



**Northumbria  
University**  
NEWCASTLE



Arts & Humanities  
Research Council

**SCIENCE  
MUSEUM  
GROUP**

## **The Railways and the Making of Upland Britain: the Lifecycle of an Envirotechnical Regime**

AHRC Funded Collaborative Doctoral Award between the Department of the Humanities, Northumbria University, and the National Railway Museum, York.



How did the construction of railways help produce Britain's modern uplands?

How should we write the social, cultural and environmental history of upland railways and the development of the settlements and industries that they encouraged?

How has the environmental legacy of these railways been treated, particularly when they are located within National Parks?

This PhD will address these questions by focusing on the Dartmoor upland around Princetown, which was connected by rail to the port city of Plymouth in the 1820s. The railway catalysed the development of the area's granite quarrying industry, bringing workers and their families to the area. The railway was also used to help make the case for developing the abandoned Prisoner of War depot into a convict prison in the 1850s. This process took a further step forward in the 1880s, when the railway was integrated into the Great Western Railway. In this way, the railway helped make this isolated and marginal agricultural landscape easily accessible and the concern of both the state and industry long before it was

designated a part of Dartmoor National Park in 1951. Since the railway's closure in 1956, the trackway has been maintained by the park authority as footpath.

The traces left by the Princetown railway provide rich evidence of Dartmoor's past industrial life and its current post-industrial condition. By helping to establish how the life and afterlife of the Princetown railway was an agent of social, cultural and environmental change, the PhD researcher will consider how the lifecycle of upland railways helps produce new rural landscapes. This PhD research is ideally suited to a historian who wishes to combine archival research with a desire to develop an intimate knowledge of an iconic landscape on foot.

This PhD opportunity comes at an exciting time in the development of the National Railway Museum, York. The NRM is currently developing its new Masterplan and the successful applicant will have the opportunity to participate in the radical overhaul of the Museum's offering.

The funding is for 42 months, with a start on 1 October 2018 (ending 30 September 2022). It covers UK/EU tuition fees and includes a full maintenance grant. The student will be based at Northumbria University with periods of work at the National Railway Museum, York.

For further details about the project and how it might be approached, contact Prof. Matthew Kelly ([matthew.j.kelly@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:matthew.j.kelly@northumbria.ac.uk)). The supervisory team also includes Anthony Coulls and Oliver Moss (National Railway Museum) and Joseph Hardwick (Northumbria).

Applicants should hold a 2.1 undergraduate degree as well as have, or expect to obtain, a Masters degree in a relevant discipline. They should also meet AHRC eligibility criteria for this type of funding:

<http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/skills/phdstudents/fundingandtraining/training-grantsand-training-grant-funding-guides/>

Applications should include: a curriculum vitae (no more than 2 sides of A4); a sample of writing (3,000 words max); and a covering letter including a 500-word statement on how the candidate would approach the above project. Please send completed applications to [matthew.j.kelly@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:matthew.j.kelly@northumbria.ac.uk) by 1 June 2018.