

Broadcast Biographies. Innovations in Genre and Medium (1945-2020)

The Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB), Faculty of Languages and Humanities, Department of Linguistics and Literary Studies, is looking for a **four-year full-time PhD researcher** in the **field of literary studies** as part of the FWO-funded research project “Broadcast Biographies. Innovations in Genre and Medium (1945-2020)”.

1. Project

This project is situated at the intersection of life writing, literary radio studies and cultural memory studies. It examines the literary radio biography in Britain and (West-)Germany in the period 1945-2020 along three complementary lines: its production and reception history, its genre and media conventions and its cultural memory function. Despite the rich history of biographical writing on and for radio, little research exists on the radio biography as genre, let alone on its role as a potential catalyst for genre and media innovation. Neither the vast scholarship on life writing nor the field of radio studies have paid systematic attention to biographies created specifically for radio. Still, as this project aims to show, the radio biography gives us a unique insight in the ongoing mediation of life narratives and the history of radio itself. By writing lives for the radio, literary authors such as Alfred Andersch, Martin Esslin, Gerhard Rühm, Angela Carter and Tom Stoppard also chronicle the life of radio itself, reflecting on the possibilities and limits of both genre and medium.

In this project, we mainly focus on productions by (post)modernist and neo-avant-garde authors. We aim to study the genre and function of the broadcast biography, including its role in the transnational exchange between the two central national broadcasting cultures.

2. Position description

We offer a four-year full-time PhD position (subject to annual positive evaluation). The successful candidate will carry out the project as a doctoral researcher in close collaboration with the two supervisors at the Centre for Literary and Intermedial Crossing (CLIC) at VUB (<https://clic.research.vub.be/en/home>). The candidate will write a doctoral dissertation on the subject of the radio biography, carry out archival work on selected authors and productions (in the UK and Germany), (co-)publish the results of the research in academic articles and books, present at national and international conferences and co-host scientific meetings. The candidate will complete the doctoral training programme of the Faculty of Arts and Humanities at VUB (<https://student.vub.be/en/phd/doctoral-training#doctoral-schools>) and is expected to defend their doctoral dissertation in 2026. Please be aware that the position requires you to be present in the department on a regular basis (3 days per week).

3. Profile

- You hold a master's degree in (literature in) English, (literature in) German, comparative literature (or a comparable degree) or you will have obtained this by the start date of this position.
- You demonstrate excellent study results. Previous academic experience (publications, conference presentations, etc.) will be considered an asset.
- You have a demonstrable interest in twentieth-century and/or contemporary literature, life writing, biography studies, literary radio studies, sound studies, media history or cultural memory studies. Previous experience with archival research will be considered an asset.
- You are an enthusiastic researcher, capable of conducting research both independently and in a team.
- You are willing to conduct research stays abroad in function of archival research and knowledge exchange.
- You act in accordance with the rules regarding scientific integrity, as described in the VUB charter for researchers: [https://www.vub.be/en/violations-of-scientific-integrityinbreuken-op-wetenschappelijke-integriteit#information-in-english`](https://www.vub.be/en/violations-of-scientific-integrityinbreuken-op-wetenschappelijke-integriteit#information-in-english)
- You have excellent English-language skills (oral and written) at an academic level. A good command of the German language is highly desirable.

4. Offer

- We offer a four-year full-time doctoral position (requiring enrolment as a doctoral student at VUB), subject to an annual positive evaluation.
- The planned starting date is **1 September 2022**, or as soon as possible thereafter.
- You will receive a salary in one of the grades defined by the Belgian government. Depending on previous professional experience, the monthly tax-free salary varies from approx. € 2541 to max. € 2704 (EU staff) / approx. € 2318 to max. € 2466 (non-EU staff). In addition, you are provided with a shared office space and work laptop, library access, social and health benefits, and free access to Belgian public transport for your commute to campus.
- As an employee of VUB, you will work in a dynamic, diverse, and multilingual environment. For this function, VUB's Brussels Humanities, Sciences & Engineering Campus (Etterbeek) will serve as your home base. Our campus is a green oasis in the capital city of Flanders, Belgium, and Europe, and boasts an excellent restaurant and extensive sport facilities. It is within easy reach (twenty minutes by public transport) of the city centre of Brussels and has a direct train connection to Brussels National Airport. Childcare facilities are to be found within walking distance.
- For more information on what it is like to work at VUB, go to www.vub.ac.be/en/jobs.

5. Application procedure

Applications should include (in one PDF file):

- (1) a **cover/motivation letter**;
- (2) your **academic CV** with details about your Bachelor and Master qualifications (including grades) and your previous academic experience (if applicable);
- (3) a **short text** on how you envisage your contribution to the project, especially the doctoral dissertation that you would be working on (max. 1000 words). Please mention your approach, research question and potential cases;
- (4) the names of **two referees**.

Also include (in a separate PDF file) a **writing sample** (e.g. your MA thesis, a research paper or academic article). Clearly mention your name on your writing sample.

Please send your application by e-mail to both supervisors, Prof. dr. Inge Arteel (Inge.Arteel@vub.be) and Prof. dr. Birgit Van Puymbroeck (birgit.van.puymbroeck@vub.be).

The deadline is **15 June 2022** (midnight, CET). Shortlisted candidates will be interviewed in the week of 4 July 2022 on the Humanities Campus of Vrije Universiteit Brussel or online.

If you have any questions, please contact Inge.Arteel@vub.be or birgit.van.puymbroeck@vub.be.