



Call for Expressions of Interest

Fully-funded PhD opportunity in Housing and Post-carbon communities

Location: UCD School of Architecture, Planning and Environmental Policy, Dublin, Ireland.

Deadline: 2 February 2026, target start May or September 2026

Dr. Seán Cullen invites applications from highly motivated students to conduct research in the broad area of 'Housing and Post-carbon communities'. This unique opportunity at the cutting edge of architectural and urban design offers full-funding, for one PhD student, for up to four years, starting in May or September 2026. The proposed research will focus on one or more of Dr. Cullen's core research interests, including, but not limited to:

- a) scenario-based, design-led research;
- b) food-water-energy nexus;
- c) systems thinking;
- d) nature-based solutions;
- e) co-design and community-engaged methodologies;
- f) circular material ecologies;
- g) climate adaptive building facades;
- h) urbanism of the global south;
- i) cultural and spatial dimensions of climate adaptation.

Scholarship Terms

The benefits of this PhD scholarship include:

- Four-year research scholarship with tax-free stipend of €25,000 per annum;
- Waived tuition fees for both EU and non-EU candidates;
- Eligible direct research expenses total €4,000;
- UCD career building and networking opportunities;
- Opportunity to complement stipend and gain teaching and mentoring experience in UCD.

Eligibility Criteria

Candidates must, at a minimum, [satisfy the entry requirements for a PhD degree at UCD](#) which includes the UCD Minimum Language Requirements. Applications are particularly encouraged from candidates that possess these additional qualifications:

- A Master's degree (or equivalent) in a relevant discipline (architecture, urbanism/urban design, landscape architecture, spatial planning, sustainable development);
- Demonstrable motivation to conduct cutting edge research;
- Relevant research and/or other research-related experience;
- A desire to develop an international research profile;



- Strong organisational, writing, presentation and other communication skills;
- The ability to work independently, as well as in a team, to work under pressure, respect deadlines, and produce quality work;
- Excellent interpersonal skills.

About the PI

Dr Seán Cullen is [Lecturer/Assistant Professor in Housing and Post-Carbon Communities](#) at University College Dublin (UCD) and a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (FHEA). His research explores how design-led and scenario-based methods can visualise housing and settlement systems for a climate-adaptive, post-carbon future. Prior to joining UCD, he was a Lecturer in Architecture at Queen's University Belfast. He has been involved in several major international interdisciplinary research projects, including [Future Island-Island](#) (AHRC), [UPSURGE](#) (EU Horizon 2020), *Ideal Home* (Innovate UK) and *M-NEX* (Belmont Forum & JPI Urban Europe), working with academia, industry and communities alike. Seán's work spans environmental technologies, circular material systems and living infrastructure, with a focus on how design research can drive sustainable and equitable transitions in housing and urbanism.

UCD and School context

Ireland's largest university, [University College Dublin](#) is ranked within the top 1% of higher education institutions worldwide. The university is located on a 330-acre parkland campus in the south Dublin suburbs. Dublin itself is a lively European capital renowned for its nightlife. [The School of Architecture, Planning and Environmental Policy](#) in UCD has an international reputation as a centre of excellence for research and teaching in a multidisciplinary School.

How to apply

An expression of interest should be lodged containing the **following three documents in a single PDF** marked '**Candidate PhD Application 2026**' to sean.cullen@ucd.ie, by the **2nd of February 2026**:

- A *personal statement* highlighting your motivation and how you meet the eligibility criteria (max 1 page).
- An *outline of an initial research proposal* aligned to one or more of the research interests detailed above (max 2 pages);
- An *up-to-date academic CV* (max 5 pages).

This document will be used as the basis for both further shortlisting, and for proposal refinement that will occur as part of the selection process. Please note, non-EU candidates will be required to meet [Irish national Visa requirements](#).

Informal enquiries may be made to Research Manager louise.dunne@ucd.ie or to sean.cullen@ucd.ie.