

MSc Postgraduate Research Opportunity

MSc Project Title:	Exploratory Analysis of New Circular Economy Business Models in the wood construction sector in Ireland
Project Duration:	24 months
Organisation:	Atlantic Technological University (ATU)
Location:	ATU Galway City, Dublin Road, Galway
Stipend:	€18,500 per annum
Responsible to:	Project Supervisors: Dr. Amaya Vega & Dr. Gabriela Gliga

Funding: The Programme for Integration of Research and Teaching (**PIRATE**) seeks to promote research and cross disciplinary collaborative activities that integrate research and teaching. PIRATE's Fellowship programme will use **HEA Performance Funding** to support this MSc. postgraduate (Level 9) research at the Atlantic Technological University Galway City.

Description:

An exciting opportunity has arisen for a suitably qualified and strongly motivated graduate to undertake a MSc in the area of wood construction and circular economy business models in ATU Galway collaboration with the Enterprise Ireland WoodConnect Cluster.

The concept of the Circular Economy (CE) has received increasing attention from practitioners, policy makers, and academics in recent years. There are many definitions of the circular economy, but in general it refers to the idea of an economy that replaces the end-of-life concept simultaneously ensuring sustainable economic growth. While the concept is relatively new, it has evolved from an initial debate on whether it was realistic or not to expect companies to engage in circularity practices, into a more recent discussion about the implications of adopting new CE business models to boost competitiveness and profitability. Additionally, the digital transformation of the business world, commonly referred to as Industry 4.0, has also captured the attention of governments and industry stakeholders around the world. Unsurprisingly, the European Commission's six priorities for 2019-2024 are aligned to support Europe's twin transition towards both sustainability and digitalisation (European Commission, 2019). As one of the key pillars of the European Green Deal, one of the European Commission's priorities for the period 2019-2024, a new Circular Economy Action Plan was adopted in March 2020. The publication of the new EU's CE strategy has triggered action from other countries, including Ireland, to develop national policy on this area. Reducing the carbon intensity of the built environment and developing circular design capabilities are key to the future competitiveness of Ireland's CE.

This project will comprise of an exploratory analysis of circularity practices and digitalisation in the wood construction and buildings sector in Ireland. The objective is to identify barriers and opportunities for the development of new digital CE business models in the sector. Specifically, the project will contribute to the identification of the various roles played by the wood construction stakeholders involved in digital CE initiatives in Ireland and internationally. The project will contribute to extend the research evidence on digitalisation and CE-based stakeholder involvement in the sector and will provide policy recommendations in line with the EPA Circular Economy Programme 2021-2027, the current EPA research programme, and the Irish Government's agenda to future proof the construction and buildings sector in terms of innovation, digitalisation, competitiveness, and sustainability.

Requirements/Qualifications: The successful candidate will hold an Honours Degree (minimum 2:2, but 2:1 or higher is desirable) in a cognate discipline such as Economics, Business Studies, Marketing, Civil Engineering (Structural Engineering/Wood) or a related discipline. Demonstrated experience in qualitative and quantitative research methods and stakeholder engagement would be an advantage. The candidate will be expected to work on their own initiative and be willing to acquire the broader skills necessary for the successful completion of an MSc. project.

Project Duration: 24 months

Conditions:

- €18,500 Stipend per annum.
- Postgraduate fees for EU students will be covered by the project* (see below)
Please Note: Candidates from outside the EU are eligible to apply, but will be expected to provide evidence of sources of additional funds to cover excesses associated with Non-EU fees.
- In addition, any necessary travel and material costs incurred during the project will be covered.
- The student will be based in the School of Business at ATU Galway, Dublin Road, Galway.

If either English or Irish is not the applicant's first language, evidence of English language proficiency is required for registration. Please refer to web link [English Language Requirements | ATU - Atlantic Technological University \(gmit.ie\)](#) view the minimum English language proficiency standards for entry to ATU

Project Start Date: April 2023

Application Closing Date: 12 noon, Wednesday 8th February 2023

Applicants should submit their:

- Curriculum Vitae (to include 2 referees)
- A copy of transcript of results
- A Personal Statement to:

The Personal Statement should not exceed 1 page and include:

- How you meet the requirements of the position
- Why you would like to pursue this MSc research programme

Applications must be submitted to ResearchOffice.galwaymayo@atu.ie e-mail address only. Please ensure all documents are emailed as a single Word or PDF file.

For further information on the project, please contact: Dr Amaya Vega (amaya.vega@atu.ie) or Joe Friel (joe.friel@atu.ie)

** In lieu of fees the appointed scholar will undertake two hours of academic development activities per week during the academic year through participation in teaching support, tutorial provision, and/or practical demonstration.*

Data Protection Statement

ATU takes very seriously its legal obligations as set out in the General Data Protection Regulation 2016/679 (GDPR) and the Irish Data Protection Act 2018 to safeguard and protect your personal information in our possession. The personal information which you disclose to us in this form will only be used to assess your suitability; administer and register you for this scholarship. We will not keep your personal information for any longer than is necessary for those stated purposes. **For more details, please refer to ATU's Student Privacy Statement:** <http://www.gmit.ie/general/student-privacy-statement>