

## PRESS RELEASE

7 March 2019

### Museum curators receive £200,000 to boost research through Headley Fellowships with Art Fund

- *Seven curators named as first recipients of programme which provides time and resources to complete in-depth research into museum collections*
- *Range of supported projects including decolonising collections, curating *The Troubles* and creating new galleries and displays*

The Headley Fellowships with Art Fund is a new funding programme to give curators the opportunity to further develop specialist knowledge relating to the collections in their care. It enables curators to take time away from their day-to-day responsibilities to embark on a period of in-depth research into their museum's collection, with funding provided to backfill their post either full-time for six months or part-time for a year.

The scheme responds to Art Fund's own research, published in a 2017 report, 'The 21st-century curator', which found that almost three-quarters of museum curators (72%) spent 15% or less of their time on collections research.

It also comes at a time when public spending on museums and galleries in England has declined in real terms by 13% over the last decade – museums reliant on local authority funding have been hit the hardest, with cuts averaging 30% over the last 5 years. According to the Museums Association's 2018 study, 34% of local authority museums reduced the number of full-time staff in the year preceding, and further research by Art Fund confirms a decline in the number of curators and specialist roles nationally over the last 15 years.

Launched in July 2018 by The Headley Trust and Art Fund, the Headley Fellowships with Art Fund will provide £600,000 over the next three years to UK curators to realise ideas for engaging audiences as well as to broker new relationships and share knowledge with museums and peers across the country.

The first fellows will embark on their projects throughout 2019 with outcomes expected starting in October. Anticipated outcomes from the projects include exhibitions, re-display of objects, books and/or learning programmes.

The seven curators selected as the first recipients and their projects are as follows:

- Joanne Anderson, Assistant Keeper of Archaeology, Great North Museum: Hancock – researching the museum’s collection of Native North American art (Project dates: April – October 2019)
- Subhadra Das, Curator, UCL Culture – decolonising university science collections (Project dates: April – October 2019)
- Dan Hicks, Curator of Archaeology, Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford – researching the untold colonial histories in the Pitt Rivers collection (Project dates: April 2019 – March 2020)
- Karen Logan, Curator of History, Ulster Museum, Belfast – curating The Troubles and community history in Northern Ireland (Project dates: April 2019 – March 2020)
- Margaret Maitland, Senior Curator, Ancient Mediterranean, National Museums Scotland – researching and celebrating Scottish archaeologist Alexander Henry Rhind and his contributions to Egyptology (Project dates: June – December 2019)
- Bryan Sitch, Deputy Head of Collections, Manchester Museum – creating a new gallery of Chinese culture (Project dates: February – November 2019)
- Adam Smith, Curator of Natural Sciences, Nottingham City Council – researching and displaying the museum’s nationally significant herbarium collection (Project dates: April – November 2020)

Rob Bell, Director of The Sainsbury Family Charitable Trusts, said: ‘It is vitally important that curators remain at the vanguard of our museums both in their understanding of museum collections and how they share that knowledge with peers and audiences. We are pleased to support these seven curators through the Headley Fellowships with Art Fund, giving them the time and support to explore, engage and further understand the brilliant collections that their museums hold.’

Stephen Deuchar, Director, Art Fund, said, ‘The roles and responsibilities of the curator today are broadening all the time – in many museums there are greater public expectations than ever before but fewer staff available to meet them. Time to develop and enhance specialist curatorial skills and knowledge can by consequence be very constrained, and as we look to the future we must be mindful of what may be lost to museums in this process. We know that most curators meanwhile brim with ideas around their collections and would dearly love more opportunity to deepen and extend their knowledge about the art and objects in their care; so we are truly delighted to be working with The Headley Trust to make these ambitions a reality.’

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# Art Fund\_

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## Notes to Editors:

### The Headley Trust

The Headley Trust was founded in 1973 by Sir Timothy Sainsbury, who remains the Chairman 45 years later. It is one of 16 Sainsbury Family Charitable Trusts. The Headley Trust makes grants of around £5million a year, largely in the Arts and Heritage field. Among its priority areas are museums and galleries, particularly those operating in the regions. The trustees particularly wish to support the professional development of curators, as well as the display, study and acquisition of British ceramics and the conservation of industrial, maritime and built heritage.

[www.sfct.org.uk/Headley](http://www.sfct.org.uk/Headley) for information about the full range of the trust's interests

### Art Fund

Art Fund is the national fundraising charity for art. In the past five years alone Art Fund has given £34 million to help museums and galleries acquire works of art for their collections. It also helps museums share their collections with wider audiences by supporting a range of tours and exhibitions, and makes additional grants to support the training and professional development of curators. Art Fund is independently funded, with the core of its income provided by 151,000 members who receive the National Art Pass and enjoy free entry to over 240 museums, galleries and historic places across the UK, as well as 50% off entry to major exhibitions and subscription to Art Quarterly magazine. In addition to grant-giving, Art Fund's support for museums includes Art Fund Museum of the Year (won by Tate St Ives in 2018) and a range of digital platforms. Find out more about Art Fund and the National Art Pass at [www.artfund.org](http://www.artfund.org)

### Great North Museum: Hancock

The Great North Museum: Hancock is managed by Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums on behalf of Newcastle University.

The Museum brings together the North East's premier collections of archaeology, natural history, geology and world cultures under one roof. It incorporates collections from the original Hancock Museum, Newcastle University's former Museum of Antiquities and the Shefton Museum.

The Great North Museum: Hancock is a partnership between Newcastle University, Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums, the Natural History Society of Northumbria (NHSN) and the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne (SANT). [www.greatnorthmuseum.org.uk](http://www.greatnorthmuseum.org.uk)

# Art Fund\_

## About UCL Culture

From art to zoology, Egyptology to performance, science and beyond: UCL Culture cares for the university's world-class spaces and collections. We are home to the Grant Museum of Zoology, Octagon Gallery, Pathology Museum, Petrie Museum of Egyptology and UCL Art Museum, as well as the Bloomsbury Theatre and art in the public realm. Nearly all our venues and opportunities are free to enjoy and open to all. Come and play a part in our ground-breaking research and learning at UCL.

[ucl.ac.uk/culture](http://ucl.ac.uk/culture) | Twitter [@ucl\\_culture](https://twitter.com/ucl_culture) | Instagram [@uclculture](https://www.instagram.com/uclculture)

## About the Pitt Rivers Museum

- The University of Oxford's Pitt Rivers Museum (PRM) is one of the finest archaeological and ethnographic teaching museums in the world. Founded in 1884, when General Pitt Rivers, an influential figure in the development of archaeology and evolutionary anthropology, donated his collection of more than 27,000 objects to the University of Oxford, it now stewards over 550,000 objects. These collections of historical, social and ritual significance are of an extraordinary range and depth, including great works of art, invention and design from around the world.
- The Museum carries out world-leading conservation and research and welcomes half a million visitors each year, and currently focuses on developing more socially engaged practice with a focus on inclusivity. The Pitt Rivers Museum is much loved for its characteristic multi-layered and dense displays. Today, the Museum is a dynamic, forward-looking institution with many connections to stakeholders throughout the world.
- Press Contact: Louise Hancock, Marketing and Media Officer, [press@prm.ox.ac.uk](mailto:press@prm.ox.ac.uk). 01865 613017.

## About National Museums NI

National Museums NI is Northern Ireland's foremost cultural and heritage museum group. The group comprises the Ulster Museum, Ulster Folk Museum, Ulster Transport Museum and Ulster American Folk Park. We are the custodians of the National Collection of 1.4 million objects which are multidisciplinary, diverse and span all time periods, referencing Northern Ireland within, and to, the wider world. Our museums are visited by more than 800,000 people annually.

The Ulster Museum is Northern Ireland's treasure house of the past and present which tells the unique human story of this part of Ireland. It is home to a rich collection of art, history and natural sciences and is free to everyone.

[www.nmni.com](http://www.nmni.com)

## National Museums Scotland

National Museums Scotland is one of the leading museum groups in the UK and Europe and it looks after collections of national and international importance. Our museums are the National Museum of Scotland, the National Museum of Flight, the National Museum of Rural Life and the National War Museum. The National Museums Collection Centre in Edinburgh houses conservation and research facilities as well as collections not currently on display. We also provide loans, partnerships, research

and training in Scotland and internationally.

Twitter: @NtlMuseumsScot

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/NationalMuseumsScotland](https://www.facebook.com/NationalMuseumsScotland)

Instagram: @NationalMuseumsScotland

## Manchester Museum

Manchester Museum, part of The University of Manchester, first opened in 1890. It is the UK's largest university museum with a collection of about 4.5 million items from every continent. Its combination of the academic and the popular is what makes the museum so distinctive and lies at the heart of its widespread appeal. The Museum's vision is to build understanding between cultures and a sustainable world. Every year over half a million people visit. Over the next three years, Manchester Museum is working towards an exciting new £13.5 million project *hello future*, to transform and develop the museum becoming more inclusive, imaginative and relevant to the diverse communities it serves.

The museum will remain partially open during this time and in 2021 will become a bigger, more inclusive and more wondrous Manchester Museum.

The *hello future* transformation includes:

- A new Exhibition Hall
- South Asia Gallery
- Lee Kai Hung Chinese Culture Gallery
- World's first Centre of Age Friendly Culture
- New entrance and visitor facilities with focus on inclusive and accessible design

[www.manchester.ac.uk/museum](http://www.manchester.ac.uk/museum) @mcrmuseum

## Wollaton Hall (Nottingham City Council)

Wollaton Hall is a spectacular Elizabethan mansion and deer park in the suburbs of Nottingham. Since opening in 1926, it has been home to the city's Natural History Museum. With a collection of 750,000 objects, ranging from fossils, minerals, plants and eggs to invertebrates, vertebrates, shells (molluscs) and taxidermy, as well as 'spirit' preserved animals and rare specimens from across the globe, it is the largest dedicated Natural History museum in the county. The current Wollaton Hall Transformation Project includes a programme of redevelopment for the Natural History Museum and its galleries. Managed by Nottingham City Museums and Galleries (Nottingham City Council).