

## M4C Collaborative Doctoral Award- 'Opening the gates: increasing opportunities for the representation of gender and LGBTQI+ in castle histories'

<b>Project Title</b>				
'Opening the gates: increasing opportunities for the representation of gender and LGBTQI+ in castle histories'				
<b>LEAD INSTITUTION</b>				
Name of HEI institution	Nottingham Trent University			
Lead regional city	Birmingham <input type="checkbox"/>	Coventry <input type="checkbox"/>	Leicester <input type="checkbox"/>	Nottingham <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>PARTNER ORGANISATION</b>				
Name of organisation	Nottingham Castle Trust			
Website URL	<a href="http://www.nottinghamcastletrust.org/">http://www.nottinghamcastletrust.org/</a>			
<b>THE RESEARCH PROJECT</b>				
<p>Nottingham Castle is a museum and art gallery currently undergoing a £30 million redevelopment supported by The National Lottery Heritage Fund. This research project aims to widen participation by researching and embedding gender and LGBTQI+ histories in the historical interpretation of the castle site.</p> <p>When the Castle reopens in February 2021, it will be the crowning attraction in Nottingham's redeveloped Castle Quarter and Southside project, aiming to attract over 350,000 visitors in our first year. Nottingham Castle is keen to explore the city's diverse stories and histories through a range of Arts and Humanities methodologies and welcomes the opportunity to investigate LGBTQI+ and female-identifying histories in order to share this with visitors. This CDA will be undertaken alongside work with other historically under-represented groups and their stories, and this research will be used in interpretation across the Nottingham Castle site, online and in its learning and community programmes.</p> <p>Castles have long been the province of military and political histories which prioritise 'top down' and masculine interpretations that can be seen to lack inclusivity for a modern audience. The validity of military-focused interpretations of castle sites continues to be a source of debate within the field of castle studies (Coulson, 2003; Platt 2012) Recent works such as <i>Royal and Elite Households in Medieval and Early Modern Europe: More than Just a Castle</i> (Earenfight, 2018) have attempted to redress this imbalance by examining sites in conjunction with households, especially in relation to women, yet this wide-ranging essay collection did not cover Nottingham and its environs. Nottingham Castle has a particularly rich history of association with key female figures of English medieval history such as Empress Matilda, Isabella of France, Joan of Navarre and Anne of Bohemia, yet it also provides opportunities to explore masculinities, sexuality and same-sex relationships through its association with Piers Gaveston, and Sir William Neville and John de Clanvowe who embarked on the Mahdia crusade of 1390 and were buried in a joint tomb like a married couple at Constantinople. Sites such as Brewhouse Yard, currently undergoing redevelopment and associated with drinking, crime and prostitution offer chances to explore alternate social histories. The site's connections to Lucy Hutchinson and the "She Soldiers" of the Civil War; leading female Nottingham Chartists like Mary Ann Abbott, Eliza Blatherwick and Elizabeth Cresswell; suffragettes like Rose Elsie Howie, Helen Kirkpatrick Watts and the daughter of Nottingham Castle's curator, Muriel Wallis; or Nottingham Castle's association with the founding of Nottingham Pride and LGBTQI+ artists like Zanele Muholi in the Castle's art collections all provide ample opportunities to develop this research into Early Modern</p>				

and Modern periods. The CDA holder will consider opportunities for reinterpreting these examples in the wider context of other castle sites across the country with a view to examining best practise for engaging a wider audience in a castle environment.

The successful candidate will be expected to take a multi-layered and interdisciplinary approach to this project, incorporating archival research with a variety of contemporary methodological approaches relating to gender history, queer theory, castle studies and heritage studies. A considerable amount of research will be undertaken via local and national archives for historical content, but fieldwork, research visits and interviews will also be required in order to engage with the Heritage aspects of the projects.

The CDA starts in the year of Nottingham Castle's reopening and offers opportunities to gauge initial reactions to the site transformation as well as opportunities to connect with key members of the Castle team involved in the site's interpretation. The candidate will gain a unique insight into the redevelopment of a major castle-based tourist site, enabling them to understand the key drivers and considerations in widening audience and increasing participation at the Nottingham Castle site at first hand. Any research which is incorporated into the site's presentation will also provide opportunities for the candidate to curate and design a variety of activities through learning and outreach programmes and the development of the site's interpretation strategies as these evolve further after opening.

#### **HOW TO FIND OUT MORE**

Lead HEI Supervisor:	Dr Natasha Hodgson
Lead HEI Supervisor Email:	Natasha.Hodgson@ntu.ac.uk