



**Trinity College Dublin**

Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath

The University of Dublin

## **Integrating Heritage at Trinity East Trinity Research Doctorate Award 2025-2029**

### **Cultural Heritage**

We invite applications to doctoral research on the cultural heritage of Trinity East site in Grand Canal Dock, Dublin, as part of the interdisciplinary research project *Integrating Heritage at Trinity East*.

#### **The Project**

The heritage of Trinity East is uniquely complex, a combination of tangible and intangible and of multiple historical and present actors, and requires an interdisciplinary study. Our research project will study the built, cultural, commercial, and natural heritage of the Trinity East site and the larger Grand Canal Dock area. Our aim is to understand how the historical complexity and legacy of human-environment interactions have shaped the unique challenges and possibilities of this site and how the globalisation of Dublin has affected local communities and their natural and built environments.

This study seeks to help ‘re-earth’ the Trinity East site as it develops and thereby demonstrate what else a city can be in the midst of an overdeveloped industrial and residential zone in which civic space, community flourishing, and biodiversity have been, at best, supplementary concerns.

The successful applicant will be fully funded (see below) and will join a team of three other PhD researchers and four co-PIs across Business, History of Art and Architecture, History, and Geography. The project will integrate these studies to understand how the historical complexity and legacy of human-environment interactions shape the challenges and possibilities unique to this site. It will explore the historical and contemporary pathways and practices through which commercial actors, local and global communities, and other

human and non-human agents have influenced the Trinity East site and its locale

### **Details of the Award**

The PhD candidate will be supervised by Professor Ciarán O'Neill, in the Department of History, School of Histories and Humanities, and will be anchored in Unit 18 – Trinity's community initiative in the heart of the Docklands, located in Trinity East. Their work will be collaborative from the beginning, building on existing relationships with the community and seeking to platform co-designed public historical work that will be valuable to both Trinity and the local residential community. This work will cluster around modern, contemporary, or oral histories of the area and will be supervised by an experienced Public Historian in TCD with extensive experience of working with varied audiences and communities on contested histories.

The possibilities for research are wide-ranging. Projects might investigate the layered industrial heritage of the area - from sugar refineries, sawmills and timber yards, to gas works, distilleries, and foundries - and how these industries shaped both the physical landscape and the everyday lives of dockland communities. Equally, they might examine the cultural memory of the 1916 Rising in the area, or the strong Republican heritage in the area since then. Oral history work could help to recover memories of the women and men who worked in heavy industry locally, capturing the transition from a casualised labour system to unionised work, and later to mass unemployment with the mechanisation of the 1970s. The area surrounding Trinity East is characterised by public housing schemes with a strong sense of community heritage and identity and these too could be the spur for an excellent doctoral project.

Other possible directions include exploring the changing social fabric of the Docklands – Italian plasterers, fish-and-chip shop owners, and migrant workers who contributed to the area's diversity in the 19th and 20th centuries – or documenting the experience of residents in the face of recent gentrification and the 'Silicon Docks' boom. Projects might also draw on the extensive community-based heritage already developed through initiatives like the St Andrew's Heritage Project and local oral history collections, or look at human-animal relationships through the lens of the DSPCA, which ran the nearby Dogs and Cats Home in the area.

The project encourages creative public outputs. These could include community co-curated exhibitions, digital storytelling or map-making projects, and educational resources for schools. There is scope to collaborate with local partners such as Dublin City Library and archives, St Andrew's Resource Centre, existing Trinity initiatives like Bridge21, TAP and the Voluntary Tuition Programme, and broader cultural initiatives through artist- or historian-in-residence models.

The Award includes a €25k per annum tax-free stipend for 4 years and a tuition fee write-down. This excludes the once-off Application fee (€55) for Admission and the annual Student Levies & Charges (SLC) (approx. €200 p.a.) charged to students at registration.

Candidates should have an undergraduate degree in History and a strong academic background in Cultural History. A Masters degree in a cognate subject area would be an advantage.

The successful applicant must be registered and ready to commence by March 2026.

### **Details of Application**

Please send a CV, Cover Letter, and two-page Research Proposal to Prof. O'Neill (Ciaran.ONeill@tcd.ie) by 5pm on Friday 14 November 2025.

Viable applicants will be shortlisted for interview soon thereafter. The successful applicant will then have to apply directly to the School of Histories and Humanities.