

Collaborative Doctoral Awards Studentship Competition (Project-led)



Arts and
Humanities
Research Council

Project Title:	The EU and the museum: an investigation of cross-border museum projects in Ireland	
Project Summary:	Cross-border museum projects, focusing on exploring histories, identities and cultural expressions has, on the island of Ireland, been driven by EU intervention and support. The project rationale, methods and working practices have shaped creativity and impacted audiences on both sides of the border, stimulating new thinking about museum purposes. This project gains new insights into how EU cultural and peace building strategies impacted museum practice. It garners new appreciation of how EU-projects have shaped workforce skills, project development and audience engagement in the museum sector. It looks to the future at how the best of such projects can be nurtured.	
Institution:	Ulster University	
Partner Organisation:	Irish Museums Association	
Primary AHRC Subject Area:	Cultural and Museum Studies	
Creative Practice Component:	None	

For further information and to submit an expression of interest, please contact:			
Lead Supervisor:	Prof. Elizabeth Crooke	Email:	em.crooke@ulster.ac.uk
EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST MUST BE RECEIVED NO LATER THAN:			DEADLINE: 6 January 2020

Project Description:
<p>Issues and Context</p> <p>The EU is currently a significant driver of cross-border museum projects between Northern Ireland and Ireland, yet the processes, character and rationale of these projects has not been fully investigated. Often associated with peace building, these project and infrastructure monies were vital to new cultural explorations and the sustenance of the peace process (Bush and Houston 2011), the future is now unclear.</p> <p>In 2018 the Irish Museums Association-Ulster University report Brexit and the Museum Sector in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland suggested we must gather and evaluate data on cross-border funding, planning and practice, workforce, training and partnerships in order to understand more deeply both the processes that shape museum practice and potential pathways for the future. The 2019 IMA study Bridge Over Brexit, which briefly documented 8 such projects, revealed a dearth in understanding of the character, content, working practices and legacy of cross border museum-based projects. It is imperative that this information is captured and considered, so the sector can continue to innovate and flourish regardless of the exact outcome of Brexit-negotiations. This is a significant gap in our knowledge and understanding as we go forward in a changed political and policy environment.</p>

Aim

By considering the character, value and impact of EU funded cross-border museum projects, this project aims to significantly advance our understanding of the social and political dimensions of cultural policy and practice in a cross-border context.

Objectives

1. To get a deeper understanding of the past, present and future relationship between the EU and the museum sector in Ireland and Northern Ireland;
2. To provide new insights into processes, rationale, character and working practices of EU funded cross border museum-based projects;
3. To ascertain the impact of such projects on peace building, workforce skills and development, museum practices and policies as well as their audiences; and,
4. To make recommendations on how museums can continue to deepen and sustain cross-border creativity.

Methods and Rationale

Policy Analysis: The research will evaluate the connections made between desired social and/or cultural outcomes of EU policy and resultant museum practice in Northern Ireland and Ireland. The focus is on EU legislation and policy directives pertaining to areas of importance to the museum sectors in Northern Ireland and Ireland, including: cultural heritage policy e.g. collections care, management, and movement cultural goods (Dimitrova and Steunenberg 2017); cultural diversity and heritage integration policy (Psychogiopoulou 2016; Niklasson 2017); and, cultural policy relevant to the peace process on the island (Bush and Houston 2011; McCall O’Dowd 2008; McCall 2013; Hayward and Murphy 2012). The research will prioritize the areas according to which had the greatest impact on museum practice.

Data Collection: Through desk-based research, and in close collaboration with the museum sector, this project will gather qualitative and quantitative data relating to EU funded projects to museums and the voluntary/community sectors the museums collaborate with, including capital projects and project funding. This data will include project documentation, such as the application, reports, and evaluation. It will document and assess: the value of EU and linked funding; rationale and desired outcomes; working methods and priorities; partners and collaborations; types of activity, such as audiences, collections, and exhibitions. Beginning with period of SEUPB funded PEACE IV (2014-2020) and PEACE III (2007-2013), the project will then review its methods and, if advised, collect data on earlier PEACE funding and other EU projects such as INTERREG. Formulated into a database, (with permission of museums) this material will be publicly available via the Irish Museums Association website.

Case Study Analysis: A thematic analysis will be undertaken considering museums, culture and identity formation; cultural programming and peacebuilding; political and social dimensions of cultural policy. The deep investigation of a selection of case studies will include material on project intent, rationale, methods, activity and evaluation. Interviews and workshops will be undertaken with museum and project staff. In partnership with the museums, workshops will be held with collaborators and community groups who participated in the projects. This project will reach policy makers, both through interviews and data collection and through development and dissemination.

Dissemination, Engagement and Development

IMA-UU workshops with the border museum network will enable data collection, policy reflection and project dissemination. The project will host policy workshop events with agencies with a north-south remit e.g. implementation bodies of the North South Ministerial Council; Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (Co-operation with Northern Ireland Scheme) and relevant museum/heritage Departments in Northern Ireland, Ireland and EU. The IMA annual conferences and publications provides the opportunity to the researcher to disseminate project findings.

SUPERVISION AND EXTERNAL ADVISORS			
First Supervisor:	Prof Elizabeth Crooke	School/Department:	Arts and Humanities
Second Supervisor:	Dr Philip McDermott	School/Department:	Applied Social and Policy Sciences

Additional Advisor:	Gina O’Kelly	Organisation/Institution:	Irish Museums Association
<p>As an interdisciplinary team we have relevant subject expertise in museum practice and policy, arts and cultural policy and peacebuilding research which feeds into the knowledge base of the project. Specifically Crooke and O’Kelly have hosted workshops and published a joint-authored report on museums and the likely impact of Brexit; McDermott has worked on a British Academy funded project focusing upon access and representation of migrants in cultural institutions in Northern Ireland, which included a consideration of peace related and conflict resolution funded projects. The student will have access to content and sharing research outcomes on MA programmes in museum studies. As Professor of Heritage and Museum Studies, Crooke is Course Director and McDermott is part of the course team.</p> <p>The supervisors will share their extensive industry expertise and networks. As the senior executive of the IMA, O’Kelly is responsible for leading and delivering the association’s advocacy work and vision in support of the museum sector. Furthermore, O’Kelly has held senior curatorial and management roles with non-profit and commercial cultural organisations including Dalkey Castle Heritage Centre, where she led a Further Education Training Award Council programme. Crooke will draw upon her museum and project knowledge gained as Director of Northern Ireland Museums Council since 2004 and Chair since 2015. She is also former Director of the Irish Museums Association and is on the Heritage Council (Ireland) Museum Standards Programme Ireland Advisory Committee. McDermott will draw upon his experience of community engagement with diverse communities.</p> <p>All three supervisors have extensive experience of managing and delivering funded research projects. Crooke has been awarded funding from the AHRC, ESRC, SEUPB and the British Academy, most recently as part of a First World War Engagement Centre which involved collaboration with community groups. O’Kelly has substantially increased engagement with the IMA through development of partnerships, undertaking research and delivery of an ambitious CPD programme. O’Kelly has secured significant funding for the IMA including projects that have been delivered along with Crooke, such as Bridge over Brexit Workshop (October 2017) funded by the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht under the Cooperation Northern Ireland Scheme. McDermott delivered the AHRC funded ‘migrant voices’ exhibition, which toured libraries and national museums.</p> <p>Crooke has approx. 18 years of PhD supervision to successful completion and McDermott and approx. 10 years. Crooke and McDermott are currently jointly supervising two PhD students. Crooke has examined PhD theses in museums and heritage studies at the universities of Newcastle, Leeds, Cambridge, Limerick and UCD. Crooke is currently working with colleagues at University Newcastle on an edited volume focusing on research methods in heritage and museum studies.</p> <p>We will be able to guide the student in the processes of academic writing and publication. Crooke has published widely in heritage and museum studies, considering histories, policies and identity politics. She has 2 monographs, 1 edited volume; 10 peer reviewed articles and 17 book chapters. McDermott has published 11 7 peer reviewed articles, 7 book chapters, and 5 commissioned reports on language policy, identity and diversity issues.</p>			

RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT

Ulster University Doctoral College @UlsterUniPhD

The Doctoral College supports a vibrant research community through its event programme (current weekly get-togethers, writing camps, thesis boot camps); training (e.g. academic writing webinar, literature review workshops); support for attendance at seminars, such as Doctoral Training Alliance Summer School; support for Interdisciplinary workshops led by Doctoral Researchers e.g. Remembering During Conflict (October 2019)

Research Centre for Creative Arts and Culture (RCCAC)

- A subject specific research environment is nurtured through the Research Centre for Creative Arts and Culture, based at Magee campus (Derry/Londonderry, a city close to the border), which includes scholars in music, cinematic arts, theatre, museum and heritage studies. Collegiality and support are fostered through Research Seminar Series – fortnightly research presentations from academic, doctoral students and invited lecturers;
- RCCAC hosts heritage and museum studies events led by Doctoral students in collaboration with the museum sector for both academics and practitioners, such as LGBTI+ and museums (February 2020 with Hillsborough Historic Royal Palace); East Asian Collections and Irish Museums (March 2019 with Ulster Museum); Inclusion and the Museum Sector (2016 with National Museums NI);

- RCCAC supports Doctoral Students in presenting their work at national and international conferences, such as the Irish Museums Association Annual Conference as well as Association Critical Heritage Studies;
- This environment leads to significant publications, such as *Heritage After Conflict: Northern Ireland* (Crooke and Maguire, Routledge 2018), which includes chapters from national and international scholars and Early Career Researchers.

Wider academic research environment at Ulster University

The research environment is further nurtured through potential connections with ongoing Ulster research.

- At INCORE, the International Conflict Research Institute, there are examples of past research focusing on EU funding (Bush and Houston 2011) and an interest in the themes of heritage, tourism, memory and peace building.
- The current INTERREG project Connected Culture and Natural Heritage in a Northern Environment (CINE) includes UU (Magee) partners <http://cine.interreg-npa.eu/>.
- An interdisciplinary team brought the Irish Humanities Alliance 2019 conference, on Border Heritage, to Ulster (Magee). <https://www.irishhumanities.com/events/border-heritage/>
- The researcher has access to Research Seminar Series and events in history, tourism, and School of Art and Design.

Irish Museums Association

The research will benefit from the existing Irish Museums Association the research environment, for instance:

- With Ulster University the IMA has brought about research focused workshops, funded under the Cooperation with Northern Ireland Scheme e.g. *The Bridge Over Brexit* (2017), *Museums and Digital Technologies* (2013 UU Magee campus); *Practice meets Theory* (2010 UU Belfast campus)
- The research highlight of the IMA year is the Annual Conference. In Year 1 invitation to join the conference planning committee; Year 1 invitation to present a paper; Year 2 opportunity to provide a conference thematic lead;
- The researcher will be invited and supported to publish in IMA journal and later to be guest editor of the IMA journal on a research related theme.
- Furthermore, the IMA supports the formation of a border museum network as a creative research environment amongst a network of museum professionals.