# Call for Expressions of Interest for 2-4 PhD Studentships 2025

**The Centre for the Sciences of Place and Memory, Faculty of Arts & Humanities, University of Stirling**

**Funded by the Leverhulme Trust**

2-4 full time equivalent PhD Studentships provide full UK fees (£4,712) and a stipend set at the UKRI minimum annual award for 2024/25 (£18,622 p.a.).

There are limited fee waivers and stipends available for international students.

Length of award: **3 years FTE or 36 months**; due to the Leverhulme Trust’s funding limitations, only full-time doctoral candidates may apply.

The closing date for applications is **11.59pm GMT on** **20 December 2024.**

There is an expectation that doctoral students will be based in the UK, though students may undertake research or fieldwork internationally, as appropriate.

Start date will be **March or April, 2025**.

There will be two rounds of PhD Studentships. This call is the first round, with 2-4 studentships available, with a start date of March or April 2025. The second round of applications, with 4-6 studentships available, will be announced in Spring 2025, with a start date of September 2025. **If you would like to be considered for the second round starting in September 2025, please do not apply now.**

We welcome Expressions of Interest from all candidates who meet the University’s entry criteria for Postgraduate Research degrees. We especially welcome Expressions of Interest from people from groups under-represented in the UK Postgraduate Research community, including people from ethnic minorities, women, disabled people, people from the Global South, and people from care-experienced or socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds.

## Link for Expression of Interest

Please read the full guidelines (below) before submitting your Expression of Interest.

**If you are ready to apply, please follow this link:** <https://forms.office.com/e/ecJQQRH1gf>

## Context: The Centre for the Sciences of Place and Memory

The Leverhulme International Professorship grant supports the establishment of a new [Centre for the Sciences of Place and Memory](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Ckls4%5CDownloads%5Cplacememory.net) at the University of Stirling. The Centre’s researchers will address pressing questions about how people locate and orient themselves in space and time. Anchored in Philosophy and housed in the Faculty of Arts and Humanities, the Centre draws on cognitive sciences, social sciences, and the arts to break new ground in the study of spatial thinking, disorientation, and remembering the past. It connects the sciences of space and memory with contemporary practical concerns about memory, emotion, and place. Centre researchers deploy diverse methods, integrating conceptual, experimental, and ethnographic approaches to implement intense interdisciplinary collaboration. The mission is to advance knowledge of dynamic relations between place and memory at multiple timescales and levels, and of how people navigate together in space and time.

Doctoral students are not restricted to any one tradition or discipline, but their research project must relate directly to the Centre’s focus on place and memory. Possible areas of research background include (but are not limited to) philosophy, psychology, cognitive science, neuroscience, geography, anthropology, archaeology, sociology, urban policy and design, architecture, environmental studies, indigenous studies, public health, migration studies, international development, history, heritage, literature, gender studies, museum studies, memory studies, politics, design, art history and theory, practice-based creative research, human-computer interaction, gaming and new media, and science studies. Applicants should indicate in their proposal how their research experience and skill set relates to studies of place and memory, and (where possible) to specific workstreams as listed below.

The Centre’s research on place and memory is driven by attention to specific topics or domains, not restricted to any one tradition or discipline. Focus is given and maintained through six workstreams, designed as vertical slices through disparate disciplines, integrating research in arts and humanities, social sciences, philosophy, psychology, and neuroscience. For more details about these workstreams, please see: <https://placememory.net/our-workstreams/>

Workstream #1. **Memory, truth, and the past**Workstream #2. **Place memory and place knowledge**Workstream #3. **Collaborative wayfinding**Workstream #4. **Technologies of navigation and memory**Workstream #5. **Disorientation and difficult places**Workstream #6. **Cognitive ecologies of the city**

Applications from researchers with active interests in indigenous knowledge and cross-cultural practices of remembering and place-making are particularly welcome. They are keen to support applications from those who are underrepresented in traditional academic disciplines and structures.

## Funding arrangements

These studentships are funded by the Centre for the Sciences of Place and Memory based within the Faculty of Arts & Humanities at the University of Stirling. Studentship funding awards provide full UK fees (£4,712) and a stipend set at the UKRI minimum annual award for 2024/25 (£18,622 p.a.). There are limited fee waivers available for international candidates. In addition, there is funding available to support specific research training requirements. The funding for PhD Studentships is subject to the Leverhulme Trust’s Terms and Conditions.

## Length of studentship award

The funded period for all awards is 3 years FTE (36 months). Due to Leverhulme’s funding restrictions, only full-time students may apply. It is possible to enrol for a further 12 months to a maximum completion period of 48 months FTE. There is an additional fee for this period which is **not** funded under the terms of this studentship award.

## Condition of studentship award

Once an offer of award has been made, you must demonstrate that you meet all specified eligibility criteria, and then secure an unconditional offer from the Centre in advance of the start date of the PhD studentship, specifically, March or April 2025. Start dates around this time may be negotiated with Centre staff. **If you would like to be considered for a September 2025 start, please do not apply now**, but wait for the second round of PhD studentships which will be announced in Spring 2025.

## Before submission

Before submitting your Expression of Interest for PhD studentship with the Centre for the Sciences of Place and Memory, you should consult the eligibility criteria below in order to ensure that you meet all of the requirements for acceptance onto a PhD programme at the University of Stirling.

## Application

Please note this application process involves two stages. First, you must submit an Expression of Interest (EoI) via an online form before midnight on 20 December 2024. The Expression of Interest includes a**personal statement** and a **research proposal**. Please note that these are limited to a maximum of 4000 characters each, (or 700 words, approximately). You are expected to submit an original project proposal that aligns with the themes and aims of the Centre of the Sciences of Place and Memory. We are unable to accept attachments or documents sent by email to support your application at this stage.  For details on how to write a research proposal, please see: <https://www.stir.ac.uk/research/research-degrees/how-to-apply-for-our-research-degrees/guidance-on-how-to-write-a-research-proposal/>

After these EOIs are assessed, a limited number of successful candidates will be invited to an online interview. Successful candidates will then be invited to submit a formal application for a PhD studentship through the University Admissions Office. As part of that formal application, candidates will then be required to provide evidence that they meet all eligibility criteria (detailed below). Awards are conditional on meeting eligibility criteria and receiving an unconditional offer from the Centre for the Sciences of Place and Memory within the Faculty of Arts and Humanities.

Recommendations for the offer of a studentship will be made by a panel of senior members of the University, supported by an adviser on equality, diversity and inclusion. The panel will consider a range of criteria, focusing on candidates’ academic excellence, relevant professional experience, evidence of advanced methodological skills, relevance of the proposed project to the Centre’s topics and workstreams, and capacity to undertake a major piece of independent research at doctoral level.

## Doctoral Research Supervisors

It is not expected that you will have identified a supervisor for your doctoral research by the time you submit your Expression of Interest. If you are invited to submit a formal application for a PhD studentship, the Centre of the Sciences of Place and Memory will assist you in identifying a primary supervisor in a Faculty appropriate to your field.

## Application timeline

22 November 2024 Application opens

20 December 2024 Application closes

13-17 January 2025 Interview select candidates (online, 10-15 minutes)

24 January 2025 Select candidates invited to submit formal application

14 February Formal applications and supporting documentation due

By 28 February 2025 Outcomes announced

## Eligibility and Supporting Documentation

It is the responsibility of the applicant to submit official documentation and follow this process by the deadline noted in the timeline. Documents may include:

* **Academic evidence.** The University specifies an upper second-class honours degree or higher qualification (equivalent for international candidates). In addition, applicants are required to have or be due to complete a Masters degree aligned to the disciplines to which they are applying and/or relevant professional experience.
* **English language competency.** If your first language is not English, to be accepted onto a PhD programme and be eligible for a studentship you are required to show English language competency equivalent to the minimum level of IELTS 6.5 (6.0 in all bands). There is information on our website that you may find useful in ascertaining whether you need to do the IELTS test [here](https://www.stir.ac.uk/international/international-students/english-language-requirements/english-language-waiver--postgraduate/) and, on the [UK Government website](https://www.gov.uk/student-visa/knowledge-of-english)
* **Fee Status.** Prior to submitting the Expression of Interest, please refer to UKCISA (<https://www.ukcisa.org.uk/Information--Advice/Fees-and-Money/Scotland-fee-status>), where you can find guidance on the eligible categories and eligibility criteria to determine your eligibility for home fees. The fee status eligibility criteria are determined by the Scottish Government, but the UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA) provide an interpretation of the regulations, and we refer to their guidance when assessing the fee status.

## Use of AI

We understand that AI may be used in the development of your proposal, for example to find material on a topic that you will then consider and explore in more depth. This may include learning to support your expression and use of the English language. Guidance and expectations in relation to the use of generative AI in the development of your research proposal are noted below.

**Referencing use of AI**

If you use AI to locate sources and then use those in your proposal, you do not need to cite the use of AI, just the sources you include. If you use AI in the process of producing your research proposal, for example to create an outline, you should acknowledge this in the declaration in the Expression of interest form. If you use information gathered from an AI source, such as ChatGPT or Bing, or quote material sourced in this way, you should cite this using normal referencing conventions, for example, OpenAI ChatGPT (2024) ChatGPT response to A.N. Other, 25 January.

**Unacceptable uses of AI**

While AI may be used to support the development of your research proposal, it must not be used to create the assessed product which should be your own work. The inclusion of work produced in whole or part by Artificial Intelligence without referencing, and/or copying or paraphrasing AI-generated content without referencing is unacceptable.

Candidates will be asked to detail their use of AI, if applicable, within their Expression of Interest form.

## Data protection

Data collected in the Expression of Interest form will be stored securely and accessed only by Centre staff, faculty administrative staff and the assessment and award panels and used only for the purposes of selection, related administration and communication as specified in the Selection guide. Documentation supplied by candidates to the Centre will be stored securely and only available to Centre staff. Read our privacy notice here: [https://stir-my.sharepoint.com/:b:/r/personal/ks74\_stir\_ac\_uk/Documents/Work%20in%20progress/IAS%20Studentships/GDPR/IAS%20Studentships%202024%20Privacy%20notice%20.pdf?csf=1&web=1&e=LQrYu4](https://stir-my.sharepoint.com/%3Ab%3A/r/personal/ks74_stir_ac_uk/Documents/Work%20in%20progress/IAS%20Studentships/GDPR/IAS%20Studentships%202024%20Privacy%20notice%20.pdf?csf=1&web=1&e=LQrYu4)