PhD Scholarship on Mainstreaming Climate Policy Misinformation

School of English, Media and Creative Arts (SEMCA)

Application(s) are invited from suitably qualified candidates for a full-time, funded PhD scholarship in the Discipline of Journalism and Media within SEMCA at the University of Galway.

This position is co-funded by Taighde Éireann (Research Ireland), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Met Eireann, and the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI).

**University of Galway**

Located in the vibrant cultural city of Galway in the west of Ireland, the University of Galway has a distinguished reputation for teaching and [research excellence](https://www.universityofgalway.ie/our-research/). For information on moving to Ireland please see [www.euraxess.ie](http://www.euraxess.ie)

**Detailed Project Description**

This is an exciting opportunity to undertake a PhD as part of a Research Ireland Project addressing the emerging and urgent challenge of climate policy misinformation. The project, entitled *Tackling Climate Misinformation in Ireland: An Evidence Base and Novel Resources for Journalists and Communications Professionals (CLiME*) examines how misleading claims, delay discourses, and climate-sceptic arguments — particularly in relation to decarbonising agriculture — are reproduced and normalised within Irish news media and public discourse.

The PhD candidate will play an important role in theproject working collaboratively with the PI and a postdoctoral researcher, and there will be excellent training and travel opportunities. The candidate will also have opportunities to gain teaching experience. The supervisory team will include Dr Brenda McNally (PI) and co-supervisor Professor Karyn Morrissey. The project is also supported by an advisory board of international experts in the field.

CLiME’s overarching aim is to shed light on the evolving forms of climate misinformation, to provide an evidence base of climate policy misinformation in Ireland and to raise awareness of the discursive strategies used to mainstream climate policy misinformation, while also interrogating the political and institutional power structures that enable their mainstreaming. The successful PhD candidate will conduct foundational research by identifying misleading and climate sceptic claims in news media coverage about decarbonising agriculture – a key area of climate policy contestation in Ireland and contribute to knowledge of the influence of journalistic news routines and production practices on the reproduction of misinformation in Irish news media. The findings of the PhD research will be used to inform the development of evidence-based tools and resources to support journalists and communication professionals.

The post will also provide the opportunity to develop a range of highly transferable skills, including policy translation, stakeholder engagement, public communication, interdisciplinary collaboration, and project management — all of which are relevant for academic careers as well as roles in the public, non-profit, and media sectors.

The ideal candidate will have a background in qualitative research, news media analysis, or misinformation studies, with an interest in strategic political communication. This is an opportunity to contribute to current debates on climate action, public trust, and media responsibility, while also advancing scholarship in climate policy misinformation, journalism studies, and environmental communication.

The successful candidate will be based in the Moore Institute for the Humanities and Social Studies (MI) at the University of Galway and will be a registered student within SEMCA. MI provides a particularly supportive environment for early career researchers and is a first port-of-call for collaborators working in academia, the Cultural and Creative Industries (CCIs), government, and industry. They will also have access to the Researcher Development Centre, which supports researcher training, researcher career development and the integration of researchers into University of Galway’s community.

**Living allowance (Stipend):** €25,000 per annum [tax-exempt scholarship award]. Computer equipment and funding for travel (e.g. to conferences) as well as attendance at international summer schools will be provided in addition to the stipend.

**University fees:** Funding support is in place for 4 years of fees.

**Start date:** 1st September 2025.

**Academic Entry Requirements:** An MA/MSc in any of the following areas: Media and Communications; Journalism Studies; Political Science; Social Sciences; or a related area to at least a high 2:1 standard. Other evidence that signifies suitability for the programme (e.g. demonstrated interest in misinformation studies, journalism studies and/or climate communication research).

**Essential Selection Criteria**

· Master’s degree to honours 2:1 standard (or equivalent international qualification) in a relevant area, such as Media and Communications or Social Sciences

· Evidence of an ability to carry out independent research

· Highly self-motivated

· Excellent written and oral communication skills

· Ability to work independently and as part of a team

· High level of spoken and written English. Please see link for details [*entry requirements*](https://www.universityofgalway.ie/international-students/studyinireland/entryrequirements/#:~:text=Entry%20Requirement%3A,5.5%20in%20any%20one%20component)

**Desirable Selection Criteria**

· Professional experience in environmental/climate communication or misinformation studies

· Experience of working as part of a research team

**To Apply for the Scholarship:** Email a cover letter and CV with TWO references in one PDF File with your name and CLiME as the file name to brenda.mcnally@universityofgalway.ie

The cover letter should include the following information:

i) Academic Awards or Scholarships received (max 300 words)

ii) Details of your previous research experience (max 500 words)

iii) Personal statement on your motivation for pursuing a PhD on this research topic and why you are particularly suited to the CLiME research project (max 1000 words).

iv) Please provide any other relevant information (max 500 words).

v) TWO academic references with full contact details. References listed as ‘available on request’ will not be accepted.

**PLEASE SUBMIT ALL INFORMATION IN ONE PDF DOCUMENT**

**Contact Name:** Dr. Brenda McNally

**Contact Email**: brenda.mcnally@universityofgalway.ie

**Application Deadline**: 6th June, 2025, 17:00 hours

**Primary Supervisor name:** Dr Brenda McNally