

# PhD Position in Applied Social Studies

“CODA: A hidden minority amongst the majority: An ethnographic study of hearing **Children of Deaf Adults** and the negotiation of threatened social identities”

## Post specification

Post Title:	PhD in Applied Social Studies: “The CODA project”
Post Status:	<b>48 months</b> , full-time
Starting Date:	<b>29 January 2024</b> (ideal start date, but with degree of flexibility)
Department/faculty:	School of Applied Social Studies, Donovan Road, Cork, Ireland
Reports to:	<b>Dr Noel O’Connell</b> (deaf supervisor) and <b>Dr Deirdre Horgan</b> (hearing supervisor)
Location:	School of Applied Social Studies and Institute of Social Science in 21 <sup>st</sup> Century (ISS21)
Salary:	Full student fees (EU) plus €19,000 per annum (stipend) which includes pension (20%) and PRSI (11.05%).
Application closing date:	<b>8 December 2023.</b>

## Post Summary

*Doctoral Researcher in Applied Social Studies*

The **School of Applied Social Studies and Institute of Social Science in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (ISS21) at University College Cork in association with Institute** are seeking to recruit a highly motivated and outstanding doctoral researcher for a period of 4 years (48 months).

The person appointed will conduct an innovative PhD project that will consist of **an ethnographic study of hearing children of deaf adults (CODAs) in Ireland and the United Kingdom (UK), their experience of the courtesy stigma of parental deaf identity, and the ways in which they use culture and shared experiences of community belonging as resources for agency, resilience and empowerment.** Funded by SFI-IRC Pathway Programme, the CODA project employs the methods of ethnography, participant observation and film documentary to gather data. The aim is to understand how CODAs experience identity and courtesy stigma (or stigma-by-association) in different social, cultural, educational and gendered contexts. The project addresses a fundamental gap in stigma studies which often focus narrowly on individuals with stigmatized identities without taking account of the ripple effect on family members. The research builds on emerging research phenomenon on

children whose parents bear stigmatised identities (e.g. mental illness, same sex-marriages, criminality, incarceration, and other types of parental disabilities). Parents bearing stigmatised identities are generally perceived to have failed to live up to what society considers to be “normal” parental roles and the general public tend to perceive their children as in some way “contaminated” by the stigma. Deafness and sign language may operate as visual cues for stereotyping leading to discrimination against deaf parents which impact on their children’s lives. The stereotype content of deafness stigma frames deaf people as intellectually inferior, incompetent, helpless, uneducable and lacking in responsibilities.

**Questions to be examined include but are not limited to:** *What are the social relations and cultural processes that enable CODAs engage in social interaction with others?* This question explore the way CODAs come together in various social situations – in particular looking at kinship, language, culture, community, sense of belonging, gender, hierarchy, and deaf-hearing relationships. *How do Codas negotiate the courtesy stigma of their deaf parents in family, school and community contexts?* The question investigates the way CODAs negotiate threatened social identities at various life stages and in different social situations. *How do CODAs experience social exclusion/inclusion?* This question generates discussions on what it is that contributes to CODAs experience of social exclusion/inclusion in family, school and community settings. *How do CODAs conceptualise and operationalise identity in the context of childhood, family and community belonging based on shared experiences and connectedness?* This question will lead to discussions about how CODAs form relationships with deaf and hearing communities with specific attention given to understanding the role of gender in how they form social relationships.

The successful candidate will be integrated into a PhD project that will provide an **innovative approach** to the study of CODAs in Ireland and the UK using the methods of ethnography, participant observation and film documentary. The project will give the PhD student an opportunity to carry out innovative theoretically informed and policy relevant empirical research that will generate new knowledge. This project is novel in that the research offers new and improved theoretical and empirical knowledge on the effects of courtesy stigma on CODAs quality of life and well-being. This knowledge will allow policymakers, professionals and researchers to effectively address barriers to children’s social and educational development and families’ social mobility. The project builds on existing research on CODAs, which is lacking in ethnographic data, by engaging in intersectionality theories and ethnography, sign language narratives and visual images to produce rich sources of data that provide insight into the experience of stigma and social disadvantage in the context of diverse social identities based on age, gender, race, sexuality, nationality, and socio-economic status. The successful applicant will gain skills in project management, film documentary, ethnographic research methods, research communication and policy-orientated research practice. Furthermore, the prospective candidate has an opportunity to draw on expertise from Dr Noel O’Connell (post-doctoral researcher) and Dr Deirdre Horgan (PhD supervisors of this study) and colleagues in ISS21 and the School of Applied Social Studies. The CODA project is funded by SFI-IRC Pathway Programme.

**Research activities conducted by the PhD candidate** will involve (1) reviewing the literature on CODAs and identifying gaps in knowledge that require attention; (2) designing a range of qualitative research instruments including ethnographic semi-structured interviews and focus

groups, participant observation and film documentary; (3) participant recruitment in collaboration with CODA UK and Ireland; (4) undertake research methods training, sign language courses (if necessary); (5) engage in fieldwork activities, and data analysis, summarising and interpreting results, and dissertation writing; (6) present work at local, national and international conference events or networks; (7) publishing a minimum of 3 journal articles arising from the study together with supervisors.

*Standard duties of the post:*

- Critical, systematic and analytical review of relevant literature for the project
- Writing academic pieces (articles/dissertation chapters)
- Conducting empirical research using ethnographic techniques
- Actively writing and submitting research papers for publication and contributing to joint projects or related submissions with the PhD supervisor/s
- Organising and attending meetings, workshops and conferences
- Disseminating academic work to specialised and general audiences
- Approximately 4 hours of teaching a week during the statutory term (facilitating undergraduate sociology and research methods tutorials), 1 semester in School of Applied Social Studies and 1 semester in ISS21 per year.

## **Person Specification**

*Qualifications*

Masters degree in sociology, social studies, deaf studies, disability studies, childhood studies, social psychology, sociolinguistics in sign language, deaf education (social science).

Masters dissertation should already be defended or submitted.

*Essential research skills*

- A good command of either Irish Sign Language, British Sign Language, International Signs or a national sign language;
- Advanced qualitative skills including proven skills in data collection
- Advance knowledge in the field of Deaf Studies, disability studies, childhood studies,
- Basic knowledge in the field of sociology of childhood or other related field;

*Other essential knowledge and skills*

- Willingness to contribute proactively to the development of the project
- Strong motivation to publish in academic journals
- Good organisational skills and ability to meet deadlines
- Ability to work effectively as part of a team

*Desirable knowledge/skills*

- Knowledge and experience in ethnography and film documentary

If interested, please forward a copy of your CV and cover letter explaining how you meet the required experience and qualifications set out in the job specification. Please also provide a sample of your research either in English or in a 10 minute video recorded in ISL, BSL or IS.

Interviews are expected to take place in January 2024.

Informal enquiries are welcome and can be made directly to Dr Noel O'Connell [noconnell@ucc.ie](mailto:noconnell@ucc.ie)

### **Institute of Social Science in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (ISS21)**

ISS21 is an interdisciplinary research institute for the social sciences in UCC, that seeks to build, sustain and enhance research on social, economic and cultural issues that will shape Ireland during the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

ISS21 hosts over 200 staff across 19 Departments in the University. Through our interdisciplinary thematic [Research Clusters & Working Groups](#) and funded [Research Projects](#), we address key questions facing Irish, European and global societies in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The Institute brings together social scientists from a broad range of disciplines to pursue research at Irish and international levels in interdisciplinary areas such as citizenship, childhood, innovation and creativity, family, gender, health, migration, social justice and sustainability. It involves collaboration between the following academic departments: Applied Social Studies, Applied Psychology, Chinese Studies, Economics, Education, Epidemiology and Public Health, Geography, General Practice, Government, History, Law, Nursing and Midwifery, Occupational Sciences and Therapies, Philosophy, Study of Religions and Sociology.

#### *ISS21 Vision and Mission*

Our mission is to generate imaginative, interdisciplinary, impactful social science research knowledge/s and methodologies to illuminate and respond to the complexities and challenges of 21st century society. By acting as a platform for attracting external grant funding, and providing an enabling, energising and connecting space for social science researchers that fosters and accelerates the development of interdisciplinary research networks and collaborations, ISS21 builds UCC's social science research capacity to respond to demands for reflexive forms of knowledge, innovative research practices, critical intellectual debate, and public engagement.

ISS21 welcomes new PhD students from across all colleges and departments within UCC and is open to social scientists from among current staff and research students in UCC who wish to be actively involved in interdisciplinary collaboration and promotion of the social sciences at UCC. There are a number of benefits to joining the institute, including:

- The chance to be part of a well-established, dynamic and supportive social-scientific research community
- Opportunities for research collaboration with colleagues from a wide range of disciplinary backgrounds

- Opportunity to become actively involved in one or more of the institute's thematic [Research Clusters & Working Groups](#).
- Benefits of using your ISS21 affiliation in your external research activity
- Support in the development and preparation of research grant proposals for national and international funding calls.
- Regular up-dates on funding opportunities in the social sciences and on all institute events.
- Support with the development of internal, national and international research networks and funding partnerships.
- Promotion of research projects affiliated to ISS21 through the institute's website, twitter and newsletter.
- Opportunities for members to present their research through ISS21 research seminar series and other events.

### **The School of Applied Social Studies**

A member of the ISS21, the School of Applied Social Studies' mission is "to provide an educational environment which promotes a culture of critical intellectual and practice enquiry in the social sciences based upon participation, inclusion and diversity". The objective is to make equality an integral part of the intellectual, cultural, social and economic life of the University. The goal is to achieve equality based upon the principles of student participation, lifelong learning, community involvement and open access. The School offer teaching programmes around three broad disciplinary areas: Social Policy, Social Work and Youth Work and Community Development.

The School's learning approach emphasizes critical thinking. Through lectures, writing and community engagement, students gain tools to empower their own futures and become the person they want to be with the necessary skills-set to pursue the career of their choice. Teaching methods encourage maximum student participation and include lectures, seminars, fieldwork, group and individual tutorials, group work, projects, meetings, workshops, practical exercises and written work.

#### *Research*

The School has a very active research community including academics and students at all levels. Affiliated to the ISS21, many staff have worked collaboratively across disciplinary boundaries on a variety of funded research projects and individual studies. A substantial volume of books, articles and reports have been produced by staff over the past five years. Approximately €2 million has been won by staff from Irish and European grants.

#### *Public Engagement and Community Involvement*

Many of the staff are involved in civil society working actively in the voluntary and community sector. Through the 'Science Shop' initiative, projects, placements and volunteering students play an active part in the community. Staff are also engaged in adult and community education in Cork and its environs.

#### *Diversity, Access and Widening Participation*

The School of Applied Social Studies is committed to promoting diversity through widening participation as part of the multicultural reality of Ireland in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. We start from the premise that each person is unique as human beings. The School's programmes seek to promote curiosity and appreciation of what is different, with a view to opening up new worlds of understanding to the learner. We value differences in class, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, ideological beliefs and ability as the most valuable asset of the University. In all our programmes, diversity is valued as an important source of intellectual enrichment and personal development.

#### *Fourth Level and Graduate Education Programmes*

The School of Applied Social Studies has a very strong record at Fourth Level, guided by its philosophy of lifelong learning. In 2007, the School (in collaboration with the Sociology Dept.) was awarded €919,000 to develop its *Graduate Research Education Programme* under the PRTL14 scheme. The School also offers a range of taught programmes including a D.Soc.Sc. "Practitioner Doctorate"; the MSW programme (100 students), an MSocSc in Social Policy; an M.Plan (Planning and Sustainable Development) with the Schools of Geography and Sociology (60 students). The School co-ordinates the part-time MSocSc in Third Sector Management which it teaches along with six other University Schools namely: Management and Marketing, Government, Economics, Food Business and Development, Law, and Accounting, Finance and Information Systems.

The School recently published its latest strategic plan: [School Strategic Plan 2019-2024](#)