



Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath
Trinity College Dublin

Ollscoil Átha Cliath | The University of Dublin

Scoil na Staire agus na nDaonnachtaí
School of Histories and Humanities



4-year doctoral award

Beyond 2022 and Ireland's 'Archival Palimpsest'

Deadline: Friday 7 June 2019

Applicants are sought for a fully-funded four-year Provost's PhD Project Award to start a PhD at Trinity College Dublin in September 2019 or March 2020 on a subject arising from the work of the Beyond 2022 project (www.beyond2022.ie) and Ireland's 'Archival Palimpsest'.

This award provides a unique opportunity for a **doctoral student** to join a multidisciplinary digital humanities team and to engage in frontier historical research on the project's core humanities research questions concerning the **social history of knowledge**.

The successful applicant will be based in the School of Histories and Humanities and enrolled in the Structured PhD Programme, collaborating closely with the Trinity Research Centre for Medieval History.

The award comprises the student's full PhD tuition fees (EU or non-EU) and an annual stipend of €16,000. Trinity's Provost's PhD Project Awards are generously funded through alumni donations and Trinity's Commercial Revenue Unit.

Potential applicants are invited to email the Principal Investigator, Dr Peter Crooks (pcrooks@tcd.ie) to consult on their research proposal.

Applications for the award must include a personal statement with a research proposal (max. 2 pages), a curriculum vitae with educational history, transcripts of degree results, and two academic references. All documents must be submitted electronically by the closing date of **Friday 7th June 2019** to Ms Eilís Dunne at pghishum@tcd.ie (NOT via the Trinity College Dublin online application system). Applications will not be considered complete until referees have submitted their references.



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Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application by the end of June. Unsuccessful candidates will be considered for other available funding. The successful candidate will be invited to apply via the online application system.

If the successful candidate does not have English as a first language, s/he will also be required to submit evidence of English language competence at this stage.

Trinity College Dublin is committed to policies, procedures and practices which do not discriminate on grounds such as gender, civil status, family status, age, disability, race, religious belief, sexual orientation or membership of the travelling community. On that basis we encourage and welcome talented people from all backgrounds to join our staff and student body. Trinity's Diversity Statement can be viewed in full at <https://www.tcd.ie/diversity-inclusion/diversity-statement>.

We are looking for applicants with the following qualifications:

Essential:

- A first-class (or equivalent) undergraduate degree in History
- Excellent communicative competence in English
- Excellent research and organisational skills
- Demonstrable communicative competence in English

Desirable:

- A Master's degree (completed or in progress) in medieval history or medieval studies
- Demonstrable experience of using archives and interpreting record sources
- Some familiarity with medieval Latin and palaeography
- Ability and willingness to collaborate in a research group

Further enquiries:

Dr Peter Crooks

pcrooks@tcd.ie



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Further Information: The Archival Palimpsest

Beyond 2022 aims to reconstruct virtually the Public Record Office of Ireland (PROI) and its destroyed collections by the centenary of the Four Courts Fire. This work of reconstruction requires a detailed understanding of the PROI's antecedent institutions from the Middle Ages to the nineteenth century, and the network of antiquarians and scholars who engaged with those collections. The objective of Beyond 2022 is to connect these disparate collections and to enhance their searchability and discoverability on a digital platform through intelligent search and visualization. These digital tools also enable us to ask probing humanities-driven questions about Ireland's 'archival palimpsest'—that is, the layered nature of our archival history across the *longue durée*, from the Middle Ages to the nineteenth century.

A particular focus of this research is on the nineteenth-century antiquarian scholars and royal commissioners—most notably the **Irish Record Commission (1810–30)**—whose inquiries into medieval Irish record sources have left to posterity a wealth of manuscripts that collectively serve as replacements for the medieval records destroyed in the Four Courts fire. Beyond the raw information it transcribed from the archives, the very existence of the Irish Record Commission and its burst of activity in the short period 1810–30 is suggestive of an 'archival transformation' in Irish society, leading towards the establishment of the Public Record Office of Ireland some decades later in 1867.

The intensity of the Commission's interest in records dating back to the Middle Ages raises research questions about the role of archives in the shaping of historical narratives and collective identities. At present, there is no analysis of this kind for the Irish Record Commission. We have remarkably little understanding of the operations of the Commission as an institution and of its interactions with and impact upon existing groups of Irish antiquaries who were already using record sources to study Ireland's past. What were the Commission's priorities and its politics? Were those priorities set by overseers in England or in Ireland? Who were the Commissioners and what was the extent and quality of their archival training (if any)? And, crucially, how widespread was the Commission's reach and influence?

These questions respond to the 'archival turn' in historical enquiry, that is an approach that no longer treats the archive merely as a store of historical records. Instead archives—and the people and professional practices that together served to create and preserve the collections—are examined historically, as institutions invested with considerable political and epistemological power.