

## PhD Postgraduate Research Opportunity

<b>PhD Project Title:</b>	<b>Development of a Design Innovation Framework for Irish SMEs (P230009)</b>
<b>Project Duration:</b>	<b>4 Years</b>
<b>Organisation:</b>	<b>Atlantic Technological University</b>
<b>Location:</b>	<b>ATU Galway City - Wellpark Road &amp; DCCI locations</b>
<b>Stipend:</b>	<b>€22,000 Stipend per year</b>
<b>Supervisors:</b>	<b>Dr Kate Dunne, Dr Mark Campbell, Dr Pauline Logue, Dr Paddy Tobin</b>

**Funding:** This PhD Fellowship is funded by the Design & Crafts Council Ireland (DCCI)

### Description:

The critical role of design in Irish society and the economy is recognised in the DCCI strategy 2022-2026 under pillar 2 *Championing design across Ireland* (DCCI, n.d.). It states, “Pillar 2 focuses on embedding design more deeply in society and the economy, to achieve better opportunities for the design sector and increase its impact” (DCCI, 2021, pg. 12). Key objectives of this pillar include “1) Increase awareness of the benefits of problem-solving through design thinking in the public and private sectors; 2) Display ownership for the design agenda in Ireland with an emphasis on delivering and communicating economic returns, and shaping future policy through the application of broad design innovation; and 3) Target meaningful impact, putting the designer’s success at the core of decision making under this pillar” (DCCI, 2021, pg. 12). This funded PhD Fellowship aims to research and develop a design innovation framework for Irish SMEs. ATU is seeking to recruit a PhD student to carry out this research. The research will consider the application and implementation of approaches to design innovation in SMEs. It will explore a cross-disciplinary strategic approach to design and the application of innovative problem-solving processes to various areas such as new products and services, business model development and user experience enhancements.

Research activities involved in this project will include a review of existing design innovation models and frameworks, international benchmarking, profiling the Irish SME sector, carrying out an in-depth analysis of current design innovation practices in a selection of SMEs, and the development and testing of a design innovation framework for Irish SMEs engaged in design. The outcome of this research is expected to enable Irish SMEs to improve their competitiveness and sustainability through design innovation. The PhD student will be expected to travel to visit companies to carry out data gathering, analysis and testing activities.

**Requirements/Qualifications:** The successful candidate will hold a minimum of an Honours Degree, with a minimum award classification of 2:1 or equivalent in a cognate discipline (design, creative processes or a related discipline). The candidate will have experience in design and creative processes and a knowledge of innovation in enterprise development. Organisational skills, along with the ability to work as part of a team are required. Interpersonal, oral, and written communication skills are important skills the successful candidate will have.

**Desirable:** It is desirable the successful candidate has qualification(s) relevant to design, innovation and problem-solving. Experience working with SMEs on development projects is also desirable. Preferably the successful candidate should have a full clean driver's license.

**Project Duration:** 48 months

**Conditions:**

- €22,000 Stipend per annum.
- Postgraduate fees will be covered by the project

If either English or Irish is not the applicant's first language, evidence of English language proficiency is required for registration. Please refer to the web link [English Language Requirements | ATU - Atlantic Technological University](#) to view the minimum English language proficiency standards for entry to ATU.

**PhD Start Date:** February/March 2025

**Application Closing Date:** 12 pm, Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> December 2024

Applicants should submit their:

- Curriculum Vitae (to include contact details of 2 referees)
- A copy of transcript of results
- A personal statement:

The personal statement should not exceed 1 page and must include details on:

- How your qualifications and experience have prepared you for this PhD research programme
- Why you would like to pursue this PhD research programme.

**Applications must be submitted to [ResearchOffice.galwaymayo@atu.ie](mailto:ResearchOffice.galwaymayo@atu.ie) e-mail address only.** Interviews will take place in January/February 2025.

**Please ensure all documents are emailed as a SINGLE Word or PDF file.**

For further information on the project, please contact: Dr Kate Dunne ([kate.dunne@atu.ie](mailto:kate.dunne@atu.ie)) or Dr Mark Campbell ([mark.campbell@atu.ie](mailto:mark.campbell@atu.ie))

**Data Protection Statement**

ATU takes very seriously its legal obligations as set out in the General Data Protection Regulation 2016/679 (GDPR) and the Irish Data Protection Act 2018 to safeguard and protect your personal information in our possession. The personal information which you disclose to us in this form will only be used to assess your suitability; administer and register you for this scholarship. We will not keep your personal information for any longer than is necessary for those stated purposes. **For more details, please refer to ATU's Student Privacy Statement: [Student-privacy-statement](#)**

**References**

Design & Crafts Council Ireland, n.d., *Design & Crafts Council Ireland Strategy*, accessed 4<sup>th</sup> November 2024, from <https://www.dcci.ie/about/what-we-do/our-strategy/>

Design & Crafts Council Ireland, 2021, *Design & Crafts Council Ireland Strategy 2022-2026*, KPMG Global Strategy Group, available at <https://www.dcci.ie/design-crafts-council-ireland-strategy-2022-2026/>