

Project Proposal



SECTION 1: PROJECT PROPOSAL AND CASE FOR SUPPORT			
Proposed Project Title:	Understanding Military Spaces: Materiality and Social Practice in the Structures of the Antonine Wall		
Project Summary: <i>(Maximum 100 words)</i>	The most sophisticated frontier system ever built by the Romans and also one of the briefest occupied, the Antonine Wall WHS offers a uniquely high-resolution insight into the Roman Empire at its height. The proposed PhD addresses key objectives identified in the Antonine Wall Research Strategy (2020), exploiting a rich body of largely un-synthesised legacy data. An integrated analysis of small finds and ceramics from sites will illuminate how the multiple constituent structures and spaces of the Wall were used, addressing fundamental questions about the activities that took place within them and the make-up of frontier communities.		
Name of non-HE Partner Organisation:	Historic Environment Scotland (HES)		
Name of Contact at non-HE Partner Organisation:	Dr Rebecca Jones	Email Address:	rebecca.jones@hes.scot
Primary AHRC Subject Area:	Archaeology		
Secondary AHRC Subject Area (if Interdisciplinary):	Choose an item.		
Does the project Include a creative practice component?	NO		
If you have listed two subject areas above, do you consider the project to be interdisciplinary?			NO
If Yes, please briefly state why: <i>(Maximum 100 words):</i>			
Please provide full details of the proposal and make your case for support below: <i>(Maximum 750 words)</i>			
<p><i>Aims and Objectives:</i> What can the range and distribution of small and bulk finds along the Antonine Wall reveal about daily life in the frontier? To address this question, this thesis will combine advanced 3D spatial analysis of sites with finds analysis. It aims to do this by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Exploring the relationship between finds distributions, activity areas, and discard patterns; and Reassessing the alleged and possible relationships between the use of key finds and identity groups. <p><i>Significance and Impact:</i> The c.20 year lifespan of the Wall means it is an excellent test bed for new theories on the most advanced Roman frontier. There has not been a new detailed synthesis of the Antonine Wall utilising recent data for around three decades, and new theoretical frameworks have developed. It advances the position and potential of the Antonine Wall for comparative and interdisciplinary research, particularly with Hadrian's Wall and the German <i>Limes</i>. Furthermore, this provides an opportunity to develop expertise for the future study of Roman Scotland, as the principal excavators of the Wall in recent decades are all now retired.</p>			

Research questions:

The research will seek to determine the extent to which military structures and spaces of the Antonine Wall are uniquely innovative – like the structure of the Wall curtain itself – or conform to or further develop existing patterns and practice of the military built-environment of other Roman frontiers, by asking a series of questions:

- Many of the standard interpretations of buildings found in the forts and fortlets of the Wall are based on observations made over a century ago; the role of others has never been identified. How can new evidence from the other frontiers and a comprehensive reappraisal of the data be used to (re)interpret the actual functions of these spaces?
- Data from the Wall offers a unique insight through which one can explore the interplay between space and identity in imperial power c AD 140-160. How might the sites illuminate the diversity of the military communities of the Wall, be it ethnicity (Allason-Jones; Haynes), gender (Allason-Jones; Allison; Driel-Murray; Greene), non-combatants (Birley), and enslavement (Webster)? The Wall has high data resolution and tighter chronology to apply to such questions.
- Given that the Wall was the most advanced of Rome's frontiers, how does the form and execution of construction compare to examples from other frontiers?

Methodology:

The research will make use of unpublished archives held by HES as well as recently published works (including early 2021). The student will undertake field visits to verify archived plans and also examine material culture held in museums. Travel between the host institution (Newcastle) and the primary archive holder (HES, Edinburgh) will be expected during the first two years of study, supported by infrequent field and museum visits.

The data will be qualitatively and quantitatively collated, using standard techniques of archaeological analysis that considers detailed morphological characteristics, metrics, and chronology, along with associated material culture. Where appropriate, data will be input into GIS for geospatial analyses. Comparative data from Hadrian's Wall and other Roman frontiers will focus on phases of Hadrianic, Antonine, and immediate post-Antonine data, *circa* AD 120-180.

Timescale:

The doctoral research can be successfully undertaken and delivered within a 3.5-4-year programme, including placements with HES in year 1-2 of no more than 6 months.

Student input:

There is significant opportunity for the successful student candidate to shape and develop the research while still meeting the stated research aims, for example through concentrating on certain agreed finds categories or advancing a new theory/model of analysis. Changes and developments in the research programme will be undertaken in consultation with the supervisory team.

Please provide details of any resources and facilities, including details of any high cost equipment, fieldwork, training, etc., that may be required to complete the project successfully, and where you will seek these resources (e.g. NBCDTP; partner resources; departmental/school funds). Please include estimated costs:

(Maximum 200 words)

The research will require travel to archives located primarily in Edinburgh and Glasgow. Historic Environment Scotland will provide access to the National Record of the Historic Environment (Edinburgh) - a key resource holding archive materials for the Wall – and facilitate access to the Wall collections in Glasgow (Hunterian Museum), Edinburgh (National Museums Scotland), and in Falkirk and Kirkintilloch (local museums). HES will also provide detailed 'event mapping' geographic information data for the Wall, together with access to recent geophysical survey results (2020). The student will also have the opportunity to meet with the principal excavators of the Wall in recent decades, most of whom are now retired, to discuss their excavation results. All collections and personnel are in the central belt of Scotland and are easily accessible by public transport.

It is anticipated that this travel (including accommodation and subsistence) will not exceed £1,000 per annum, the cost of which is met by support provided by HES (see below).

Access to requisite photographic, 3D-scanning equipment, software and library resources, and doctoral training programmes, in addition to appropriate study space will be provided via Newcastle University through the standard Northern Bridge arrangements.

Please outline the arrangements for communication between the partner organisation and academic host organisation in regard of the project management and the monitoring of academic progress:

(Maximum 150 words)

The Supervisors will follow existing practice in Archaeology at Newcastle University, consisting of regular monthly communications (in person or via phone/zoom) with at least one supervisor. These communications are documented via the Eportfolio system. At least once a semester, a supervision will be conducted with two supervisors present, and one full supervision (all three supervisors) will be held once per academic year.

Student progress will be regularly monitored through monthly communications and larger supervisory meetings, all of which the student is responsible for documenting on the Eportfolio system maintained by Newcastle University. Monthly communications provide the opportunity for the student to seek guidance and receive feedback on work, as well as identify training needs. Furthermore, the student's work is reviewed in an annual progression report, in which the student provides documentation alongside the supervisors to highlight successes and identify potential barriers in undertaking the research.

What benefits will accrue to the student and the partner organisation as a result of your collaboration?

(Maximum 300 words)

In addition to the production of a PhD dissertation by the student, there will be a number of positive outcomes of the research. First, the research will generate a recent assessment of the state, suitability, and potential of the existing unpublished archives for research purposes. Second, the research will unlock the potential of archived data to enhance interpretation and understanding of sites and locations along the Antonine Wall World Heritage property. Third, the knowledge generated by the research will contribute to ongoing interpretation work for the Wall, including updates to its app and website. Furthermore, a direct comparative methodology with Hadrian's Wall and other portions of the *Frontiers of the Roman Empire* will reinforce existing links and establish new connections with a vital and dynamic international network.

These international links provide opportunities for the doctoral student to disseminate the research and build professional experience, and further enhance Historic Environment Scotland's contribution and commitment to international partnerships and collaboration specifically in relation to the *Frontiers of the Roman Empire WH* property and World Heritage more generally.

The research also benefits the student due to its direct influence on informing direct management of World Heritage resources, while also building employable skills in archival assessment and material culture analysis as well as an accompanying suite of digital skills.

The studentship also addresses a strategic lacuna in Scottish archaeology, at a time when most of the leading experts in Roman Scotland and the Antonine Wall, are either retired or within a few years of retirement. Thus, the research addresses professional concerns in relation to succession-planning (relative to research expertise) and provides beneficial expertise relative to future employment.

Please briefly state what financial (if any) or in-kind contribution the partner will be making over the duration of the award:

(Maximum 100 words)

Financial support of up to £1,000 per annum will be provided by HES, with a further £550 available in addition to this annual stipend.

In-kind support from HES is assured through supervision and placement. Supervision will come from within its Archaeology and World Heritage Team (Jones), with the Antonine Wall World Heritage coordinator and others providing additional guidance and information. The HES supervisor (Jones) has expertise in Wall collections and will provide guidance, support and training on their availability and use. HES will provide a placement to enable the student's research to directly benefit the site's management.

Please describe the nature of the collaborative arrangement and the activities the student will be taking with the organisation:

(Maximum 300 words)

The studentship is designed to address some of the research topics identified in the forthcoming Research Agenda for the Antonine Wall (2020). It will help fulfil some of the objectives in the forthcoming Antonine Wall World Heritage Management Plan (2021) - HES and the local authorities are responsible for delivering the Management Plan. Many key parts of the Wall are Properties in Care and HES leads on the coordination of the Wall, the international partnership and reporting to UNESCO.

Collaboration with HES will enable the student to have access to the principle archive for the Wall, plus be introduced to all the partners, including various museum collections. HES is currently a partner in the £2.1m *Rediscovering the Antonine Wall* project which is undertaking infrastructure work and projects aimed at increasing awareness. This has created a demand for further knowledge and understanding of the Wall, to which the student will be well placed to contribute, at a time when there is a lacuna of academic study of the Wall despite a spate of recent publications including legacy excavations, many of which were funded by HES. The student will be well placed both to contribute to projects arising after the RtAW project completes, plus the first ever Pilgrimage of the Antonine Wall (2024) in which HES is playing a key role.

The placement that the student takes with HES in year 1/2 will be with the Archaeology and World Heritage team enabling them to participate in Interpretation work along the Wall in the form of new content for the digital App and participating in the final stages of the current RtAW work as well as contributing to follow-on project development.

For HES, the research contributes to Scotland's Archaeology Strategy, HES's Corporate Plan (*Heritage for All*), Research Strategy and International Strategy (*Partnering Globally*).

SECTION 2: SUPERVISION AND EXTERNAL ADVISORS

First Supervisor:	Dr Rob Collins	School/Department:	HCA
Second Supervisor:	Prof Ian Haynes	School/Department:	HCA
Additional Advisor:	Dr Rebecca Jones	Organisation/Institution:	Historic Environment Scotland
Additional Advisor:		Organisation/Institution:	

Explain how the expertise of the supervisory team and external advisors will allow them to support the proposed project and the selected student:

(Maximum 500 words)

The supervisory team consists of experts of the archaeology of Roman frontiers across the two collaborating institutions. Collectively, Collins and Haynes have supervised over 20 PhDs (to completion and in progress), as well as sitting on 11 supervisory committees and over 21 examination panels. Jones has not directly supervised a PhD student, but will contribute to supervision as the representative from the collaborating organization and brings direct experience of managing research programmes, fieldwork and the archives of the Antonine Wall. Supervisory training will be provided to Jones via Newcastle University's staff training programme.

Dr Collins is an expert in Roman frontiers and small finds, having published extensively on the topic of Hadrian's Wall and Roman frontiers in general. As a Senior Lecturer in Roman Archaeology, he is responsible for teaching on the topic of Roman frontiers and the Roman army, utilising evidence from buildings/structures, material culture, textual sources (incl. inscriptions), and survey data. Dr Collins has also led and undertaken excavations and survey at numerous sites along Hadrian's Wall, and completed small finds reports. In this regard, the supervisor has the expertise and knowledge of the methodological and data capabilities within which the doctoral research will be framed.

Prof Haynes has extensive engagement with study of community life and frontier spaces in the Roman World from doctorate onwards, from early edited volumes, such as *The Roman Army as a Community* (1999) through to more recent monographs *Blood of the Provinces* (2013) (a study of the types of units that occupied the forts of the Antonine Wall) and site reports like *Roman Excavations at Maryport, 1870-2015* (2020). Prof Haynes' research and teaching reveal a deep interest in cultural contact and exchange in the Late Iron Age/Roman period, with a detailed familiarity with the Antonine Wall and appropriate site investigation processes, and a thorough knowledge of comparative frontier systems.

Dr Jones has surveyed, excavated and published on the Antonine Wall. She is Head of Archaeology and World Heritage at HES and a Visiting Professor at Heriot Watt University. She Chairs the Antonine Wall Steering Group (which manages the *Rediscovering the Antonine Wall* project), and is on the Antonine Wall Research Committee, the Inter-Governmental Committee managing the Frontiers of the Roman Empire (FRE) World Heritage property, and its expert advisory 'Bratislava Group' (the latter together with Dr Collins). She led the mapping for the successful nomination of the Antonine Wall as part of the FRE WHS (2008) and regularly lectures on the Antonine Wall to audiences ranging from local interest groups to international conferences – she gave a keynote at the European Association of Archaeologists virtual conference in August 2020. She is Chair of the Antonine Wall Pilgrimage Committee (2024) and is co-Chair of the International Congress of Roman Frontier Studies, the principle triennial conference for researchers on Roman Frontiers and the Roman Army.

SECTION 3: RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT

Please provide details about the research environment the selected student will be joining and its suitability:

(Maximum 500 words)

The School of History, Classics & Archaeology (HCA) at Newcastle University has a long history of engagement with Roman frontier studies.

HCA also offers a Masters degree in Roman Frontier Studies, ensuring a vibrant and active research community of lecturers, post-doctoral researchers, and students. This community is supported by the specialist frontiers library collections of the Great North Museum library, which contains extensive published volumes and grey literature relevant to the doctoral research, with the Great North Museum also holding substantial collections with comparative value. Every year, HCA also hosts the Roman Archaeology Seminar series, bringing leading researchers to Newcastle to disseminate finding and provide networking opportunities.

HCA also owns a full suite of equipment and labs suitable to supporting material culture research, including photographic and 3D-scanning equipment (and software), pXRF, and a thin-sectioning lab. The student will have the opportunity to be trained in the use of this equipment to support the research.

The Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences (HaSS) and Newcastle University also provide a range of training programmes (including those offered through the Northern Bridge Consortium) that provide foundational and skills support to the doctoral student. This includes training in teaching in Higher Education, and the student will have opportunities to develop and apply such skills. In addition, Newcastle University's student well-being centre is available to support the student and provide guidance with personal issues that may impact on the student.

SECTION 4: STUDENT SPECIFICATION

For further information about this Collaborative Doctoral Award and to submit an expression of interest, please contact:

Lead Supervisor (or alternative Contact)	Rob Collins	Email:	Robert.collins@newcastle.ac.uk
Expressions of interest must be received no later than:	(13/01/21)		
Expressions of interest should be accompanied by the following documentation:	2 page CV; personal statement; 2 page research proposal addressing the funded research		
Interviews for shortlisted candidates are expected to take place:	April 2020		

APPLICANT SPECIFICATION

Note, applicants must also meet the criteria for the acceptance on a doctoral programme as set out by the host Institution's Postgraduate Admissions Service.

Education and Professional Qualifications	Essential Criteria	Degree in Archaeology
	Desirable Criteria	MA in Roman Frontier Studies (or related)
Research and Impact Experience and Training	Essential Criteria	N/A
	Desirable Criteria	
Professional Practice and Job-related Experience	Essential Criteria	
	Desirable Criteria	Experience of small finds analysis
Interpersonal Skills	Essential Criteria	N/A
	Desirable Criteria	
Other Factors	Essential Criteria	N/A
	Desirable Criteria	