



Call for Expressions of Interest

Fully-funded PhD opportunity in ERC architecture humanities project (ACME)

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

Deadline: 03 June 2025, target start September 2025

Professor Gary A. Boyd invites applications from highly motivated students to conduct research within his European Research Council Funded Advanced Grant: *Architecture of Coal in Modern Europe* (ACME)

While its environmental impact is now painfully obvious, ACME explores another side of coalmining whose legacies and residues remain in various and often unexpectedly progressive forms. It argues that, responding to the unique conditions of coalmining architecture emerged as both site and transmitter of an intense and unprecedented level of technological and social innovation. *ACME* will provide a new synthesis of humanities and spatial-based methodologies including architectural visualisation to reappraise their significance by exploring and establishing the architectures of coal as *ecologies* that existed both *within* and *across* the buildings and landscapes coalmining created. It argues that these ecologies were pivotal to the creation of a coalmining *épistémè* – the *coalscape* – a pervasive, interdependent network of beliefs and practices that enfolded geologies, energies, bodies and space to exert a significant influence on the social and spatial foundation of modern Europe.

This unique opportunity at the cutting edge of European research offers full-funding for two PhD students, for up to four years, starting in September 2025. The proposed research will focus on a particular aspect of the ACME project namely Work Package 1: *Settlement and Housing*:

This aims, for the first time, to draw together and compare examples of the architecture and urbanism of twentieth-century mining settlements and miners' housing from across the European coalfields, exploring how these developed over time and under different agencies. Of specific interest will be the hitherto under investigated relationships between the enduring and particular conditions found in coalmining and the development of two key modern, twentieth-century architecture and planning forms and concepts: the Garden City, and the New Town movements,

Scholarship Terms

The benefits of this PhD scholarship include:

- Tax-free stipend of €25,000 per annum;
- Waived tuition fees for both EU and non-EU candidates;
- UCD career building and networking opportunities;
- Opportunity 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; history of architecture; archaeology; geography; history; planning; energy humanities);
- 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.
- Willingness to travel to access sites and archives etc. within Europe.

About the PI

Gary A. Boyd is Full Professor of Architecture at University College Dublin and PI on the European Research Council (ERC) Advanced Grant for *ACME: Architecture of Coal in Modern Europe* (2025-2030). Prior to this he received a Leverhulme Major Research Fellowship (2018-22) which realised *Architecture and the Face of Coal: Mining and Modern Britain* (Lund Humphries 2023). This won the Alice Davis Hitchcock Medallion (SAHGB) in 2023. He was project leader of a Getty Foundation *Keeping it Modern* grant (2018-2021) which received the Royal Institute of Architects in Ireland (RIAI) Prize for Research in 2021; and *Miners' Modernism* in collaboration with the Twentieth Century Society (supported by the Paul Mellon Centre and AHRC Impact Accelerator Fund) (2023-2025). He has also co-curated/designed a series of international architectural exhibitions including *Infra-Éireann* – the Irish pavilion for the 14th Venice Architectural Biennale – and, at EXPO 2020 in the United Arab Emirates, the *Architecture of Creative Learning*.

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 2024**' to gary.boyd1@ucd.ie, by the **03 June 2025**:

- A *personal statement* highlighting your motivation for joining the *ACME* project and how you meet the eligibility criteria (max 1 page).
- An *outline* of your interest and potential contribution to the work package described above (max. 2 pages)
- An *up-to-date academic CV* (max 5 pages).



**UCD School of Architecture, Planning
and Environmental Policy**

**Scoil na hAiltireachta, na Pleanála agus
an Pholasáí Chomhshaoil UCD**

This document will be used as the basis for both further shortlisting, and for possible 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 gary.boyd1@ucd.ie