

M4C DTP Collaborative Doctoral Award (CDA) Marketing Template

Project Title			
From Stoke Mandeville 1944 to London 2012: Photography and the Making of the Paralympic Community in Britain			
LEAD INSTITUTION			
Name of HEI institution	De Montfort University		
Lead regional city	Birmingham <input type="checkbox"/>	Coventry <input type="checkbox"/>	Leicester <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
			Nottingham <input type="checkbox"/>
PARTNER ORGANISATION			
Name of organisation	National Paralympic Heritage Trust		
Website URL	https://www.paralympicheritage.org.uk/		
THE RESEARCH PROJECT			
<i>(Max 750 words)</i>			
<p>This project will examine the formation of the Paralympic community through the study of the NHPT photographic collections. This archive follows a community-centred approach.¹ It reflects the daily life of disabled athletes, and not just the elite or mega-events, and aims to bring the photographs back to their regional communities through itinerant exhibitions, currently planned for Norfolk, Bradford, Manchester, Bath and London. By closely analysing the growing NHPT photographic collection, the student will identify how athletes, coaches, medical staff and families have used photography to define themselves as a 'community' and how they have used sport to frame and represent their disabilities. Understanding how the Paralympic community has appropriated medical images or the stories that Paralympians tell when seeing the NHPT photographs will challenge public perceptions about individuals with disabilities and will present new critical insights into the formation of sports communities, representations and disability.</p> <p>The proposed CDA project will 1) determine the key role photographic representations have played in building the Paralympic community; 2) demonstrate the public impact and academic value of incorporating photographic collections into sport heritage projects and activities; 3) will consolidate the reputation of DMU as a leading institution in interdisciplinary arts and humanities research based on knowledge co-production with heritage institutions such as NHPT at regional and national levels.</p> <p>This project will make a theoretical and practical intervention in current debates in disability history, photographic history and sports history. While scholars have examined the media coverage of Paralympic athletes, the visual history of the Paralympic movement is yet to be written.² The NHPT collection of photographs produced by Paralympians, their families, coaches and medical professionals provide critical representations that, against negative imagery, showcase the disabled body as transgressive and full of political potential.³ Following a sociological approach which understands disability as formed by the interaction between the individual and society, the analysis of the NHPT photographic collections also sheds light into the understanding of sports disability within the Paralympic community.⁴ The critical examination of photographic sources will contribute to the sparse scholarship on the Paralympics, largely reliant on textual sources.⁵</p> <p>This project will follow the methods of photographic history.⁶ First, the student will conduct research on material preserved at the NPHT, working with archivists and cataloguers to classify the material and identify key details such as the producer, the circulation of the images between the private and the public sphere and their reception and consumption. Secondly, the student will select a group of</p>			

photographic sources and conduct oral interviews with people related to them (athletes, coaches, doctors or relatives who are either in the photographs or who took them). Following a photo-elicitation strategy, the interviewees will use the photographs to reflect on their own experiences within the para-sport world.⁷ This project will be co-designed between the NPHT, which will provide the photographic sources and contacts, and DMU, which will provide the academic expertise and guidance, to situate this project within the parameters of photographic, social, cultural, sport and disability histories.

The outcomes of this project will be the result of the co-creation of knowledge between the student, the academics at DMU and the NPHT. The PhD student will be key to maintain and enhance the NPHT Paralympic heritage by means of 1) contextualising the existing photographic collection, 2) compiling oral histories related to the Paralympic movement in the Midlands and 3) contributing to a Midlands version of the itinerant NPHT exhibition, which will take place in 2024. Unlike other NPHT exhibitions, the Midlands exhibit will be specifically designed for the region and will be the product of the M4C CDA, as the NPHT is not currently planning to tour the exhibition anywhere in the Midlands.

This project is timely with the NPHT's recent opening of the museum and coincides with the Paralympics, starting just after the 2020 Paralympics close and finishing as the Paris Paralympics happen in 2024 and the 2022 Commonwealth Games in Birmingham, which include para-sports. In Year 1, the student will be embedded in the NPHT, working with the primary sources and reviewing literature for the formal review. The student will complete any necessary training during this period. In Year 2, the student will conduct the oral history interviews, write the first chapter of the dissertation and collect materials for the exhibition. In Year 3, the student will work on the itinerant exhibition and write the rest of the chapters. In addition to completing a doctoral thesis, the student will present this research at academic conferences and via publications.

1. Terry Cook, "Evidence, Memory, Identity and Community: Four Shifting Archival Paradigms", *Archival Science*, 13, 2013, pp. 95-120.
2. Athanasios Pappous, Anne Marcellini, and Eric de Léséleuc, "From Sydney to Beijing: the evolution of the photographic coverage of Paralympic Games in five European countries", *Sport in Society* 14:3, 2011, pp. 345-354.
3. David T Mitchell & Sharon L Synder, "Representation and its Discontents. The Uneasy Home of Disability in Literature and Film", in *Handbook of Disability Studies*, edited by Albrecht, Seelman and Bury (Thousand Oaks, Calif: SAGE, 2001), pp. 195-218, Beth A Haller, *Representing Disability in an Ableist World* (Louisville: The Avocado Press, 2010) and Rosemarie Garland Thomson, "Seeing the Disabled. Visual Rhetoric of Disability in Popular Photography", in *The New Disability History*, edited by Longmore and Umansky (New York: New York University Press, 2001), 335-374.
4. Michael P Kelly, "Disability and Community. A Sociological Approach" in *Handbook of Disability Studies*, edited by Albrecht, Seelman and Bury (Thousand Oaks, Calif: SAGE, 2001), pp. 396-411.
5. Ian Brittain, *The Paralympic Games Explained*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2016).
6. Gillian Rose, *Visual Methodologies. An Introduction to Researching with Visual Materials* (London: SAGE, 2001); Penny Tinkler, *Using Photographs and Social and Historical Research* (London: SAGE, 2013); Elizabeth Edwards and Janice Hart, *Photographs, Objects, Histories. On the Materiality of Photography* (London: Routledge, 2004).
7. Douglas Harper, "Talking About Pictures: A Case for Photo Elicitation", *Visual Studies*, 17:1, 2002, 13-26; Timothy John Curry, "A Visual Method for Studying Sports: The Photo Elicitation Interview", *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 3:3, 1986, pp. 204-226.

HOW TO FIND OUT MORE

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