

PhD Studentship, School of Geography, University of Leeds, UK

Developing Public Art for Social Inclusion: The Potentials and Problems of Commissioned Art in Engaging Diversity

AHRC-funded Collaborative Doctoral Award between School of Geography at the University of Leeds and IXIA The Public Art Think Tank

Advertisement link: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/19RLoB7IxN7wkus0ArDZe7HYLJbvXcvl1PaWt0H-FJxk/edit?usp=sharing>

Lead Academic Supervisor:

Dr Martin Zebracki

Associate Professor of Critical Human Geography

School of Geography

University of Leeds

Partner Organisation Supervisor:

Nayan Kulkarni

Board of Trustees Member

IXIA The Public Art Think Tank

Are you a talented researcher with a Master's degree, or similar postgraduate qualification, and looking for your next challenge? Do you have a background in qualitative research and in the arts and/or geohumanities including the broad fields of Human Geography, Anthropology, Media, Art or Heritage Studies or cognate fields? Do you want to pursue your career in one of the UK's leading research-intensive Russell Group universities and a world-class Geography department?

The successful candidate will be based in the School of Geography at the University of Leeds and supervised by Dr Martin Zebracki, Principal Investigator and Lead Academic Supervisor; Professor Robert Vanderbeck, Academic Co-Supervisor; and the Partner Organisation Supervisor, Nayan Kulkarni, who is a Board of Trustees Member of IXIA The Public Art Think Tank.

The White Rose College of the Arts & Humanities (WROCAH) is a Doctoral Training Partnership of the Universities of Leeds, Sheffield and York. It is responsible for the distribution of doctoral studentships, funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), provided for these universities and for the coordination of a doctoral training programme. The research area of the studentship in hand falls in the remit of the WROCAH Academic Subject Cluster of Creative Arts and Media

<http://wrocah.ac.uk/about/subject-clusters/>

What is this project about?

This 3-year studentship will make a significant contribution to understanding the role of commissioned public art to promote inclusivity in socially diverse contexts. It addresses a significant gap by pursuing the rigorous study of the following three areas:

- (1) Public engagement: What impacts do commissioned public art practices have on diverse communities and individual members of the public?
- (2) Evaluations: What are the limitations and potentials of extant models for evaluating social impacts of commissioned public art practices?
- (3) Actions: How can artists and commissioned public art practices inform planning, policies and public(-private) developments to promote inclusive community spaces?

The project draws from archives, observations and interviews in collaboratively selected case studies in the UK's West Midlands conurbation, where artists have worked closely with commissioners, planners and local and marginalised communities. Focus group interviews will examine how discursive threads and priorities evolve.

The student will benefit from supervisory expertise, training in cutting-edge research methods and the Partner Organisation's rare access to resources and links with beneficiaries to maximise impact. The student will enjoy considerable autonomy by playing a decisive role in the research design, case selections and analysis, and collaborative arrangements.

This project breaks new ground by the development of a formal collaborative platform for the critical interdisciplinary and evidence-based evaluation of increasing claims, both in theory and practice, about the inclusive benefits of public art practices, particularly within contexts of urban regeneration initiatives. So far, such claims have largely remained poorly evaluated due to

resource limitations in the arts sector. The student will have unique access to – and expand critical reflection on – the Partner Organisation’s historical and live projects as well as its consultant and trustee networks.

About the Partner Organisation: IXIA The Public Art Think Tank

This studentship provides a unique working relationship with IXIA, UK’s leading public art think tank, established in 2003, formerly known as Public Art Forum. This studentship support IXIA’s mission to promote and influence the development and implementation of public art projects, strategies and policies by creating and distributing knowledge to arts and non-arts policymakers and delivery organisations within the public and private sectors, commissioners and curators, artists and the public. The studentship has the potential to significantly contribute to and expand on IXIA’s research strategy The Long View, providing a context for the work of public art in the UK over the last 70 years.

What impact activities will be supported by this studentship?

Throughout your PhD you will work with a non-academic partner on a piece of applied research that is of direct importance to that organisation. Your PhD will have immediate real-world impact and you will have access to additional support and training with that partner organisation.

This project will extend, advance and disseminate a unique body of public knowledge and awareness of the role of commissioned public art in advancing inclusive practices within place and community development. This will involve both conventional academic outputs (i.e., peer reviewed articles) and a programme of engagement and outreach to contribute policy, practical and public value.

The studentship will involve 4 months of collaborative engagement activities through the Partner Organisation’s consultants, trustees and wider connections. This will support IXIA’s general work and capacity to disseminate research across various arts policy sectors, cultural heritage management and creative industries and to play to different agendas of key players in the field, including government-funded, commissioning bodies such as Arts Council England, IXIA’s funding partner.

Financial support

Full-time AHRC Competition Studentships for doctoral research are three years in duration (or five years part time). Awards are subject to satisfactory academic progress. Awards must be taken up in October 2020. No deferrals are possible. Awards will comprise UK/EU fees at Research Council rates and, for eligible students, a maintenance grant (£15,009 in 2019/20).

Eligibility

Please note that all applicants should meet the AHRC’s academic criteria and residency requirements: <http://wrocah.ac.uk/new-student/2020-cda/>

Strong applicants will have a good first degree in an appropriate subject, as well as a Master’s degree and professional experience relevant to the scope of the project (or experience of belonging to a collaborative team).

How to apply^[SEP]

Before applying for any WROCAH Studentship, please first ensure that you have read the WROCAH webpages about Collaborative Doctoral Awards, the WROCAH training programme and requirements: <http://wrocah.ac.uk/new-student/2020-cda/>

Please note that the selection of Collaborative Doctoral Award applicants is a two-stage process^[SEP]

STAGE 1 – Expressions of Interest (EOIs) to the Lead Academic Supervisor by 1 November 2019:

Dr Martin Zebracki M.M.Zebracki [at] leeds.ac.uk

Please double check the eligibility criteria to make sure you are able to apply. After EOIs are received, you may be called to complete a programme application for a place of study at http://www.leeds.ac.uk/info/130206/applying/91/applying_for_research_degrees, clearly stating to which project you wish to apply, by Thursday 21 November 2019^[SEP].

To assess your academic ability to undertake three years of independent research you may be required to provide the following evidence:

- Project Statement (a two-page statement that conveys your motivation and enthusiasm for the project and demonstrates your suitability for the intended study)
- Curriculum Vitae

- Transcripts of marks for undergraduate and postgraduate degrees plus certificates where available
- Two academic references http://ses.leeds.ac.uk/download/1484/reference_template-research_degrees from referees who will be able to provide their references by the deadline for Stage 1
- IELTS Certificate (if applicable)

Interviews will take place to select a suitable candidate on 28 November 2019 PM (time slot TBD).

STAGE 2 – Apply for funding to WRoCAH

Candidates selected after Stage 1 will liaise with the project supervisory team to submit a studentship application through WRoCAH (link to application form to be provided) by the deadline of Wednesday 29 January 2020 5PM. Funding applications must be student-led and this is where you will have the opportunity to demonstrate how you would intend to shape the project.

If you are selected by the project team to be put forward to WRoCAH, your application will be considered competitively within the main WRoCAH competition. Being put forward for consideration is not a guarantee of funding.

Contact:

To explore this studentship further and for any queries you may have, please contact the Lead Academic Supervisor, Dr Martin Zebracki, at M.M.Zebracki [at] leeds.ac.uk

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