



ENGLISH HERITAGE



Arts & Humanities
Research Council

**Sheffield
Hallam
University**

PhD Studentship in Interpretation Design

A Collaborative Doctoral Partnership studentship between Sheffield Hallam University
and English Heritage

Funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council

Project Title: Shaping bespoke visiting experiences by interpreting the multiplicity of Hadrian's Wall.

Supervisors: Daniela Petrelli (Sheffield Hallam University, Art & Design Research Centre)
Andrew Roberts (Properties Historian, English Heritage)

Project Overview

This practice-based PhD project will develop innovative reinterpretations of a UNESCO world heritage site, contributing to an understanding of heritage, design and audience engagement. Hadrian's Wall is a complex, trans-historical monument. Academic studies (Hingley, R. *Hadrian's Wall: A Life*, Oxford University, 2012) have recognised the significance of the Wall's multiple pasts and presents and explored its many voices: from military garrisons drawn from across the Roman world to the early archaeologists who rediscovered it, and the visitors and residents who were inspired by it physically, spiritually and poetically. Yet, this diversity of voices is barely reflected in the contemporary presentation of the Wall which focusses on the Roman period.

The successful candidate will be supported to develop new, experimental digital interpretive interventions, reflecting the multiple histories of the site and complementing the traditional single-narrative interpretation already in place on the Wall.

These interventions will pair a broader, trans-historical, multi-focal understanding of place, with a nuanced understanding of the Wall's visitorship. This includes local communities, families, history enthusiasts and non-enthusiasts, walkers, school groups, and international tourists. Heritage-audience research, furthermore, identifies various typologies that map individual attitudes, behaviours, and expectations on heritage sites: e.g. the 'experience seeker' has a "been there, done that" attitude, whilst the 'hobbyist' has a strong personal interest in the details (Falk, J. *Identity and the Museum Visitor Experience*, Routledge, 2009).

Designed interventions may incorporate aspects of personalization, multisensoriality and physical experience of place to provide the visitor with bespoke experiences. Through developing new interactions, and exploring visitor's experiences, we anticipate that the research will explore questions such as:

- How can the representation of place through multiple layers of interpretative material (including history, archaeology, folklore, natural environment, poetry, memoirs, and biographies) be employed to create multiple experiences targeted to different audiences and visiting styles?

- What is the visitors' response to multiple interpretative offers? How will they choose? Will they come back for a different experience?
- How can the visit become personal? What makes it emotional?
- What are the implications for English Heritage? Should it embrace such an open-ended approach? What is the impact of researching more and diverse content? Can this open a dialogue with visitors?

Details of Award

- Starts: 1st October 2019
- 3.5-year award (includes a "[Student Development Fund](#)" equivalent to 0.5 years of funding)
- The PhD is practice-based meaning that the submission is composed by two mandatory parts: a 40,000 words thesis and a documented body of practice as evidence of the candidate's creative practice carried out throughout the 3 years.
- The PhD studentship provides a tax-free stipend, at the national minimum doctoral rate, plus tuition fees at the UK/EU rate of £4,327. The stipend for 2019/20 is £15,009.
- The student is eligible to receive an additional travel and related expenses grant during the course of the project courtesy of the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England, worth up to £6000.
- The student will have access to Sheffield Hallam's technical expertise and devices (e.g. how to 3D scan and 3D print replicas) and a range of state-of-the-art technologies including a user-friendly proprietary system for the rapid prototyping and deployment of smart multimedia and multisensory installations (see the meSch project website for more information <http://www.mesch-project.eu/>)
- As part of Award the student will receive specialist and generic research training and join a community of research students in disciplines related to culture and communication.
- The student will be based at the Art & Design Research Centre that is part of the Cultural, Communication and Computing Research Centre at Sheffield Hallam University. This blog exemplifies some of the research carried out in C3RI: https://blogs.shu.ac.uk/c3riimpact/?doing_wp_cron=1554857968.3320069313049316406250
- The student will also have access to English Heritage's Hadrian's Wall site portfolio and relevant historical research and interpretive expertise.

Eligibility

- Due to restrictions on the funding this studentship is open to UK/EU students who meet the residency requirements set out in the UKRI Conditions of Research Council Training Grants. <https://www.ukri.org/funding/information-for-award-holders/grant-terms-and-conditions/>
- This studentship is open to UK/EU students who meet the residency requirements set out in the [UKRI Conditions of Research Council Training Grants](#).
- Applicants should have a minimum of a good honours degree in a relevant subject and ideally will also have or expect to receive a relevant Masters-level qualification.
- A practice-based PhD submission consists of a 40,000 words thesis and a documented body of creative practice. Applicants therefore need to demonstrate an ability to explore

creative engagement in a heritage context. This can be narrative-based, visual-based or interaction-based.

- We are interested in candidates with relevant practical experience e.g. working on exhibition design, heritage interpretation or associated relevant creative practices, including appropriate research skills.
- The candidates are expected to show interest in the heritage sector and enthusiasm for developing skills in the areas of design, digital technology and interaction.
- As a collaborative award, students will be expected to spend time at both Sheffield Hallam University and English Heritage properties and offices.
- Part time study will be considered for this studentship.
- Sheffield Hallam University and English Heritage are committed to equality and diversity.

How to apply

Your application should include:

- An application form can be found here: <https://www.shu.ac.uk/research/degrees/apply>. Note that candidates can write a research proposal up to 2000 words and should include a section outlining how the project is tailored to their particular strengths and research interests. The proposal should include a short overview of current knowledge and context, referencing key background literature and discuss a methodology or approach. Please provide a short CV outlining any relevant projects undertaken over the last 5 years.
- E-mail completed applications to pgradmin@shu.ac.uk by 12 noon on **Sunday 26 May 2019**.

Further Enquiries

Interested students are invited to contact the supervisory team:

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