

School of Writing and Journalism (SoWJ)

Title: The Future of the Heritage Guidebook: investigating new models for the commercial heritage guidebook and its potential for promoting sustainability, conservation and eco-tourism.

Director of Studies: Dr. Niamh Downing

Project Details:

The Creative Connected Communities Research Centre at Falmouth University, invites applications for a three-year full-time Doctoral studentship, to undertake practice-led research into the development of new writing and publishing models for the commercial heritage guidebook and its potential for promoting eco-tourism and sustainable behaviours.

Guidebooks have a long history of connection with environmental movements, and ecological tourism, from Wordsworth's *Guide to the Lakes* (1810) to Wainwright's walking guides. They also offer a way for heritage organisations to communicate the significance of a site, and enhance visitors' connections with a place. Guidebooks provide influential representations of sites of historical and environmental interest via particular aesthetic modes, and in embodying the environmental tensions between conservation and access, they also have a potential role to play in generating awareness of environmental concerns.

In 2015, 90 years after the publication of its first printed guidebook, the National Trust began producing e-guidebooks to complement each of its new printed guidebooks. Working alongside National Trust Publishing and through self-directed practice, the PhD student will investigate new ways in which writing and publishing models for the heritage guidebook might creatively deploy digital technology to engage audiences and promote sustainable behaviours and eco-tourism.

This is an opportunity to produce a sustained piece of practice-based work or series of works in the field of commercial non-fiction writing, as well as to develop an innovative solution to engage new audiences with the guidebook format. Research questions might also address the place of eco-critical non-fiction writing in a commercial context, the role of the contemporary guidebook in promoting eco-tourism or sustainable behaviours, the historical context of the guidebook as it figures in earlier debates about sustainability and the environment.

Based in the School of Writing & Journalism at Falmouth University, the successful applicant will work within a team of researchers currently working in the area of sustainability and ecology, and its relationship to writing, literature and digital technologies. We expect research students to take a full and active role in the Research Centre and School, 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

niamh.downing@falmouth.ac.uk. For general enquiries, please contact Jemma Julian, Research and Development Support Officer via email at research@falmouth.ac.uk or by phone on 01326 255831