Fully Funded PhD Studentship

The Hidden Landscape of a Roman Frontier: Aerial Laser Scanning, Spatial Analysis, and the Antonine Wall

The School of Humanities at Canterbury Christ Church University is pleased to announce an exciting fully funded full-time PhD Studentship in collaboration with Historic Scotland (to become Historic Environment Scotland in October 2015) for admission in October 2015. The Studentship is co-funded by Canterbury Christ Church University (CCCU) and Historic Environment Scotland (HES) and is designated for cutting-edge research on the digital processing, analysis, and interpretation of high-resolution LiDAR data collected by the Scottish Ten Project (www.scottishten.org) for the Antonine Wall, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and imperial Rome’s north-west frontier in central Scotland. This challenging project will extract the maximum utility from the Antonine Wall LiDAR data in order to augment existing documentation of this monument and its landscape, inform heritage management, and break new ground in both Roman frontier archaeology and in the theoretical and methodological application of aerial laser scanning for archaeological and heritage practice. The project will identify previously unknown Roman infrastructure, contribute to long-standing debates about the planning and building of the frontier, and will lead to new discoveries within a rich multi-period landscape. A key output will be the creation of a highly detailed archaeological map of the Wall’s invisible landscape, integrating traditional excavation and survey data with the results of advanced remote sensing technologies.

The project requires strong GIS skills and ideally previous experience working with aerial imagery, preferably in an archaeology/heritage context. These skills will be further developed throughout the course of the project, including the post-processing of raw (xyz) LiDAR data, the creation of
enhanced visualisations, and the development of expertise in 3D analyst and spatial analyst tools. Familiarity with the Scottish National Monuments Record (i.e. the CANMORE database) is desirable, as is previous experience and/or a strong interest in Roman frontiers, the Antonine Wall, multi-period landscape archaeology, or heritage management. In addition to desktop-based processing and research, the project will require field visits to ground-truth identified features, and to liaise with local experts and heritage community groups in Scotland. This will provide the candidate with opportunities to carry out field and geophysical surveys, as appropriate. The successful candidate will also be given considerable teaching experience and support, with a requirement to teach a minimum of 25 hours per academic year in years 2 and 3 of the project. Supervision throughout the project will be provided by Dr Darrell J. Rohl (CCCU) and Professor Tim Champion (CCCU), with supervisory support from Dr Lyn Wilson (HES) and an interdisciplinary advisory group.

The Studentship covers full-time UK/EU tuition fees, plus an annual maintenance stipend for up to three years. For 2015/16, the stipend will be £14,279 with annual rises based on published Research Councils UK (RCUK) rates in subsequent years. Funding in years two and three is dependent upon satisfactory progress, and no funding will be available beyond the end of year three. Applications are welcome from candidates of any nationality, however the Studentship will only cover tuition fees at the UK/EU rate.

Candidates with previous degrees in Archaeology, Computer Science, Geography, Heritage, or History are particularly welcome. For an informal discussion of the project, please contact Dr Darrell J. Rohl (darrell.rohl@canterbury.ac.uk).

How to Apply

Candidates must apply direct to the Canterbury Christ Church University Graduate School (https://www.canterbury.ac.uk/study-here/postgraduate-research/how-to-apply-for-a-research-degree.aspx). Application materials must include the following:

- A completed research degree application form (this must state that your subject of research is the “Hidden Landscape of a Roman Frontier” project)
- A 500 word statement on why you are applying for this project, your ideas on how you would undertake the research, and how your skills and experience make you a good candidate to complete this project. (NOTE: this is in place of the university’s standard research proposal)
- Two academic referees who can comment authoritatively on your research potential
- Evidence that you have a good (UK 2:1 or equivalent) bachelor’s degree where your dissertation is written in English
- No more than 5 pages of supplementary material that provides evidence of your experience and skills in spatial analysis using GIS and/or processing and analysis of LiDAR data

Applications must be received no later than 15 April 2015.

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to interview in late May or early June. The successful studentship recipient will be required to sign a terms and conditions document in line with university policies and the conditions of the grant agreement between Canterbury Christ Church University and Historic Scotland.