



PhD Position in the Centre for Language and Communication Studies:

‘Mutual adaptation of refugees and the host society: building resilient communities through trauma-informed informal language learning and story-telling practice’

Post Title:	PhD Researcher in Language and Communication Studies (Forced Migration)
Post Status:	48 months , Full-time
Starting Date:	September 2025
Department/Faculty:	Centre for Language and Communication Studies, School of Linguistic, Speech and Communication Sciences School of English
Reports to:	Professor Bronagh Ćatibušić Professor Paul Delaney
Location:	Trinity College Dublin (Dublin, Ireland)
Stipend:	Maintenance stipend Euro 25,000 per annum plus full tuition fees (EU/non-EU).
Closing Date:	12th June 2025 (23:59 BST)

Summary of post

Doctoral Researcher, Centre for Language and Communication Studies (PhD programme):

The **Centre for Language and Communication Studies at Trinity College Dublin** is seeking to recruit a highly motivated and outstanding doctoral researcher for a period of 4 years (48 months). The successful candidate will conduct an innovative project **building resilient communities through trauma-informed informal language learning and story-telling practice**. They will be co-supervised by Dr Bronagh Ćatibušić (School of Linguistic, Speech and Communication Sciences, primary supervisor) and Dr Paul Delaney (School of English, secondary supervisor).

Learning the language of the host society and understanding some of the cultural reference points which define that society are key factors in the social inclusion of refugees. Volunteer-led language classes for adult refugees can offer opportunities for intercultural dialogue and network-building which support mutual understanding. This **interdisciplinary project** combining linguistics, literature, education, and cultural studies will explore how language learning in informal educational environments can nurture inclusive, multilingual and culturally diverse communities. It will investigate how trauma-informed, participatory approaches to language learning and story-telling practice may enhance the resilience and agency of refugees. The **methodology** will involve community-based participatory research



which will firstly evaluate existing informal contexts for language learning and storytelling through gender-sensitive focus groups and interviews with refugee language learners and volunteer tutors. This engaged research will then inform the design, implementation, and review of a pilot project conducted with refugees and volunteer tutors, leading to the development of practical multilingual and multimodal resources to support resilient communities.

Project Funding: Trinity Research Doctorate Award for Group-based Research Project

The PhD will be funded through the **Trinity Research Doctorate Award for Group-based Research Projects**. The successful candidate will be part of an interdisciplinary group of researchers working on projects linked under the umbrella project 'Refugee-thrive: Building trauma-informed refugee resilience in the face of the evolving challenges of forced displacement'. The four PhD projects are:

1. Comparing refugee children's resilience in Irish schools: EU Temporary Protection and other refugee backgrounds.
2. Refugees as peace builders: countering populist narratives and building refugee resilience for integration.
3. Mutual adaptation of refugees and the host society: building resilient communities through informal language learning and storytelling.
4. Building refugee resilience through an ethical-legal analysis of the international protection framework in Ireland.

The successful candidate is expected to contribute to the 'Refugee-thrive' project and to the academic activities of the Trinity Centre for Forced Migration Studies (TCFMS) (<https://www.tcd.ie/global/forced-migration-studies/>). TCFMS addresses one of today's critical challenges: with over 110 million people displaced globally (UNHCR, 2023), the Centre creates an interdisciplinary community connecting research, teaching, policy and practice. By bringing together academics, practitioners, and experts with lived experience, TCFMS develops collaborative research initiatives aimed at improving outcomes for forcibly displaced persons. The successful candidate will join this dynamic research community, benefiting from cross-disciplinary networks and opportunities to contribute to meaningful, impact-oriented scholarship.

Applicants are asked to submit a **research statement** that demonstrates how their research background and skills match with the project.

Applicant profile

Applicants are expected to have a strong interest in the topic and to be intrinsically motivated to work on the project. They are expected to have an excellent knowledge of qualitative methodology.

Major research activities conducted by the candidate will involve (1) collaborating closely with your research supervisors; (2) becoming familiar with the main theoretical debates in the field by engaging in a systematic reading of the literature and writing a state-of-the-art literature review for your project; (3) designing qualitative research instruments including



semi-structured interviews and focus groups; (4) conducting advanced qualitative data analyses; (5) summarizing and interpreting results and developing policy implications; (6) presenting work in front of different audiences at local, national and international level in conferences or networks; (7) publishing articles arising from the study together with the research supervisors.

We are looking for enthusiastic PhD candidates who would like to acquire high-level training in applied linguistics and cultural studies and in writing a cutting-edge PhD dissertation at Trinity College Dublin. Candidates from refugee backgrounds within in the Irish international protection system, including those seeking asylum, with temporary protection, with refugee status or permission to remain in Ireland on humanitarian grounds, are welcome to apply.

Qualifications

- a high 2.1 or 1st class degree at the undergraduate level in language and linguistics, English literature, education or a related discipline, with exposure to issues in relation to forced migration desirable; a relevant Master's degree is also desirable.

Essential research skills

- excellent analytical skills;
- knowledge of qualitative methods;
- familiarity with the literature on refugees, migration and education in Ireland;
- experience in the management and analysis of qualitative data;
- technical skills in NVivo or a comparable software package or willingness and competence to acquire such skills in a short amount of time;

Other essential knowledge and skills

- strong interpersonal and relational skills;
- an interdisciplinary approach;
- excellent written and verbal communication skills in English;
- ability to structure and pursue an independent research project;
- strong motivation to publish in academic journals;
- good organisational skills;
- ability to work effectively in a team.

Desirable skills

- interest in or basic knowledge of community-based participatory research;
- experience of language teaching or cultural engagement with refugee communities;
- interest in pursuing an academic or teaching career.

The PhD Programme at CLCS

The candidate will join the PhD programme at the Centre for Language and Communication Studies (CLCS) in Trinity College Dublin, Ireland's leading university which is located on a historic campus in the heart of Dublin. CLCS will provide all logistic, academic and intellectual support and integrate the successful candidate into a vibrant doctoral programme at TCD, while offering additional economic supports to cover fees and basic expenses related to the PhD programme. PhD students at the department are embedded in the interdisciplinary



context of the School of Linguistic, Speech and Communication Sciences. The School is a member of the Trinity Research in Social Sciences (TRiSS), which connects social scientists from multiple schools and research themes for the purposes of collaboration (<https://www.tcd.ie/triss/member-schools/>). The School is also a member of the Trinity Long Room Hub, the university's Arts and Humanities Institute which also offers supports to early career researchers (<https://www.tcd.ie/trinitylongroomhub/>).

PhD students are expected to collaborate closely with their supervisors and will produce a PhD in the form of a dissertation.

Standard expectations of the post

- Critical, systematic and analytical review of relevant literature for the project.
- Writing academic output (working papers, chapters, journal articles) in excellent English.
- Conducting empirical research using primarily qualitative methods.
- Actively writing and submitting research papers for publication and contributing to joint projects or related submissions with the PhD supervisors.
- Attending meetings, workshops, and conferences.
- Disseminating academic work to specialised and general audiences.

Application Procedure

Informal enquiries are welcome and can be made directly to Dr Bronagh Ćatibušić, Assistant Professor in Applied Linguistics, Centre for Language and Communication Studies; bronaghc@tcd.ie or Dr Paul Delaney, Associate Professor, School of English; delanep@tcd.ie.

To apply, candidates should submit:

1. a **motivation letter** clearly indicating how the applicant's profile and skills fit the requirements of the job position (max. 1 page);
2. a **full curriculum vitae**
3. A concise **research statement** no longer than 1,500 words excluding references (see explanation below)
4. the names and contact details of **two referees** (with email addresses included);
5. at least one example of your written work (in English) that shows your analytical and writing skills in a relevant discipline.

via email to

- Dr Bronagh Ćatibušić (bronaghc@tcd.ie) and Dr Paul Delaney (delanep@tcd.ie).

before the **closing date of June 12th, 2025 (23:59 BST)**.

Applications must indicate exactly "PhD Application – Building Resilient Communities" in the subject line.

Research statement



Applications will be considered based on a candidate's academic record and a **short research statement** to be submitted alongside the usual application documents (motivation, CV, references, writing sample). The research statement demonstrates a candidate's research experience and skills in relevant research fields as well as a brief outline of their research interests in relation to the project. The statement should be **no longer than 1500 words** (excluding references).

Institutional background information

The Centre for Language and Communication Studies

The Centre for Language and Communication Studies (CLCS), founded in 1979, is a centre of research in linguistics, applied linguistics, phonetics, computational linguistics and natural language processing. We offer a Joint Honours undergraduate programme in Linguistics and teach the linguistic components of other undergraduate programmes. We also have five taught postgraduate M.Phil. programmes, in Linguistics, Applied Linguistics, English Language Teaching, Speech and Language Processing, and Chinese Studies. CLCS is one of two departments in the School of Linguistic, Speech and Communication Sciences, the other being the department of Clinical Speech and Language Studies.

In Linguistics we focus our research on phonetics and phonology, and linguistic interfaces in syntax, semantic and pragmatics. In Applied Linguistics we focus our research on language pedagogy and acquisition, language teaching, sign language teaching and interpreting, bilingualism and multilingualism, and new technologies in language learning. We have specific expertise in the applied linguistics of English, Irish, Irish Sign Language and Asian Languages. In Speech and Language Processing we focus our research and development in speech processing, text-to-speech synthesis and automatic speech recognition, and in various areas of computational linguistics and natural language processing.

Further information on CLCS is available at: <https://www.tcd.ie/slscs/clcs/index.php>

The School of Linguistic, Speech and Communication Sciences

The School of Linguistic, Speech and Communication Sciences (SLSCS) is a multidisciplinary school that includes the following academic areas: the Department of Clinical Speech and Language Studies; the Centre for Language and Communication Studies; the Centre for Deaf Studies; the Centre for English Language Learning and Teaching; and the Trinity Centre for Asian Studies. The core research of the School is the scientific investigation of language, speech and communication, not only to uncover the structure of particular languages but also, more fundamentally to elucidate how the process of language communication works. Our research intersects with other disciplines and draws on their methodologies. Sociolinguists focus on the relationship between language and society: psycholinguists model language encoding/decoding and how we acquire language. All these fields underpin the study of language pedagogy as well as language policy, language planning and language pathology. The growing intersection with engineering and computer science brings computational techniques to bear on linguistic and speech research.



The School's research strength derives from the diversity of the research undertaken. Across the School, there are also emerging research themes, which form research clusters, where we are developing cross disciplinary collaborations. A key research cluster for the current project concerns the 'Languages of Ireland' and includes research into Irish, Irish English, Irish Sign Language, and migrant languages.

Further information on the School is available at: <https://www.tcd.ie/slscs/>

The Trinity Centre for Forced Migration Studies

The Trinity Centre for Forced Migration Studies (TCFMS) is committed to addressing one of today's most pressing global challenges. With Trinity College Dublin becoming a member of the University of Sanctuary network in March 2021, the Centre embodies the network's core principles: learning about forced migration, ensuring a culture of welcome, sharing ideas and practices, and engaging in outreach and advocacy activities.

The Centre aligns with Trinity's Strategic Plan (2020/25) "Community and Connection," championing the university's values of being inquisitive, pioneering, responsible, inclusive, and collaborative. As the first forced migration research centre of its kind on the island of Ireland, TCFMS promotes interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary study of factors determining and resulting from forced displacement.

TCFMS facilitates networking and collaboration between academics, policy-makers, NGOs, and experts with lived experience to address critical research needs in this area. The Centre contributes to Trinity's Research Charter by harnessing collective expertise for the greater good. Regular activities include an annual lecture or conference and seminars with speakers from academia, civic society, and the NGO sector, all open to the public.

The Centre creates an interdisciplinary community connecting research, teaching, policy, and practice, developing collaborative initiatives aimed at improving outcomes for the over 110 million forcibly displaced persons globally (UNHCR, 2023). PhD students who become affiliated with the Centre will benefit from cross-disciplinary networks and opportunities to contribute to meaningful, impact-oriented scholarship.

Further information on the Trinity Centre for Forced Migration Studies is available at: www.tcd.ie/global/forced-migration-studies

Trinity College Dublin

Founded in 1592, Trinity College is at the nexus of tradition and innovation, offering undergraduate and postgraduate programmes across 24 schools and three faculties: arts, humanities, and social sciences; engineering, maths and science; and health sciences. Spread across 47 acres in Dublin's city centre, Trinity's more than 20,000 strong student body comes from all 32 counties of Ireland, and 16% of students come from outside the country. Of those, 40% are from outside the European Union, making Trinity's campus cosmopolitan and bustling, with a focus on diversity.



Trinity College Dublin

Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath

The University of Dublin

As Ireland's leading university, the pursuit of academic excellence through research and scholarship is at the heart of the Trinity education. Trinity is known for intellectual rigour, excellence, interdisciplinary approach, and research-led teaching. Home to Nobel prize-winners such as scientist Ernest Walton and writer Samuel Beckett, Trinity draws visitors from across the world to its historic campus each year, including to the Book of Kells and Science Gallery which capture the university's connection to both old and new. Trinity accounts for one-fifth of all spin-out companies from Irish higher education institutions, helping to turn Ireland into an innovation-intensive, high-productivity economy. That culture of innovation and entrepreneurship is a defining characteristic of our campus as we help shape the next generation of job creators.

Equal Opportunities Policy

Trinity College Dublin, the University of Dublin is an equal opportunities employer and is committed to the employment 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.