.

The objectives of the project are to:

- Identify and interrogate the motivations and actions of key supporters who championed the establishment of a folk museum for Ulster in order to understand the driving forces behind the museum's creation.
- Consider how the people of Ulster responded to plans for a folk museum and understand more about how the museum was experienced following its opening.
- Investigate the impact that economic, political and social factors, at home and abroad, had on plans to establish a folk museum for Ulster.
- Examine the role of open-air museums in influencing the design and development of the Ulster Folk Museum.
- Explore how a comprehensive analysis of the museum's establishment can offer insights into guiding the Ulster Folk Museum's direction in the 21st century, ensuring its continued relevance.
- Share research findings with the public through on-site exhibitions and online platforms.

Application procedure

Candidates should submit an online University of Leicester PhD application form, attaching a statement. The statement should outline the applicant's:

- Academic qualifications and/ or relevant professional experience and expertise (max 300 words)
- Motivation to pursue this Collaborative Doctoral Partnership (max 500 words)
- A provisional outline of a research topic within the thematic parameters given above. The outline should set out indicative aims and objectives, research questions, scholarly context, methods and sources (max 750 words)

Candidates must also arrange for two references to be submitted to the University of Leicester by the deadline, including at least one academic reference.

Research with National Museums NI

This research studentship is one allocated to the University of Leicester by the AHRC to support the work of National Museums NI. Given the site-specific nature of the PhD, the successful student will be expected to spend a significant proportion of their time carrying out research and gaining relevant experience at the Ulster Folk Museum (Northern Ireland) as part of the studentship. National Museums NI will provide up to £2,000 per year to assist the successful applicant with travel and related expenses.

Details of Award

CDP doctoral training grants fund full-time studentships for 4 years or part-time equivalent up to a maximum of 7 years.

The award pays tuition fees up to the value of the full-time home UKRI rate for PhD degrees.
Research Councils UK Indicative Fee Level for 2024/2025 is £4,786.

The award pays full maintenance for all students both home and international students. The UKRI National Minimum **Doctoral Stipend for 2024/2025 is £19,237**, plus a CDP maintenance payment of £600/year.

The student is eligible to receive an additional travel and related expenses grant during the course of the project courtesy of National Museums NI worth up to £2,000 per year for 4 years.

The successful candidate will be eligible to participate in events organised for all Collaborative Doctoral Partnership students who are registered with different universities and studying with cultural and heritage organisations across the UK.

Eligibility

- This studentship is open to both home and international applicants.
- International students are eligible to receive the full award for maintenance as are home students. To increase access to international candidates, the University of Leicester has agreed to waive the difference between the UK fee and the international fees for this project.
- We encourage the widest range of potential students to study for this CDP studentship and are committed to welcoming students from different backgrounds to apply. We particularly welcome applications from minority ethnic backgrounds as they are currently underrepresented at this level in this area.
- Applicants should ideally have or expect to receive a relevant Masters-level qualification in a relevant subject such as museum studies or history, or be able to demonstrate equivalent experience in the cultural sector e.g. galleries, museums, libraries, archives.
- Applicants must be able to demonstrate an interest in the museum sector and potential and enthusiasm for developing skills more widely in related areas.
- As a collaborative award, students will be expected to spend time at both the University and the National Museums NI.

NB. All applicants must meet UKRI terms and conditions for funding. See:

<https://www.ukri.org/funding/information-for-award-holders/grant-terms-and-conditions/>

Project details and how to apply

For more information and how to apply see: <https://le.ac.uk/study/research-degrees/research-subjects/museum-studies>



Informal enquiries

To submit questions about the project and funding, contact: cdp@nationalmuseumsni.org