



PhD Position in Sociology:

‘Growing Up in Multicultural Ireland: The School-Community Relationship’

Post specification

Post Title:	PhD Researcher in Sociology: “The School-Community Relationship Study”
Post Status:	48 months , Full-time
Starting Date:	September 2023 (ideal start, but with degree of flexibility)
Department/Faculty:	Department of Sociology, School of Social Sciences and Philosophy
Reports to:	Prof. Daniel Faas; Dr. Aimie Brennan
Location:	Trinity College Dublin & Marino Institute of Education (Dublin, Ireland)
Salary:	PhD Researcher. Full fees (EU) plus Euro 20,000 per annum (18,000 stipend and 2,000 pay for teaching at MIE)
Closing Date:	28th February 2023

Post Summary

Doctoral Researcher in Sociology

The **Department of Sociology at Trinity College Dublin in association with Marino Institute of Education (MIE)** is seeking to recruit a highly motivated and outstanding doctoral researcher for a period of 4 years (48 months).

The person appointed will conduct an innovative PhD project that will consist of a **study of the interaction between external stakeholders in the community (such as faith communities and parents) and internal school actors (such as teachers and principals) and the consequences of these interactions for both the formal ethos that is established and the actual informal understandings, practices and behaviours.** The project examines what form the school-community links take and which interests, values and social norms of the local ‘community’ become active in the school. The project builds on an emerging research strand, exploring school ethos and the role of religion in Irish primary schools. It uses a multi-method qualitative case-study design to gather data from school stakeholders and community stakeholders in two schools in an urban community with high levels of migration, and two schools in a rural community with low levels of migration.

Questions to be examined include but are not limited to: To what extent do teachers and principals see themselves as serving the religious and social ethos of ‘the community’ or do



they prioritise other principles? Does the influence of the community depend on whether teachers/principals share the same ethos? To what extent does stated ethos vary between schools and if so, what role do stakeholders (i.e. teachers, principals, faith communities, parents) have in producing this variation? Does the social, economic and ethnic composition of the catchment area for a Community National School matter? To what extent do the stated policies and practices reflect their actual practices? What do policymakers think about this new school model and how do they as external actors interact with the school? To what extent do parents and their children engage with each other outside school?

The successful candidate will be integrated into a PhD project that will provide an **innovative approach** to the study of school-community links in Ireland using the community national school model as a case study. The project will give the student an opportunity to carry out innovative **theoretically informed** and **policy relevant** empirical research that will generate new knowledge. Theoretically, this project is novel in its holistic focus on horizontal (e.g. faith communities) and vertical (e.g. policymakers) agents/stakeholders in the community and its examination of the dynamics between schools and communities. The successful applicant will gain skills in project management, research communication and policy-oriented research practice. Furthermore, the prospective candidate has an opportunity to draw on the expertise from colleagues in Marino Institute of Education (notably Dr Aimie Brennan who acts as co-supervisor of this study). The project will be funded through a joint venture between the department of Sociology at Trinity College Dublin and Marino Institute of Education.

Major research activities conducted by the PhD candidate will involve (1) reviewing the literature on school ethos and community studies before identifying schools appropriate for inclusion in the study; (2) designing a range of qualitative research instruments including semi-structured interviews and focus groups; (3) working with large qualitative datasets; (4) engaging in summarizing and interpreting results for social science audiences with policy implications; (5) presenting work in front of different audiences at local, national and international level in conferences or networks; and (6) publishing four journal articles arising from the study together with the Supervisors.

Standard duties of the post:

- Critical, systematic and analytical review of relevant literature for the project
- Writing academic pieces (articles/dissertation chapters) in English
- Conducting empirical research using qualitative techniques
- Actively writing and submitting research papers for publication and contributing to joint projects or related submissions with the PhD supervisor/s
- Organising and attending meetings, workshops and conferences
- Disseminating academic work to specialised and general audiences
- Approximately 4 hours of teaching a week during the statutory term (facilitating undergraduate sociology and research methods tutorials), 1 semester in Trinity and 1 semester in MIE per year



Person Specification

Qualifications

- MA, MSc or MPhil in Sociology, Education, Social Policy or in any cognate fields (thesis should be either defended or submitted)

Essential research skills

- advanced qualitative skills including proven skills in data analysis packages such as NVivo (or other similar qualitative analyses packages)
- basic (preferable solid) knowledge in the field of sociology of education or other related field
- good knowledge in case-study research designs

Other essential knowledge and skills

- good knowledge of the Irish education system
- excellent written and verbal communication skills in English
- willingness to contribute proactively to the development of the project
- strong motivation to publish in academic journals
- good organisational skills and ability to meet deadlines
- ability to work effectively in a team

Informal enquiries are welcome and can be made directly to Professor Daniel Faas (Department of Sociology at Trinity College Dublin; daniel.faas@tcd.ie).

The Department of Sociology

Sociology is a member of the School of Social Sciences and Philosophy, one of 24 Schools within Trinity College. The Department's principal research clusters are: Migration, Identities and Diversity; Comparative Inequalities, Education and Families; Power, Conflict and Resistance; Digitalisation and Social Networks. The Department shows a great variety of international sociologists with a high profile, becoming increasingly international, and combining the use of advanced quantitative methods applied to real-world data with the use of sophisticated and diverse qualitative methodologies. Our research links to several College priority research themes: 'International Integration' centred within Trinity Research in Social Science (TRISS), 'Identities in Transformation' within the Trinity Long Room Hub (TLRH), and 'Inclusive Society'. The Department has a long-standing collaboration with one of Ireland's premier research institutes, the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI). Members of the Department have successfully obtained NORFACE or H2020 funding.

The Department has an active postgraduate programme. It is home to an MSc Comparative Social Change, delivered jointly with University College Dublin, as well as an MPhil Race, Ethnicity, Conflict. It has a structured PhD programme combining advanced methodological training with transferable skills workshops. There are around 15 PhD students and our



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doctoral graduates have positions in academic institutions, non-governmental organisations and the private sector.

Further information on the Department of Sociology is available at: www.tcd.ie/sociology

School of Social Sciences and Philosophy

The School of Social Sciences and Philosophy was formed in 2005 and comprises the Departments of Economics, Philosophy, Political Science and Sociology, together with the Policy Institute. With over 45 full-time academic staff, the School has an international reputation in research and is committed to the dissemination of its knowledge and expertise to the benefit of the wider community, with the Policy Institute providing an important channel for policy analysis and evaluation. The School is home to the unique undergraduate degree in PPES (Philosophy, Political Science, Economics and Sociology). It also contributes to undergraduate degrees in Business, Economic and Social Studies (this includes Political Science and Sociology), Philosophy, History and Political Science, Philosophy and Political Science, Law and Political Science, Geography and Political Science, Sociology and Social Policy, European Studies and to the TSM programmes in Economics, Philosophy and Sociology. Over 100 graduate students are conducting research across the four disciplines.

Further information on the School is available at: www.tcd.ie/ssp

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 17,000-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.

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.

Marino Institute of Education

Marino Institute of Education (MIE) is a teaching, learning and research community committed to promoting inclusion and excellence in education. MIE has a long and proud



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involvement with education, specifically initial teacher education (ITE), dating back over 100 years. MIE's association with Trinity began in 1976, when the first intake of lay students registered for the Bachelor in Education (B.Ed.) course. In July 2011, this relationship was further strengthened with the formalisation of an agreement which places MIE under the joint trusteeship of the Congregation of Christian Brothers European Province and Trinity College Dublin, the University of Dublin. In the last decade, the academic mission and scope of MIE's activity has been re-envisioned to encompass a deeper understanding of education in and beyond the classroom, to incorporate the continuum of teacher education and the education of specialist education practitioners at early years, primary and further education levels. This is allied with a commitment to education studies encompassing non-traditional education settings and the wider education environment in a pluralist context.

Further information about MIE is available at: <https://www.mie.ie/en/>

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.

Application Procedure

Candidates should submit:

- a motivation letter clearly indicating how the applicant's profile and skills fit the requirements of the job position (max. 2 pages);
- a full curriculum vitae
- the names and contact details of 2 or 3 referees (with email addresses included);
- at least one example of a written piece (expected in English) that shows the analytical and writing skills of the candidate in a social science discipline.
- **via email to daniel.faas@tcd.ie**
- **with CC to aimie.brennan@mie.ie**
- **by Tuesday 28th February 2023 (23:00 GMT),**
- indicating exactly "PhD Application – School-Community Study" in the subject line.