

The Rhug Project: Fully funded 3 year PhD Studentship in Welsh history, culture and landscape studies, c.1450-1700

Qualification Type: PhD

Location: Institute for the Study of Welsh Estates, Bangor University

Application deadline: 26 June 2017

Funding amount: The studentship includes the full cost of tuition fees plus a maintenance stipend worth c.£14,553 per annum, for the three year duration of the award

Hours: Full-time, commencing October 2017

Summary

Bangor University's [Institute for the Study of Welsh Estates](#) (ISWE) invites applications for a fully-funded 3 year PhD Studentship focusing on the history, culture and landscape of the Rhug Estate in north Wales during the period c.1450-1700. This unique studentship is sponsored by the [Rhug Estate](#) and includes a full stipend for three years in addition to the cost of all tuition fees and funding to attend an international conference.

Supervised by an expert and interdisciplinary academic team including [Professor Huw Pryce](#) (Professor of Welsh History), [Professor Peredur Lynch](#) (Professor of Welsh) and [Dr Shaun Evans](#) (ISWE Project Manager), this project provides an outstanding opportunity for a motivated, talented and ambitious graduate looking to develop a career in the academic and / or cultural heritage sectors. The successful candidate will be based in the [School of History and Archaeology](#).

The Rhug Estate

Founded in medieval times by descendants of Owain Brogyntyn, by the beginning of the 16th century the Rhug Estate had been acquired, through marriage, by the Bachymbyd branch of the influential Salesbury family, who over a period of two centuries developed it into one of the most prominent landholding estates in north Wales. Over subsequent generations the estate was acquired by the Vaughans of Nannau, before being inherited by Charles Henry Wynn (1847-1911) of Glynllifon in 1859. From him the estate has passed by descent to its current owner, the 8th Baron Newborough. The Rhug Estate is now a vibrant rural enterprise, characterised by its award-winning organic farm, shop and bistro situated at Corwen.

Project Description

The successful candidate will develop a research project centred on the development of the Rhug Estate under the Salesbury family during the 16th and 17th centuries. This focus on the identity and influence of one of Wales' most prominent gentry families and estates over the course of 200+ years provides an outstanding prism for the creation of an innovative, interdisciplinary research project capable of making important contributions towards both Welsh and broader historiographical traditions. Contextualised by subjects such as the Reformation and the Renaissance, the so-called 'Acts of Union' between England and Wales and the Civil War, potential themes include:

- **The development and management of the family's territorial influence:** including estate building, land management and landlord-tenant relations;
- **The Salesburys – a Welsh gentry family:** including perceptions and performances of status, honour and authority;
- **Welsh cultural engagement:** including bardic patronage and manuscript collecting;

- **Politics, patronage and power:** including local office-holding and parliamentary representation;
- **Fashioning the landscape of the Rhug and Bachymbyd estates:** including architecture and visual and material culture;
- **Dynastic identity and family life:** including ancestry, inheritance, marriage strategy, kinship and familial roles;
- **Religion, revolt and royalism:** Including Catholicism, the Civil War and continental conflicts.

This project is part of an exciting partnership between Bangor University and the Rhug Estate. The project will involve extended periods of archival research into unexplored estate records at places such as [Gwynedd Archives](#) and the [National Library of Wales](#), with additional opportunities to engage with sources including Welsh praise poetry, architecture and visual and material culture at sites such as [Rug Chapel](#) (CADW).

Alongside the production of a doctoral thesis, the successful candidate will work closely with the Rhug Estate, heritage organisations, local history societies and community groups to create an engaging programme of heritage outputs (web content, exhibitions, guided walks etc.) which promote the history of the Rhug Estate. These heritage outputs will form an integral part of the PhD project and its assessment.

The Institute for the Study of Welsh Estates

ISWE is a new research centre based within the [College of Arts and Humanities at Bangor](#). Its objective is to support and promote innovative research into the history, culture and landscapes of Wales, through the prisms of landed estates and the collections they generated over the course of their existence. Bringing together colleagues from academic fields ranging from History, Welsh, Law and Music, through to Forestry, Heritage Studies and English Literature, ISWE benefits from the outstanding corpus of estate archives held by [Bangor University Archives and Special Collections](#). In addition to working closely with equivalent research centres across the UK, Ireland and Europe, ISWE enjoys close collaborative relationships with partners in the archive, cultural heritage, local history and rural affairs sectors. The Rhug Project represents an important early initiative for ISWE, providing opportunities for the successful candidate to contribute towards the development of a research centre which is quickly forming a distinctive role in the cultural and intellectual life of Wales.

For more about ISWE's aims and approach please visit <http://iswe.bangor.ac.uk>.

Postgraduate Study at Bangor University

Bangor University is committed to maintaining an environment which allows its postgraduate students to fully realise their potential during this exciting period of their lives. You will become part of a vibrant and supportive academic community including other postgraduates, early-career researchers and established academics. In addition to the expert guidance provided by your supervisory team, you will have access to outstanding training and development opportunities through the [College's Graduate School](#) and Bangor University's [Doctoral School](#).

As an important part of the ISWE community you will be invited to engage with its exciting programme of research activities and public events and will have access to unique opportunities for developing your skills and experiences through its partnerships with organisations in the archives and cultural heritage sectors. You will also have the opportunity to undertake undergraduate teaching in the College of Arts and Humanities.

This studentship also includes funding for you to attend an international conference.

How to apply

The closing date for applications is **26 June 2017**.

Apply online at <https://apps.bangor.ac.uk/applicant/>. Incomplete applications or applications received after this specified time will not be accepted.

The application must contain the following documents:

1. Covering letter (max 1,000 words): The covering letter should set out your reasons and motivation for applying to study at Bangor University; your understanding and expectations of doctoral study; your academic interests generally; and provide evidence of how you fulfil the following criteria:

- A demonstrable interest in the project and the aims of the Institute for the Study of Welsh Estates;
- A good general understanding of Welsh, Early Modern and / or Late Medieval History;
- A strong academic record in a relevant field of study, including a BA degree (2.1 or above) and ideally an MA at Merit or Distinction level;
- An ability and commitment to complete the PhD project (including a thesis) within the three-year studentship period (i.e. project and time management skills);
- Experience of archival research;
- Experience of working in a cultural heritage setting and / or knowledge and understanding of heritage interpretation techniques;
- Outstanding communication and interpersonal skills (including written and oral), ideally in English and Welsh;
- An ability to travel to sites of relevance to the project (e.g. The National Library of Wales, Gwynedd Archives, Rhug Estate and The National Archives).

2. Research proposal (max. 500 words): The research proposal should give an indication of the ways in which you would like to develop the Rhug Project. It might include sections on the following:

- Key research themes and questions;
- Overview of relevant academic literature;
- Proposed methodology;
- The intellectual significance and contribution of the proposed research;
- Ideas for cultural heritage outputs.

3. Academic / Professional Qualifications: *This should include proof of English Language Competency (7.0 IELTS minimum) for applicants without English as a first language.*

4. Curriculum Vitae: This should be no longer than two pages.

5. References: All applications require two academic references to be submitted in support. Candidates must approach referees themselves and request a reference to be submitted.

Where can I find more information?

Informal enquiries about the project should be directed to: Dr Shaun Evans (shaun.evans@bangor.ac.uk)

General enquiries about the Studentship or the application process should be directed to: Postgraduate Admissions Administrator (pgadmissionscah@bangor.ac.uk).

The online application form is available [here](#).