

**Collaborative Doctoral Awards
Studentship Competition (Project-led)**



Part 1 : Project Proposal Application

To be completed by the lead proposed supervisor(s) and non-HE partner organisation.



Arts & Humanities
Research Council

**Before completing each section, please consult the Guidance Notes.
Failure to provide the required information may result in disqualification.**

SECTION 1: PROJECT PROPOSAL AND CASE FOR SUPPORT			
Proposed Project Title:	Mapping the Cultural Geography of Sam Henry’s Irish Song Archive		
Project Summary: <i>(Maximum 100 words)</i>	This will be the doctoral examination of the Sam Henry collection of traditional Irish song with a literary and cultural geography approach. Henry’s archive, held by Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council, of approximately 15,000 textual materials, is one of the most significant collections of song, photography and folklore in the British Isles. The project will map and analyse the significance of the sense of place that Henry’s archive constructs and will examine how local place impacts upon the gathering of song, and how culture can be identified through the manifestation of song, folklore and local history.		
Name of non-HE Partner Organisation:	Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council Museum Services		
Name of Contact at non-HE Partner Organisation:	Helen Perry	Email Address:	helen.perry@causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk
Primary AHRC Subject Area:	English Language and Literature		
Secondary AHRC Subject Area (if Interdisciplinary):	Cultural and Museum Studies: Cultural Geography		
Does the project Include a creative practice component?	YES x NO <input type="checkbox"/>		
If you have listed two subject areas above, do you consider the project to be interdisciplinary?	YES xNO <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>		
If Yes, please briefly state why: <i>(Maximum 100 words):</i>	The project will combine literary analysis of Henry’s song lyrics and contextual material that will employ techniques and approaches found in cultural geography, so as to explore how place is imagined and portrayed in the work of the song writers. Geographical awareness will seek to examine how individuals and communities have constructed their personal literary, heritage and cultural landscape in the first thirty years of the existence of Northern Ireland. This will be carried out within the environment of the museum and university sectors, employing contemporary collections management approaches, community engagement and developing public audiences and audiences.		
Please provide full details of the proposal and make your case for support below: <i>(Maximum 750 words)</i>	<p><i>I had my existence. I was there. Me in place and the place in me (A Herbal, Human Chain, 2010)</i></p> <p>The Sam Henry archive embodies the significance of Seamus Heaney’s celebration of the significance of place upon existence. It is one of the most important collections of traditional song in the British Isles. Held and managed by Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council, it contains over 15,000 artefacts among which are materials relating to approximately 800 songs which Sam Henry gathered in the north of Ireland between 1920-1950. His focus into the song tradition of an area across much of the northern counties of Antrim</p>		

and Derry/Londonderry yielded much richness and variety of source material. The Council's Museum Services have been working with the collection as appropriate external funding has been secured. As a result, the archive has recently been catalogued to museum standard and digitised onto www.niarchive.org. Since 2009 Public awareness has been raised through three developmental exhibitions and, over the last three years, a programme of community engagement workshops. This has prepared the way for serious academic investigation to begin into comprehending the archive. This is timely for a number of reasons.

1. To date no sustained, in depth monograph exists of Sam Henry's methodology and impact and this will be the first project to attempt to explore, contextualise and analyse Henry's approach and collection.
2. At present there is an extensive re-evaluation of what constitutes indigenous "culture" in Northern Ireland amid the backdrop of concerns about Brexit, the present political impasse a generation after the Good Friday Agreement, and questions raised on Northern Irish identity as we move towards the examination of its centenary as a state in 2021. The Sam Henry archive provides a very fertile collection to analyse and understand the cultural underpinnings of a broad cross communal area in the first half of the twentieth century.
3. Given that concerns about space, the local and the locale are so prevalent in the collection. The archive provides a very strong foundation to examine song lyric within a geographical setting and to illustrate this through geo-mapping.

The doctoral project provides considerable opportunity to work directly with the team that has developed the archive, to create a significant research portfolio based on the collection and develop industry based skills, capabilities and experience that will enhance the candidate's career prospects.

The research questions that the project will explore are:

1. How does the lyrics of Sam Henry's collection create a sense of place and community.
2. Which major themes and concerns arise from the lyrics.
3. How can this be mapped to the topography of the north of Ireland?

This material is highly important as it was transcribed "in the field" at a time of great social, political and demographical change in Ireland. As such, Henry's work located and preserved many songs and contextual information that would have otherwise been lost from the record. His methodology sought to transcribe as accurately as possible the songs of the people of his local area across a broad area of Northern Ireland without too much editorial interference. In this way, his collection gathered songs, folklore, photographs, familial and local history in a deeply authentic manner which generated considerable interest and affection not merely among his local community, but by subsequent generations of singers, musicians, broadcasters and musicologists in the United Kingdom, the Republic of Ireland and across the globe. This was recently highlighted in *Sam Henry Songs of the People*, a two hour documentary and concert programme on BBC Northern Ireland (2018). Henry has been acknowledged as a major pioneer in the study of song in the British Isles and has been championed by key musicologists such as Alan Lomax and Gale Huntington. The quality of the material is highly impressive and will generate scholarship across the disciplines of literature, musicology, history, museum, media and heritage studies. It is singularly important as a window into a pivotal generation that witnessed the shift from traditional to modern forms of society amid a backdrop of the foundation and initial consolidation of the state of Northern Ireland. Henry's songs convey the sense of how communities understood their local places and their place within them, their Geographical Imagination (Massey, 2005), through the lyrics of local song and imagined the places in which they lived. This project shall employ an interdisciplinary methodology of literary criticism with cultural geography to trace how the locales mentioned in Henry's work constructed their sense of place through how their song described their setting place and milieu. The candidate shall be based within the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council Museum Services with a six month placement at the Burns Library in Boston College, Boston. USA. There, the candidate will have access to major American archives of other Henry material, gain excellent working knowledge of Boston's curatorial and digital centre, and disseminate their work and projects within the academic and museum sectors in the United States.

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 candidate may require training in Geo-mapping alongside coding skills. This will be provided through the Institute for Creative Industries at Ulster University. This recently formed institute brings together advanced research and teaching expertise in creative disciplines to collaborate with industry, government and communities, focusing on skills acquisition, job creation, policy development and future-led research.

Archivist/ Curatorial Skills - use of Collections management software, collections handling, digitisation and current Standards in Museum Practice through Museum Services and other Museum Sector training as provided by Northern Ireland Museums Council Resources for public engagement including workshop materials, venues and exhibition equipment are provided through Museum Services.

Training in study skills, project management, public dissemination of work, impact development, ethics management, and acquisition of teaching practice shall be provided through the Ulster University Doctoral College.

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)

1. There are longstanding partnerships between Ulster University and the institutions Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council Museum Services which have developed project and outreach activities over the last ten years. The PhD researcher would be treated as an employee of the CCGBCMS under placement from Ulster University. They would be supervised by Frank Ferguson, Linda Clarke (UU) and by Helen Perry (CCGBCMS Manager)
2. Supervision would follow Ulster University doctoral procedures. Meetings would be carried out at least monthly to review progress against project plan and address any issues and confirm next steps/ targets for the following month against full project plan. Disciplinary, Health and Safety, and work place procedures would be in accordance with UU/ CCGBCMS practice.
3. The Candidate to be based at Ballymoney Town Hall where CCGBCMS and Henry archive are based, with office space at UU Campus and all NBC resources.

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

(Maximum 300 words)

STUDENT

1. The candidate will gain the perfect balance of theoretical and practice based skills through a doctoral project shared between a university and key museum setting. The candidate shall develop their analytical and curatorial skills by working with leading experts on literature and place and museum practice and be able to utilize these skills within and beyond the academy.
2. They will gain experience and expertise on a prime underexplored collection with international significance and produce a thesis that should form the basis of a leading monograph and series of articles.
3. Their placement with the museum will provide additional training and career development through enhancing and extending their skills and capabilities and providing experience of working within the cultural industries, assisting with and curating installations within public museums and art spaces.
4. They will enhance and extend their skills in digital humanities and explore theoretical and practical ways to develop the impact of their research within universities, museums, archives and for public the public sector, stakeholders and communities.
5. The placement in the United States will permit the candidate to carry out the necessary work required on the reach and significance of Henry's collection and provide considerable opportunity to develop a very strong network of contacts in research and industry fields that shall provide much assistance for project and career development.

THE PARTNERS

6. The partners shall gain a significant scholarly analysis of the Henry Collection. At present no sustained scholarly work exists on Henry's practices. This project shall rectify this omission and provide supplementary works that disseminate and explore the significance and meaning of the collection.
7. This shall raise awareness in academic and public spheres, locally, nationally and internationally of the significance of the collection and add to the museums ongoing commitment to share and develop the understanding of Henry's work,

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)

The partner would provide office space, materials and supervision for duration of the project with value attributed to the contribution in kind. This would include in-house training in archival, curatorial and exhibition practice in addition to that provided by Ulster University. Access would be provided to computing and IT facilities and support. The candidate would be offered the opportunity to develop teaching and workshop materials based on their project and support would be given for the candidate to disseminate their work through public engagement through the museum's calendar of public outreach activities.

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

(Maximum 300 words)

The candidate will be supervised as an Ulster University PhD researcher who is working under placement at the Museum Service. They shall be treated as a member of the curatorial team of the museums service. Meetings shall be held at least monthly between the supervisors (Ferguson, Clarke, and Perry). These shall review progress against the progress plan, provide feedback and explore further steps and targets. The researcher will be enabled to manage their work within the location of a university and industry-based setting thus benefitting from the combination of strong theoretical and analytical direction combined with direct access to their main archive as both a user *and* curator. In a project in which awareness of space and place is highly significant, situating the candidate in a core area of Henry's focus will prove beneficial on a number of levels. This will help inculcate sensitivity to the political and cultural public space of the museum industry in Northern Ireland and develop awareness of how significant geography can prove to song, people and communities.

The collaborative nature of the supervision will assist the candidate in managing the requirements of doctoral study in line with placement objectives. The candidate will gain team working and team building skills, developing their office, archival and curatorial capabilities, as well as project planning, collections management, engaging with the public and with heritage. The candidate will be provided with practical assistance to develop the impact of their work. They will work closely with the supervisory team to develop the digital map of Henry's songs as a museum installation, workshop and talks series, and gain insight into collecting, measuring and understanding how their impact is created through this process.

SECTION 2: SUPERVISION AND EXTERNAL ADVISORS

First Supervisor:	Frank Ferguson	School/Department:	Arts and Humanities
Second Supervisor:	Linda Clarke	School/Department:	Education
Additional Advisor:	Helen Perry	Organisation/Institution:	Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council Museum Services
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)

Frank Ferguson has considerable research expertise in Ulster literature, song, culture and identity. He is a leading expert on Ulster writing who has led major projects into researching, digitising and disseminating Ulster culture. He is well placed to lead the supervision of this project as he has internationally acknowledged expertise on Ulster literature and song. He is the editor of the landmark *Ulster Scots Writing An Anthology* (Four Courts 2008) and was the consultant for a recent BBC television production on *Sam Henry Songs of the People* (BBC 2018). He is the Research Director of English Language and Literature at Ulster and the Director of the Ulster University Centre for Irish and Scottish Studies. He has led a series of major projects developing digital, exhibition and outreach materials in Irish and Scottish literature as part of the English research unit's research and impact development programme. He is Co-Investigator on the AHRC funded Representation of Jews in Irish Literature. He has supervised five successful PhDs and five successful MRES in literary studies. He has great experience in developing the professional and academic skills of PhD and Early Career researchers at Ulster through his Impact and Outreach work to the local educational and arts sectors and has created strong research networks through schools, libraries, archives, arts organisations and local media which have proved very beneficial to his PhD candidates.

Linda Clarke is a senior Educationalist and a Geographer with a keen interest in the Geographical Imagination which inhabits the intersections between place and learning. Her research is focused on teacher education and education technology and she has worked on a range of interdisciplinary curricular projects including the Ulster-Scots Education Project with Frank Ferguson that created a series of educational materials for secondary schools and the general public based on Ulster-Scots history, literary and heritage. She will bring considerable experience of the developing of cultural mapping for academic and cultural purposes.

Helen Perry has over twenty five years experience in the museum sector with a track record of building collections and engaging communities in heritage practice. Helen has been responsible for the development of Coleraine Museums collection from approx. 2000 items in 1999 to a substantive and important collection of approximately 40,000 including the prestigious Hugh Thomson collection and the Sam Henry Collection. She has been managing the Sam Henry projects to date including exhibitions, community engagement and documentation of the archive. She has also led major projects with external funding from Heritage Lottery Fund and PEACEIII 7 PEACEIV working with community groups across the Council area on projects that have explored the Decade of Centenaries and the associated sensitive and divisive histories - using the Henry archive to support reflection and discussion with audiences as part of that body of work. In addition Helen has run a number of very successful seminars for museums, heritage and community sectors and supervised third level student placements in the museum service from European and UK institutions.

SECTION 3: RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT

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

(Maximum 500 words)

The project shall provide the candidate with a very strong research environment which combines a university doctorate with industry placements. The Council's Museum Service is core funded by the Council to deliver on the Cultural Services Strategy. The three pillars of the Museum Service are Collections Management, Community Engagement and public access to collections. The Service manages 5 museum collections across the Borough with over 50,000 items. It delivers substantial annual programmes in 5 Accredited(UK Standard for Museums) museum venues and delivers a programme of community engagement with groups in particular targeting Section 75. The Service reports through Head of Service Community and Culture to the governing body. A further function requires Museum Services to seek external funding to deliver enhanced and targeted programmes e.g. PEACEIV. There are currently 4 core staff including the Manager enhanced by 2 PEACEIV staff. The office is fully accessible and supported by Councils IT and Technical services teams when necessary.

The candidate will also become an integral part of the Research Unit for English Language and Literature with outputs assessed in REF2014 as over 80% internationally excellent and world leading. Researchers in the English research unit at Ulster continue to contribute significantly to the discipline: they sit on advisory boards in government and in secondary and higher education; they are members of editorial boards and referee for key publishers such as Palgrave Macmillan, OUP, Blackwell, Routledge and Ashgate; they provide invited keynote lectures and presentations at prestigious international conferences and symposia; and examine degrees and advise on programmes around the world.

The candidate will become part of the English research group and will have access to work with the Ulster Centre for Literary Biography and the Ulster University Centre for Irish and Scottish Studies. They will have access to a variety of seminars and talks and can contribute to the English seminar series.

As a researcher at Ulster they will be part of Ulster University Doctoral College, an University wide research environment for PhD researchers. Each campus has bespoke PhD hubs providing social and meeting spaces. On the Coleraine Campus it is within the School. PhD researchers engage with the annual festival and the Doctoral Forum provides a voice for PhD's. At Faculty level there are 9 research Units, providing a rich diversity. We have collaborative agreements with the Seamus Heaney Homeplace which provides access and opportunities for PhD candidates. We work closely with the MAC Belfast, the Riverside Theatre, The Verbal Arts Centre, Derry-Londonderry, the John Hewitt Summer School, Armagh and the Ulster-Scots Agency. The candidate would have the opportunity to engage as researcher with a number of programmes and bursaries which are offered by these groups.

The candidate will also have an opportunity to develop their work on Henry on a placement at the Burns Library Boston College where they can explore a series of pertinent American archives, enhance their skills in archival and digital humanities and gain further industry experience with museum and research partners in the United States.



**Causeway
Coast & Glens
Borough Council**

Dr Frank Ferguson
Distinguished Research Fellow | Senior Lecturer in English
Research Director English Language and Literature
Director of Centre for Irish and Scottish Studies | FHEA

Ulster University
Cromore Road,
Coleraine BT52 1SA

10th October 2019

Dear Dr Ferguson

Re Northern Bridge Sam Henry Proposal

Thank you for preparing the application as the lead partner. This is an exciting project providing a unique opportunity for a PhD Student.

Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council understands that this project will assist our Museum Services to build on the work with the Sam Henry Collection through providing a unique opportunity for a doctoral student to work with our Sam Henry Collection through Ulster University. Such a project delivers on our Cultural Services Strategy 2016- 2021 under Theme One - Enhancing our Cultural Assets and Theme 2 providing learning opportunities for Young People. The results for Museum Services will see increased knowledge of this unique and important collection, dissemination of work through the academic world, thereby encouraging further research, and public programming through the work of the student over three and half years.

Council welcomes this opportunity to build on our partnership working with the University and can confirm that we can provide the workspace for the student to access the collection and the knowledge and skills of our Museum Services team.

On behalf of Council I support this application and wish you every success

Yours sincerely

Richard Baker

Corporate Director of Leisure and Development