

Art and Design

The [Art & Design Research Centre](#) (ADRC) within the [Cultural, Communication & Computing Research Institute \(C3RI\)](#) welcome applications for full time, fully funded and part-time (fees only) PhD studentships, to start October 2017. You will join SHU's vibrant community of Art & Design PhD Researchers, who are based in a studio community in partnership with *S1 Artspace*, located at the iconic Park Hill Flats, close to the main university buildings and transport links.

In the REF 2014, 81% of research submitted by ADRC was rated as world-leading or internationally excellent. Research activity in ADRC takes place in four broad domains: creative practices in healthcare; advanced making processes and theory; social, cultural and philosophical narratives and applied research in digital media. Our research strategy focuses on the generation of ideas and knowledge through practice, reflection and dialogue and its dissemination to other academics, practitioners, end users, commerce and industries. The featured PhD projects listed below offer rich opportunities for research in a range of applied settings and organisations or in partnership with local and national cultural institutions. We specialise in the practice-led doctorate, which positions creative practice as the origin or reference point of the PhD thesis, and many of our current PhD projects are also interdisciplinary in approach.

How to apply

Applicants should email their completed [postgraduate application form](#) (including a 1500 word proposal) to C3RI@shu.ac.uk by 12 noon on Friday 24 February 2017. Applicants for a practice-led PhD in the ADRC should include a short CV outlining relevant projects or exhibitions undertaken over the last five years and any current work in progress.

When completing the application form, applicants have the option of submitting their own research proposal OR you can develop a proposal in response to one of our featured projects listed below. In either case, please also summarise:

- a) why you are interested in doing PhD research on this topic
- b) how your skills and experience to date (including your undergraduate and/or masters dissertation, if relevant) prepare you to embark on the project
- c) any challenges that you foresee in conducting the research and how you might approach or solve them.

We strongly recommend that you contact the project lead or other prospective supervisor to discuss and develop your research proposal before submitting your application form.

Please indicate clearly in your email whether you would like to be considered for:

- Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA) Scholarship offered by the Faculty of Arts, Computing, Engineering and Sciences (ACES) only
- University PhD scholarship only
- Both scholarship schemes
- Part-time study (fees only) - GTA scholarship excluded

International applicants are eligible to apply for full-time University PhD scholarships only. Where English is not your first language, you must show evidence of English language ability to the following minimum level of proficiency: an overall IELTS score of 7.0 or above, with at least 6.5 in each component or an accepted equivalent. Please note that your test score must be current, i.e. within the last two years, and that relevant certification must be submitted at the point of application.

For all queries about the application process please email C3RI@shu.ac.uk

Selection process

Interviews will be held between April 3 and 7 2017. Shortlisted applicants will be required to give a 10 minute presentation (see below) followed by an interview. Interview panel members include the head of postgraduate research, a prospective director of studies and (for GTA applicants) a representative from the relevant teaching department. Applicants for a practice-led PhD will be invited to show examples of creative practice at the interview stage. Where travel to Sheffield is not possible, interviews are conducted by Skype or conference call.

The presentation should outline your PhD research proposal or a related research project you have already undertaken, targeted to a non-expert audience; we want to see how clearly you can articulate your ideas and key concepts. You may use PowerPoint if you wish or other visual aids as appropriate, but this isn't compulsory.

Research areas

1. *The Role of Design in Enabling People with Dementia to Live Well in collaboration with [Lab4Living](#)*
Project Lead: [Paul Chamberlain](mailto:p.m.chamberlain@shu.ac.uk) (p.m.chamberlain@shu.ac.uk) with [Claire Craig](#)

Dementia is a term used to describe a group of syndromes, characterized by deterioration in cognitive functioning. At present it is estimated that globally 47.5 million people are diagnosed with the condition (Alzheimer's Disease International, 2015) and the World Health Organisation has identified dementia to be a public health priority (WHO 2012). Historically researchers from health care and clinicians have undertaken much of the research relating to design in the context of people with dementia and consequently this has been weighted towards the design of environments and strategies to promote function (Marshall, 1995, 2008, 2014). However there is a growing body of research spearheaded by artists and designers such as Wallace (digital personhood) and Treadaway (2015) who have challenged designers to move beyond a focus on practical care to explore the potential of design that can support personhood and address the affective domain.

This PhD offers the opportunity to extend and interrogate the role of design in the creation of products to promote well-being, moving beyond a focus on functional independence to the affective domain; to explore questions regarding well-being, pleasure, curiosity, playfulness.

The research is framed around the broader question of: what is the role of design in enabling people to live well with dementia?

Questions the research seeks to address could include:

- How is it possible to involve people with dementia in the design process?
- What does design and creative practice offer in building understanding of/eliciting the experiences of people with dementia?
- What do designerly approaches offer in comparison to existing approaches developed by clinicians?

As a PhD student you will have access to expertise across design and health offered through the interdisciplinary research cluster [Lab4Living](#). Within Sheffield you will have the opportunity to engage with and draw on the expertise of the Dementia Action Alliance, Alzheimer's Society, and local specialist dementia hospital. Lab4Living works closely with the CLAHRC for Yorkshire and Humber, which involves a wide range of partner organisations including Barnsley NHS Foundation Trust, Bradford District Care Trust, Rotherham, Doncaster and South Humber NHS Foundation Trust, local authorities across Yorkshire as well as industry.

The candidate will ideally have a masters qualification in design with good range of practical design

skills to be able to visualise, communicate ideas and 3D workshop skills in a range of processes and material and some understanding of participatory approaches to design and competency in CAD. Some experience or understanding of the challenges of Dementia as a context for study is also desirable. The candidate should demonstrate good personal skills and be able to communicate with a range of audiences.

2. Public Art and the Park Hill Sculpture Garden in collaboration with [S1 Artspace](#)

Project Lead: [Becky Shaw \(b.shaw@shu.ac.uk\)](mailto:b.shaw@shu.ac.uk) with [Keith Wilson](#)

The sculpture park is an established part of the visual art infrastructure with key examples including Yorkshire Sculpture Park and the Chatsworth Collection. Contemporary organisations like Grizedale Arts, Cumbria, interrogate the history of the rural sculpture park. In 2016 S1 Artspace, Sheffield, moved their operations to the iconic, brutalist heritage site, Park Hill flats, and situated an urban sculpture park in the residential centre. Professor Keith Wilson was the first to be commissioned, building a series of flat, low circular concrete plinths to demarcate the park for art, to invite other artists, and to open an invitation for public play.

The proposed project will use the unique context of Park Hill sculpture park to explore issues including: the problems and opportunities presented by commissioning in domestic 'gardens'; the relationship between permanent urban sculpture parks (like Minneapolis Sculpture Garden), mobile ones (like Skulptur Projekte Munster) and a domestic sculpture park context; questions of ownership and authorship in a domestic site; and the relationship between the domestic audience and transient art audience.

The project will involve studying the existing usage of the sculpture park using art practice, plus interviews, observation etc where appropriate. The project will both explore public engagement, and potentially generate much more. The project is likely to involve shadowing the development of new artist's commissions, and also the development of new actual or hypothetical works for the site (subject to S1's needs). The researcher will be based at Park Hill, in studios facing the sculpture park.

S1 and Sheffield Hallam have a long and deep relationship. The original founders of the gallery were Sheffield Hallam graduates, building a gallery and studio as means to support their development as artists, and to continue their work as critical, experimental practitioners. As the organisation developed, many of our graduates began successful international artist careers launched by the studios and galleries. Some of our PhD students have exhibited doctoral work in the space. In the last four years S1 have provided research space for the ADRC PhD community. During this period, S1 have been involved in an extraordinary journey, becoming a significant cultural organisation, embedded in the Park Hill estate. Our ADRC PhD community has just moved to Park Hill; with the new site offering extraordinary opportunities for research development and community engagement.

The candidate will ideally have experience of or an interest in public art practice and/or discourse. The candidate will have a developing practice in sculpture, public art, site-specific art, curation in the public realm, participatory genres, critical practice or performance. The candidate should also be familiar with key debates about public art. The candidate should be able to identify why PhD research is the next stage in their career.

3. The Contemporary Value and Significance of William Morris' Legacy in collaboration with the [William Morris Gallery](#).

Project Lead: [Col McCormack \(c.mccormack@shu.ac.uk\)](mailto:c.mccormack@shu.ac.uk) with [Paul Atkinson](#)

William Morris' legacy is all around us, embedded in the ubiquitous presence of his surface pattern work; reoccurring interest in independent, radical publishing; and bon mots about the relationship between art and life, amongst many other contributions. However Morris continues to have a paradoxical relationship to national heritage discourse. While his work is often the source of multiple commercial exercises, he was a romantic and a radical. To explore the contemporary value of his work, we offer the opportunity to engage with the collection of the William Morris Gallery, London. The collection covers many disciplines and encompasses the arts and humanities.

The WMG Collection offers a rich context and source of material to generate a contemporary appraisal of aspects of Morris' work. Potential areas for research include (but are not limited to): the past, present and imagined future of activism; an exploration of the value of utopian structures for the contemporary; art education; an examination of the resurgent interest in medievalism in visual arts; the relationship between the romanticism of craft and the industrial, post-industrial or technological age; the relationship between protest and text; a reconsideration of romanticism; and imagining how Morris might respond to today's heritage industry.

The project will involve exploring aspects of the WMG using art practice, and other methods, such as observation, where appropriate. Engagement with the collection could happen through regular encounters or through a placement. The organisation offers possible opportunities for the development of presentations, discussions, screenings, display (depending on the museums needs or capacity).

William Morris Gallery's (WMG) collection predominantly covers the disciplines of art, design, literature and social activism. A museum on the life and work of William Morris, it also has contemporary visual art programme and gallery. Their archive holds a wide range of arts and crafts material, including works by prominent artists of that movement. The Museum also houses the Century Guild archive, plus a comprehensive collection of Kelmscott Press artefacts and a wide range of historic journals (19th century). The WMG already facilitates researchers, providing access to its archive and a network of researchers, academics and curators; facilitating connections to a wider community of interests in the field of William Morris

The candidate will ideally have a growing, active practice in visual art or design, and with an interest in Morris's writings including but not limited to: his fiction, writing on society, historical text, science fiction, utopianism, medievalism and craft. MA is a standard entry requirement, plus a clear understanding of why research study will develop your career.

4. Designing for Automated Futures in collaboration with the [Sheffield Robotics](#) research group at The University of Sheffield.

Project Lead: [Ian Gwilt \(i.gwilt@shu.ac.uk\)](mailto:i.gwilt@shu.ac.uk) with [James Law](#)

Industry 4.0 suggests a rapid growth in the use of automated devices where the integration of digital-physical systems, objects and environments combine to form new social, economic and communication paradigms. Within this current trend human-robot co-working is a rapidly emerging field, and a new range of collaborative robots in both workplace settings and shared public spaces provide opportunities for rethinking our approach to manufacturing, welfare provision, transport infrastructures and the ways that we engage with each other and society. These potentials create a requirement for further research in a highly interdisciplinary field, requiring a combined effort to address issues ranging from the design of automated systems to human interaction interfaces and other social-cultural issues. Much of the current research focus is on the technology development with so far little consideration of the human challenges. This research aims to explore, identify and understand what the critical challenges are for designing and shaping how these automated futures might look and feel.

The studentship will offer the opportunity to work with both academic staff and researchers from the ADRC at Sheffield Hallam University and the Sheffield Robotic research group at The University of Sheffield.

We are looking for a student with an undergraduate degree / Masters in Design; Visual Communication; Interaction Design; Product Service Systems or another design-based discipline.

The candidate should have an interest in the use of digital technologies and the cultural implications for the application and adoption of these technologies. They should be conversant with a range of media platforms and familiar with co-design research methods and practices.

5. The Digital & the Hand-Made: New technologies and the role of the gallery in collaboration with [Site Gallery](#).

Project Lead: [Penny McCarthy \(p.mccarthy@shu.ac.uk\)](mailto:p.mccarthy@shu.ac.uk) with [Gary Simmonds](#) and/or [Michelle Atherton](#)

As the shift to new technologies impacts on how we envision ourselves and our cultural legacy, this project explores the impact of this on both our way of viewing art and the gallery experience. Contemporary art has influenced the rapid development of new technologies to enable new art forms to swiftly arise, expanding the field of art through net art, digital installation and works using virtual reality. Conceptions of studio practices are changing in parallel with these developments. While two decades of the world-wide web have enabled dissemination to a wider community and also extended diversity and awareness, in-person attendance has decreased. The project responds to timely and urgent issues for art's audiences, raising key questions to explore the viewing of art works.

The proposed project will use the Site Gallery in Sheffield as a context to explore these issues. As Site moves into a phase of redevelopment over the next two years there is an opportunity for research to follow this activity. The project raises questions about the nature of both viewing and seeing as well as issues that define the new frameworks for audience engagement, curatorial strategies, and the individual practices of artists.

Site Gallery was founded by Sheffield Hallam graduates and has been crucial to the development of the profiles of staff and graduates through exhibitions and collaborations. Site Gallery is Sheffield's leading international contemporary art space, supporting artists specialising in moving image, new media and performance. Pioneering emerging art practices and ideas, Site works in partnership with local, regional and international collaborators to nurture artistic talent and support the development of contemporary art. Site works in collaboration with the [Transmission Lectures](#), bringing international artists to present and discuss their work and also facilitating discussion groups as Site.

The ideal candidate will be familiar with contemporary discourses on art, its audiences and the image in transition. They will be looking to enhance their competence in the innovative and creative use of images. They will have a developing practice in one or more of the following: curatorial practice, image-making, critical practice, live art or art writing.

6. *Playstation VR Technology & Innovative Educational Applications in context of REVEAL in collaboration with [Sony Interactive Entertainment Europe \(SIEE\)](#) as part of the [PlayStation First scheme](#).*

Project Lead: [Jacob Habgood \(j.habgood@shu.ac.uk\)](mailto:j.habgood@shu.ac.uk) with [Daniela Petrelli](#) and [Tim Jay](#)

REVEAL is a €1M EU-funded Horizon 2020 project pioneering the use of mainstream PlayStation VR technologies for innovative educational applications which engage audiences in the Europe's rich historical and scientific heritage. The first year of REVEAL will generate an Educational Environmental Narrative (EEN) application which tells the story of smallpox and the discovery of vaccination set within the Georgian estate of Dr. Edward Jenner. This application will provide an exciting platform upon which to base a programme of PhD research in game-based learning running alongside REVEAL. The EU project benefits from support from the R&D team at Sony Interactive Entertainment Europe (SIEE) and will generate new published applications for the PlayStation Store.

REVEAL's EEN applications will provide a basis for exploring a range of research questions related to game-based learning including, but not limited to; the educational affordances of immersive VR, learning analytics in VR environments, and the design and use of VR environments for museums. It could also potentially support VR-related research topics not directly linked to learning such as effective VR navigation techniques, or novel graphical visualisation techniques for VR. Set within the Steel Minions game studio, research students will have access to commercial PlayStation development equipment within a commercial studio environment. As such, a candidate with strong game development skills would be best placed to make the most of this opportunity. The Steel Minions is part of the Applied Gaming Technologies Research Group: an active community of researchers building and evaluating a range of innovative gaming applications.

We have a long-established partnership with Sony Interactive Entertainment Europe (SIEE) as part of the PlayStation First scheme. SIEE are formally named external partners on the REVEAL project.

There is plenty of scope here for interdisciplinary research, building on the foundation of either a previous degree in Game Development, Software Engineering or Computer Science, including a good working knowledge of C++ and real-time rendering systems. This PhD opportunity might also suit a professional game programmer looking for a career change.