

## **Institute of Photography (IoP)**

**Title:** Creativity for Transition in Rural Environments

**Director of Studies:** Dr. Daro Montag

### **Project Details:**

Climate change presents what is arguably the most significant environmental issue currently facing humanity. Although future scenarios can only ever be predictions, the science behind climate change is well documented and points in the same direction. Levels of CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere continue to increase and the threshold for maintaining a stable planet has long since passed. This suggests that our society needs to radically change if we are to avert the worst case scenarios.

Whilst the science is clear there remains a gap between what is known, and how this translates into action and behaviour. In recent times a significant amount of cultural activity has been focused on communicating this issue with the underlying aim of changing behaviour. In the UK such programmes include Cape Farewell, Tipping Point, and Julie's Bicycle. Although this cultural activity has undoubtedly contributed to a growing environmental awareness, there remains a gap between the cultural outputs and the social transformation required to bring about a low-carbon economy.

The Transition Town movement provides a key model for how communities might build low-carbon, resilient communities, and be transformed from the inside. Whilst this model is proving successful at a certain scale, it struggles to find traction within dispersed or sparsely populated communities. Rural communities often lack the critical mass to effectively participate in this movement, and much of the cultural component gravitates towards urban or metropolitan areas. Rural communities thus present a particular problem, and therefore may require an alternative approach.

The potential for creativity to influence and bring about social change is well recognised. This research project will therefore investigate the role of creativity within this transition, with particular reference to the challenges faced by rural communities. It will ask how creativity can help to bring about social change that is translated into meaningful action.

Based in the Institute of Photography at Falmouth University, the successful applicant will become part of a team of researchers currently working in the area of art, ecology and Innovation in rural environments. We expect research students to take a full and active role in the department, including taking part in regular workshops, conferences and seminars.

The studentship commences September 2017, and the successful candidate can expect to develop their own dissertation topic within the remit of the project.

Applicants will be expected to demonstrate at interview:

- imaginative and viable preliminary ideas for research into this subject area

- an appreciation of the nature of PhD study and of both independent and collaborative research
- clear motivation for undertaking PhD study in Falmouth in this subject area
- evidence that you have, or can develop, the skills required to start the proposed research

For an informal discussion about the studentship, please email

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