

Critical Minerals Symposium

7 November 2025

Seminar Room 204, UCD Humanities Institute, Dublin

Organisers: Dr Ge Tang & Katie Donnolly

8:30–9:00 Reception

9:00–9:10 Opening Remarks

Associate Professor Sarah Comyn (UCD)

9:10–10:10 Keynote

Chair: Dr Ge Tang (UCD)

Associate Professor Tom Nurmi, The Norwegian University of Science and Technology, 'Quarry of Thought: Minerality and AI'

10:10–10:30 Coffee Break

10:30–11:30 Panel 1: Critical Minerals, Colonial Legacies and Contemporary Distrusts

Chair: Dr Kelsey McFaul (UCD)

Assistant Professor Nicholas McGee (Durham University), 'Excavating the Origins of China's Relationship with Africa: Gold, Indenture, and Race in South Africa'

Dr Gustave Lester (KTH Royal Institute of Technology), 'War Geology: Toward A Longer View of Critical Minerals and the United States'

Associate Professor Geertje Schuitema (UCD), 'How are Ethical Judgements of the Mining Sector Formed by Social Trust, Values, and Value Similarity?'

11:30–11:45 Break

11:45–12:30 Panel 2: The Costs of Green Energy Transition

Chair: Associate Professor Sharae Deckard (UCD)

Dr Aileen Doran (Satarla Ltd, UK), 'Rethinking Critical Minerals for a Just and Sustainable Energy Future'

Dr Diplali Mathur (Trinity College Dublin), 'Rematerializing Ireland's Race to Net Zero'

12:30–13:30 Lunch

13:30–14:30 Panel 3: Imaginaries and Representations of Extractivism

Chair: Katie Donnelly (UCD)

Alexia Bozas (Pennsylvania State University), 'Imaging Extraction: Critical Minerals and the Ethics of Environmental Witnessing in Richard Mosse's Broken Spectre'

Ritam Dutta (Jadavpur University), 'Egyptian Ores and Gothic Curses: Mineral Orientalism in The Beetle'

Professor Gary Boyd (UCD), 'Visualisation and the Coalmining Imaginary'

14:30–14:45 Coffee Break

14:45–15:30 Feature Paper (Virtual)

Chair: Associate Professor Sarah Comyn (UCD)

Dr Camille Mary Sharp (Western University), 'Below Our Feet: The Rocky Foundations of Canadian Museums'

15:30–15:40 Comfort Break

15:40–17:00 Panel 4: Critical Methodologies and Research Ethics

Chair: Assistant Professor Koen Torremans (UCD)

Dr Helene Birkeli (University of Bergen), 'Cobalt, Speculation and Norwegian Art in the Nineteenth Century'

Dr Eleanor Armstrong (University of Leicester), 'On Trinitite'

Dr Kelly Richards, Camille Britton, Rachel Parle (Oxford University Museum of Natural History), 'Communicating Criticality: Making a Research-led Critical Raw Material Exhibition at the Oxford University Museum of Natural History'

Associate Professor Pádraig Murphy (Dublin City University), 'Critical Materialism within a Broad Framework for Responsible Research across Discipline'

17:05–17:15 Comfort Break

17:15–17:45 Reflection Workshop and Closing Remarks

This symposium is supported by the UCD College of Arts and Humanities, the UCD Humanities Institute, and Research Ireland through the Starting Laureate Minerals project. It is also supported by CAH's research strands: Environmental Humanities, Thresholds of Knowledge, and Transnationalising the Humanities.