PhD Opportunities at the University of Manchester within Dryland Quaternary Environments and Geoarchaeology

About us

The Quaternary Environments and Geoarchaeology research group is a vibrant group of 16 academics, post-docs and PhD students, conducting high-impact, international research into Quaternary climate and landscape change within five broad themes:

Dryland systems | Geoarchaeology | River systems | Glacial systems | Ecosystems

The academics within the Dryland systems and Geoarchaeology themes include Abi Stone and Jamie Woodward and we are part of the Manchester Centre for Archaeology and Egyptology and the Manchester Environmental Research Institute. We also have strong national and international research collaborations, with our recent research including sites in southern Africa, northern Africa and the Arabian Peninsula. We are recruiting PhD students to contribute to this research and join our team from 2020-21.

Funding opportunities

Competitive funding is available for PhD studentships. Deadlines for applications are the end of January, with successful applicants notified by late April. To be considered for funding for 2020-21 entry you will need to submit your PhD application.

Prospective applicants should get in touch between October and December 2019 to express interest and work on their research application with a potential supervisory team.

School of Environment, Education and Development Postgraduate Research Scholarships

- Duration: 3 years (full time) (part-time also allowed)
- Availability: all nationalities
- £15,000 per year stipend; covers tuition fees

President’s Doctoral Scholar Awards for SEED

- Duration: 3 years (full time) (part-time also allowed)
- Availability: all nationalities
- £16,000 per year stipend; covers tuition fees

Through SEED up to £1500 for overseas fieldwork destinations also available.

Potential students should contact
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Geography at the University of Manchester

Our Geography department is one of the top 10 in the world (Global Ranking of Academic Subjects 2019) and has a diverse body of students and over 50 academic staff engaged in a wide range of physical and human geography. Manchester is an exciting city with excellent transport links, culture and sports. It benefits from being a major city without the expense of London and sits on the edge of the Peak District National Park.

PhD project areas

Our studentships are not part of a Doctoral Training Partnership, which means we are not constrained by particular project goals and prefer to formulate projects collaboratively with prospective students. We are keen to help students develop projects that they find exciting and interesting and suit their own research goals and agenda.

We work on reconstructing the nature and timing of environmental change across dryland systems, including sand seas and dunefields, former fluvial systems, groundwater-fed tufa carbonates and wider groundwater systems. Many of these sites are found in direct association with archaeological artifacts, for which we aim to provide both chronological control and environmental context. This research also provides a long-term context for current environmental challenges in dryland regions. Our research facilities are well-equipped, including our own preparation laboratory for luminescence samples, a portable luminescence reader, ITRAX core-scanner and sediment particle size via laser granulometry. We have an excellent track record of obtaining NERC facilities support for U-Th dating and stable isotope analysis and work with a collaborative network of UL luminescence dating laboratories, as well as petrological specialist laboratories in Europe.

Potential research areas are listed below. Please get in touch to discuss these and other areas of interest within Quaternary drylands landscape dynamics.

- Using a portable luminescence reader for landscape-scale analysis of dunefield provenance and processes
- Dunefield dynamics in the Namib Sand Sea
- Fluvial-aolian interactions in the Namib Sand Sea
- Quaternary history of the River Nile
- Reconstructing Palaeolithic Landscapes in Saudi Arabia.
- Stable isotopic signatures from tufa carbonates for palaeorainfall composition

Our PhD students are an integral part of our research group, contributing within our seminars and research meetings, including the International Quaternary Webinar Series. We regularly attend national and international conferences and are active within the QRA, British Society for Geomorphology, AFQUA, SASQUA and INQUA.

Please contact us and start to develop your research proposal with us
abi.stone@manchester.ac.uk
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