Theorising Research Ecologies? An Environmental Humanities Symposium

UCD Humanities Institute, 11th April 2024

Early Career and Independent Researcher Travel Bursary Application Form

Please email your completed application form to ashley.cahillane@ucd.ie with the email header "YOUR NAME_ ECR Bursary Application Form"

Submission deadline: 28th February 2024

About the Travel Bursary

This bursary scheme is intended to develop Environmental Humanities networking for Ireland-based scholars. A limited number of awards are available.

The award can cover the cost of rail or bus transport and one or two nights' accommodation in Dublin city if necessary. Please note that the award cannot be used to cover flights or car journeys.

Awardees do not need to present any research at the event **but they are expected to attend the full event and to participate in discussions. They will also be asked to take notes for one** or more of the (90-minute) sessions.

The funding must be spent in coordination with the event organiser, Ashley Cahillane. Travel expediture must be receipted.

We will prioritise applicants who do not already have relevant research or travel funding that could be used to attend this event.

Eligibility

You must currently be based (for work, research, or residence) in the Republic of Ireland or Northern Ireland. Scholars who work or research for Irish organisations/institutions but live outside the country are also welcome to apply. Yet, the bursary does not cover air travel.

You must be a student, early career, or independent/unaffiliated researcher. "Early career" refers to scholars within seven years of the award of their PhD (from graduation date). The organiser will consider extensions to the ECR status due to eligible career interruptions such as parental leave, sick leave, other caring responsibilities, or illness.

You must be actively engaged in research that relates to the Environmental Humanities (this research does not have to be paid or funded).

Applicant Details

First Name(s)	
Last Name	
Email	
Organisation (if any)	
Position at organisation	

Are you a student, early career, or unaffiliated researcher? If early career, when did you graduate from your PhD?	
Title of current research project most relevant to the event	
Do you live, research, or work in the Republic of Ireland or Northern Ireland? Please briefly explain.	
Are you available to travel in-person to the symposium at UCD between 9.00-17.00 on 11th April 2024?	
Do you already have research or travel funding that could be used to atttend this event?	

Research Relevance

(Please take max. 300 words to explain how participation in this event could be beneficial to your research. You may find it useful to read the event description [Appendix].)

Additional Considerations (optional)

(Do you wish to raise any additional considerations, including financial need, to support your application? If so, please take max. 300 words.)

Signed: ……………………… Date…………………………

If you have any questions, please contact Ashley Cahillane at ashley.cahillane@ucd.ie

Appendix

Event Description

Theorising Research Ecologies? An Environmental Humanities Symposium

Date: 11ᵗʰ April 2024 **Time:** approx. 9.00am – 5pm (UTC Dublin time)

Venue: Seminar Room H204 UCD Humanities Institute   **Format:** Hybrid

Organiser: Ashley Cahillane (ashley.cahillane@ucd.ie), UCD School of English, Drama, and Film, and UCD Earth Institute

Keynote speakers:

Dr Michelle Bastian, University of Edinburgh

Dr Samuel Solnick, University of Liverpool

How can the environmental humanities expand to consider 'research environment' as a form of environment? How do factors such as location, networking, and working conditions matter when it comes to the environmental critic? Does turning an environmental humanities lens to our laptops, desks, or travel choices augment or hinder our practice?

There is a growing desire amongst researchers of all disciplines to reduce the harmful emissions produced by research travel, fieldwork, and equipment. Yet, this decarbonisation effort needs to be collective and structural in order to be just and effective. How can the environmental humanities contribute to such an effort? Could the field, for example, analyse the "energy unconscious" (Yaegar 2011) of academia, highlighting how it is wedded to fossil fuel infrastructure and subjectivities? Initiating research of this kind, the Low Carbon Methods Network ask provocatively: "How does carbon structurally shape conditions of knowledge production, and what possibilities for transition might it foreclose?" (Webb Jekanowski et al. 2022). As well as critiquing structures of knowledge production, can the environmental humanities use speculative or utopian methods to imagine new, more just paradigms of research practice? Could a focus on research ecologies through ecomimesis (Morton 2009) help to stimulate more mindful consideration of research materials and processes when devising research projects?

And how might a consideration of 'research environments' enhance the environmental humanities by bringing together process and outcome, as well as theory and practice? How might it inculcate more ecological modes of thinking and working which also include social justice for researchers? For example, does attunement to work spaces foster attunement to worker's rights? Or attunement to politics of gender, race, age, class, and ability (among other categories) as they play out in knowledge production? How can 'research environments' encourage us to focus on the immediate, the practical, and the political?

Of course, too much of a focus on 'research environments' may induce myopia, angst, or risk (for the precariously employed). It may also upset work/life separation. Is it worth putting 'research environments' under analysis, even if only fleetingly, occasionally, provocatively? What are the personal, intellectual, and professional costs? Is it worth it?

This symposium will gather researchers interested in the intersections of humanities research and the environment. **It is free to attend in person or online**. Due to our focus on

research environments, we will reflect on questions of location, accessibility, and travel when it comes to networking on local, national, and global scales. Through a day of discussions, presentations, and provocations, the event will advance environmental humanities discourse in new place-based and politically-engaged directions.

Discussion may include (but are not limited to) the following topics:

- Place-based methodologies
- Navigating scales, such as local, national, and global
- Feminist approaches, such as ecofeminism, positionality, intersectionality, embodiment, or social reproduction theory
- Trends and trajectories of Environmental Humanities
- Travel, infrastructure, or energy
- The environmental impact of research itself, e.g. emissions, data storage, travel
- Environments and Disability Studies
- Digital spaces and technology
- Spatial theory and spatial (in)justice
- Minority language/culture contexts
- Economic precarity
- Interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research
- Practice- and arts-based research
- Covid-19 precedents, experiences, and legacies
- The representation of research/ researchers and work/workers in culture

This event is a collaboration between the MARBEFES project on Marine Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (Ashley Cahillane): https://marbefes.eu/ and the Cultural Imaginaries of Just Transitions project (Treasa DeLoughry): https://www.ucd.ie/humanities/research/culturalimaginariesofjusttransitions/.

Funded by the UCD Earth Institute, the UCD Humanities Institute, and the UCD College of Arts and Humanities.

The event will provide ideas and networking to feed into Biennial Conference for the Association for the Study of Literature and the Environment UK and Ireland (ASLE-UKI), which will take place at University of Galway, 12th – 14th August 2025.

The event is also a follow-on from, and development of, the Decarbonizing Research Workshops held at University of Galway in November 2022 (Laoighseach Ní Choistealbha and Ashley Cahillane): https://mooreinstitute.ie/2023/01/24/incorporation-support-equity-reflections-on-decarbonizing-research-methods-2/.

To register: https://forms.gle/qo5zKQC1cNsbgKn16