

A new model for large-scale community performance



WRoCAH funded Collaborative Doctoral Award between School of Performance and Cultural Industries at the University of Leeds and Slung Low Theatre Company¹

Do you want to explore new ways of making community theatre? Do you want to investigate large-scale, outdoor performance as a tool for telling stories of our time? Can you contribute to processes of making and researching performance? Do you have skills as a practitioner and researcher and a desire to hone them both working closely with a theatre company committed to social change, Slung Low, and the School of Performance and Cultural Industries on a Collaborative Doctoral Award?

The successful candidate will be based in the School of Performance and Cultural Industries at the University of Leeds and at The Holbeck, Slung Low's new South Leeds base. They will be supervised by Dr Kara McKechnie, Lead Academic Supervisor; Dr Adam Strickson, Academic Co-Supervisor; and the Partner Organisation Supervisor, Alan Lane, who is Artistic Director of Slung Low.

What is this project about?

Theatre can help communities to make statements about 'who they are and what they aspire to become' (Taylor 2003:2). Slung Low's aim is to facilitate these statements, prioritising process over product ('the how is the what', Lane 2018), but adding 'extraordinary outdoor adventures for audiences' to the established purposes of community theatre. Their aim is to foster cultural capability through cultural democracy (Wilson, Gross & Ball 2017). This practice-led project will accompany this process by drawing on practices of applied/community theatre, ethnography and different dramaturgies (i.e. performance, behaviour, space, intervention). The successful candidate will be involved in preparing for and then contributing to the inaugural production by Leeds People's Theatre (LPT), a new initiative by Slung Low. The student would have a stake in the creative process, co-developing methods for large-scale, regionally/ spatially specific performance in a community-run model, and also test creative strategies for their transferability. Balancing artistic excellence with new forms of co-creation will be an objective of this studentship, as well as liaising with other People's Theatres (established companies such as Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Camden and Sheffield) to create a loop of experience and methodologies. This would create new knowledge in

¹ If you are selected by the CDA project team to be put forward to WRoCAH, your application will be considered competitively within the main WRoCAH competition. Being put forward for consideration is not a guarantee of funding.

Practice-as-Research (PaR) for large-scale community performance in public spaces and art as activism. The 'scholartist' will support the company's move from community involvement (its current Cultural Community College) to community co-creation and will have significant opportunities to impact on the artistic strategy of LPT, investigating sustainability and the balance of community-driven practice and artistic excellence through their own practice. There is considerable scope to choose skills and research directions according to the scholar's interest and expertise.

What contributions will you make to the partner organisation?

The School of Performance and Cultural Industries is a vibrant centre of research and teaching, with an excellent track record of working with industry partners (also having collaborated with a number of these partners on previous Collaborative Doctoral Awards). We are looking for a highly qualified, enthusiastic and dynamic student looking to enhance their practice as a (e.g.) a community theatre practitioner, a director, a dramaturg, a producer and to complete a three-year doctoral study. You will be working across the School of PCI and Slung Low at The Holbeck.

We would expect the successful candidate to take a position at the heart of the company. Slung Low operate a 5 strong staff structure and the placement would sit directly in that, being supervised by and reporting to the artistic director, and being daily managed by the producer. Leeds Peoples Theatre, part of the Federation of People's Theatres- a collection of like minded professional theatre makers gathered by Slung Low with support from Paul Hamlyn Foundation and Leeds 2013 - would be an excellent forum for the work of the studentship to be disseminated industry wide, via the website, blogs and the press. In its second and third year, it would be expected that the candidate work directly with the LPT company; attending workshops, rehearsals, participating in supporting the performance- a full part of the community. This could benefit the company in their community interactions, in the sourcing of material during the creation/ devising process and in the shaping of said material into a coherent dramaturgy: an outdoor adventure in a public space, specific to South Leeds. The PhD scholar's creative input and research can make a considerable contribution here.

Financial support

Full-time AHRC Competition Studentships for doctoral research are 3 years in duration (or 5 years part time). Awards are subject to satisfactory academic progress. Awards must be taken up in October 2019. No deferrals are possible. Awards will comprise UK/EU fees at Research Council rates and, for eligible students, a maintenance grant (£14,777 in 2017/8).

Academic Requirements - Eligibility

Strong applicants will have a good first degree in an appropriate subject, as well as a Master's degree and professional experience relevant to the scope of the project (or experience of belonging to a collaborative team).

Please note that all applicants should meet the AHRC's academic criteria and residency requirements (<http://wrocah.ac.uk/new-student/2019-cda/>).

How to apply

Before applying for any WRoCAH Studentship, please first ensure that you have read the WRoCAH webpages about Collaborative Doctoral Awards, the WRoCAH training programme and requirements

<http://wrocah.ac.uk/new-student/2019-cda/>

Please note that the selection of Collaborative Doctoral Award applicants is a two stage process:

STAGE 1

Applicants must apply for a place of study

http://www.leeds.ac.uk/info/130206/applying/91/applying_for_research_degrees, clearly stating to which project you wish to apply, by the deadline given below.

To assess your academic ability to undertake three years of independent research you may be required to provide the following evidence:

- Project Statement (a two-page statement that conveys your motivation and enthusiasm for the project and demonstrate your suitability for the intended study)
- Curriculum Vitae
- Transcripts of marks for undergraduate and postgraduate degrees plus certificates where available
- Two academic references
http://ses.leeds.ac.uk/download/1484/reference_template-research_degrees from referees who will be able to provide their references by the deadline for Stage 1
- IELTS Certificate (if applicable)

Interviews will then take place to select a suitable candidate.

Deadline for STAGE 1 applications

Extended to 11 December 2018

Date of interviews

10 January 2019

STAGE 2

Apply for funding to WRoCAH

Candidates selected after Stage 1 then liaise with the project supervisory team to submit a WRoCAH studentship application via the WRoCAH online application form by the **5pm on Wednesday 23 January 2019 deadline**.

NB: Candidates who have been unsuccessful in Phase One can submit a separate WRoCAH application as a non-CDA applicant.

Informal enquiries can be made to

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School of Performance and Cultural Industries