

PhD Scholarship: The Ethics of Carbon Pricing

The School of Theology, Philosophy, and Music and School of Law and Government at Dublin City University are offering a four year fully funded (stipends & fees) scholarship in the Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences at Dublin City University. The project will be supervised by Professor [Bert Gordijn](#) and Dr. [Goran Dominioni](#). This is one of four interdisciplinary PhD Scholarships being offered in the Faculty from 2021. Note that candidates may apply for **one** scholarship only.

Research topic: Climate change is one of the defining challenges of our time. There is broad agreement among scholars and policymakers that a cost-effective climate change action strategy should include carbon pricing. The design and implementation of carbon pricing instruments pose questions that have important ethical components. What type of carbon pricing instrument to adopt? What price should be put on carbon? What sectors to exempt? How should carbon revenues be used? This PhD project aims to contribute to the research on the ethics of carbon pricing by i) deepening the analysis of carbon taxes and emissions trading schemes by considering specific design features and ii) broadening the analysis to types of instruments currently ignored in the research. The analysis aims to provide recommendations to policymakers on the ethical design and implementation of carbon pricing.

The project will be developed in four phases. First, the PhD student will analyze existing carbon pricing instruments, their key design features, and mitigation and economic effects. The methodology of this stage of the research will consist of the analysis of a selection of policy documents as well as a set of interviews to develop a better contextualized understanding of the policy challenges in relation to carbon pricing. Interview participants will include officers of international organizations that work on carbon pricing, EU and government officials, and members of civil society organizations active on carbon pricing policy. Second, the student will conduct a systematic literature review to identify the main ethical issues related to carbon pricing and to highlight the research gaps. This will be done on the basis of the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) method. Third, the student will analyze a selection of ethical challenges related to carbon pricing design and implementation to fill some of the gaps identified in the systematic literature review. This ethical analysis will be conducted from the perspective of an appropriate ethical theory such as normative stakeholder theory, a theory of justice, a version of utilitarianism, or some other theoretical approach, depending on the specifics of the ethical challenges to be analyzed. Fourth, based on this ethical analysis, the student will propose a set of policy recommendations.

Candidate profile: The ideal candidate must have recently completed or expect very soon a Bachelor or Master degree or equivalent degree in philosophy, preferably with a specialization in ethics. The candidate is expected to have first class or upper second-class honours (or equivalent) degree. In addition, the applicant should:

- Have excellent philosophical and analytical skills
- Have an interest in practical applications of ethics and policy-relevant research

- Be familiar with or have an interest in the ethics of climate change
- Have expertise or an interest in climate change/environmental studies, economics and/or political science
- Have good social and communication skills in academic as well as non-academic contexts
- Appreciate multidisciplinary collaboration
- Have excellent knowledge of written and spoken English (See [DCU's requirements](#) for English language skills; applicants must ensure that they meet these requirements **before submitting an application**).
- Meet DCU's entry requirements in general (see general entry requirements [here](#))

Application instructions

Deadline: The strict deadline for application is: 17th of May (5 pm, UTC +1). Applications received after this deadline will not be considered. Shortlisted candidates will be invited for interview in the last week of May.

What to submit: Candidates should email their applications in a **single PDF file** to bert.gordijn@dcu.ie and goran.dominioni@dcu.ie with “PhD in Climate & Society” in the subject line. This application must include:

1. A cover letter outlining your motivation for applying as well as your qualifications for the PhD position
2. A curriculum vitae
3. A writing sample (for example, a copy of your Master thesis)
4. Names of two referees
5. A complete version of the [application form](#)

Note: Incomplete applications will be deemed ineligible.

Process: If successful at the interview stage, candidates will then be invited to make a formal application to DCU via the [Student Application Portal](#). Applicants are expected to read the information available [here](#) on the general process for PhD applications to DCU.

For queries contact: Prof. Bert Gordijn (bert.gordijn@dcu.ie) or Dr. Goran Dominioni (goran.dominioni@dcu.ie).