

Advertisement

Doctoral Fellowships (2022-5): New Archival Visions

University of the Western Cape

The University of the Western Cape is offering **four doctoral fellowships** to commence in 2022. The fellowships will be based at the Centre for Humanities Research (CHR), with bursary funding for a period up to four years (or earlier depending on completion of degree programme). These fellowships form part of the university's initiative to reactivate its archival holdings that include the UWC-Robben Island Museum-Mayibuye Archives and other specialised research and art collections on campus. Candidates are invited to submit proposals for doctoral thesis research that should address one or more specific collection, theme or organizational entity that forms part of the UWC archives. Proposals may be located either within a specific discipline or within interdisciplinary studies.

The new archival turn proposed here is one that invites engagement with histories, media, performances and curating in a transforming South Africa and subcontinent that may unsettle traditional definitions of the archive. While the content of the archive offers rich opportunities for research, 'it is rarely a simple matter of revealing secrets waiting to be found' (Arondekar 2009). The Mayibuye collections for example have emerged as a pre-eminent centre of historical interpretation of the anti-apartheid struggle, and yet there is a need to acknowledge components that remain marginal, less intelligible or which undermine dominant national narratives. Thus proposals are invited that explore questions of how subjects are made visible in archives of liberation, and how this might shed light on their structuring, limits and potential. The archival responsibility underpinning this initiative at UWC is to foster new research directions that transcend the notion of simple archival retrieval and promote a 'radically different script of historical continuation' (Arondekar) that opens both lost and new futures.

Successful fellows will join the postgraduate fellowship programme at the CHR and participate in the Centre's reading group, Winter School, and joint weekly seminar series.

Application requirements

Each applicant must submit the following:

1. Evidence of MA degree graduation, or evidence of completion and graduation in early 2022 (applications for the UWC PhD programme remain open until June 2022)
2. An outline of the proposed research theme based on UWC archival holdings (1-2 pages)
3. A cover letter introducing the applicant and motivating for the value of the research theme
4. An up-to-date curriculum vitae
5. A transcript of degrees to date
6. Names and contact details of two referees.

Applications should be submitted by 21 January 2022 to the Centre for Humanities Research, UWC. Email: centreforhumanitiesresearch@uwc.ac.za.

Please note that each candidate should apply for the PhD programme in the department of their choice through the UWC online system, and submit, where relevant, proof of online application with their fellowship submission. Supervision or co-supervision by a CHR staff member will be a requirement of the fellowship.

On the Collections

A small sample of potential areas of research might include (but are not limited to):

Discipline/field	Collection/theme/organization
History/Literature/Anthropology/Women's & Gender Studies/Sexuality Studies	International Defence & Aid Fund (IDAF) papers (legal & welfare assistance to political detainees and families; research & outreach programmes); papers of Robben Island ex-political prisoners; total of 362 collections of personal and organizational documents connected to national liberation struggles
Art History/Visual Studies/Photography/Curatorship Studies/ Online and Multimedia Installations	Community Arts Project art collection; UWC Art Collection; Mayibuye art, artifact and poster collections; photograph collections of Eli Weinberg; Leon Levson; Billy Paddock; IDAF photo archive; Rashid Lombard Collections; Jon Berndt Collection
Film & Video/Cinema/Documentary Studies	Frontline states; Afravision Video Archive; political rallies & speeches, Rashid Lombard Collections
Oral History/Sound Studies/Music studies, DJ Scholarship	Recordings of rallies; interviews; cultural performances; solidarity concerts, Rashid Lombard Cape Town Jazz Festival Collections
Education/Critical Education Studies	Collections of organisations related to educational struggles and sectors (SACHED, ERIP, and many more)
Information Science, Computer Science, Artificial Intelligence, Data Science, Law	Systems development and architecture; digital intangible and spatial heritage; digital forensics; privacy, law and ethics; ethics of intellectual property and histories of trauma
Humanities and Natural Sciences	Applied forensics; media restoration; radiochemistry; image processing and pattern recognition

For a closer view of archival holdings, please visit the UWC-Robben Island Museum-Mayibuye Archive website at <https://mayibuearchives.org>. Information on collections is available on request by filling out the online form at <https://mayibuearchives.org/contact-us/> and specifying your interests. Please note that some collections listed above may not be accessioned yet, and part of doctoral research may include the archival ingest work working together with staff. An indication of interest in such archival groundwork is welcomed in fellowship applications.

More information on the UWC art and other collections held by the university is available from Miceala Felix at the CHR, mfelix@uwc.ac.za. Further questions on the preparation of proposals and applications can be addressed to centreforhumanitiesresearch@uwc.ac.za and queries will be forwarded to relevant academic staff to assist.