

## PLACEMENT DESCRIPTION



<b>Job Title</b>	Fictile Ivories Cataloguing Placement	<b>Duration</b>	6 months, part time
<b>Division</b>	Collections	<b>Hours/FTE</b>	2 days a week, 9am – 5pm (flexible)
<b>Dept</b>	Decorative Art and Sculpture	<b>Salary</b>	<b>This is an unpaid doctoral placement that is financially supported by the successful applicant's PhD stipend in line with UKRI guidance.</b>
<b>Reports to</b>	Michaela Zöschg, Whitney Kerr-Lewis (maternity cover Laura Chase)	<b>Direct Reports</b>	

### Context

To provide opportunities for early-career training for PhD students, the V&A has made available a range of doctoral placements based in collections departments, archives, the National Art Library, research, and collections care and access. Each placement is a discrete project designed by members of V&A staff (who will also act as the placement's supervisor), involving collaborative as well as independent research. They contribute to live research projects and existing priorities, and their outputs and value to the Museum are varied; projects may lead to new insights into our collections and archives, influence Museum policy and procedures, contribute to public engagement and/or support funded projects.

In addition to the on-the-job experience of each placement and mentoring from supervisors, doctoral placement students will have access to the Museum's wider range of workshops, talks and postgraduate training events/opportunities, alongside a bespoke training package designed for the placement student cohort.

Where the project allows, there is scope for some remote work; however, all students will be required to come to the Museum at certain points during the placement and must be based in the UK during any remote work. The exact proportion of remote to onsite work will be negotiated between the student and placement supervisors. For remote work, students will be required to have access to their own equipment (i.e. computer and internet access).

V&A doctoral placements are unpaid and only open to students currently studying on a funded PhD programme. Applicants will be asked to evidence that they are in receipt of a stipend for the duration of the placement that is at least equivalent to the UKRI national minimum doctoral rate. International students are welcome to apply but must meet any UK visa/residency requirements in addition to the funding requirements. Please consult the Application Guidelines for full details on eligibility, the application procedure and an explanation of placement length/opportunities for remote work.

V&A Doctoral Placements are *only* open to students currently studying on a **funded PhD**. For further information regarding eligibility please consult the 'Application Guidance'.

## Purpose of the Placement

As exemplified by the V&A's Cast Courts and cast production, in the nineteenth century, new technologies for reproduction such as plaster casting, electrotyping and photography began to play an important role in the institutional development of art history, archaeology and conservation, and the development of networks between European private and public collections. Due to their comparatively small size and portability, Fictile Ivories – plaster casts of medieval and Baroque ivory carvings – played a particularly important role in this story about networks, exchanges, and learning.

The V&A's collection of over 1000 Fictile Ivories is the largest collection of these objects in existence, and J.O. Westwood's *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Fictile Ivories in the South Kensington Museum* (1876) remains the standard reference work for anyone interested in these objects. This project aims to bring Westwood's pioneering work into the 21st century. The successful candidate will complete a focused photography and cataloguing campaign of a portion of the V&A's Fictile Ivories, making them digitally accessible via Explore the Collections. They will develop object handling skills which will be utilised in reorganising the collection within our storage. They will also be given the opportunity to collaborate on a dedicated webpage outlining the importance and history of this part of the V&A's collection and potentially co-author an article situating them within recent research.

## Possible outputs of the placement

- Enhanced catalogue records for a portion of the fictile ivory collection.
- Re-organisation of storage of the fictile ivory collection.
- Webpage on fictile ivory collection, co-authored with SCP team, to sit within the Sculpture pages on the V&A website .
- Depending on the interests of the student, a possible Work In Progress talk or article on an aspect of the fictile collection i.e. history of collecting, Medieval 19th C revival, or fictile ivories as a reproduction technique.
- Funding permitting, a study session with external research partners.

*The above sections are intended to be an outline of the duties, responsibilities and outputs of this placement; these are not exhaustive and may change. You may be expected to undertake other duties that are commensurate with the placement.*

## PERSON SPECIFICATION

### Essential

- Computer and numeracy literacy
- Some knowledge of medieval art history (esp iconography)
- A keen eye for accurate record keeping

### Desirable

- An interest in the history of collecting
- Knowledge of a European language such as French, German, or Italian

### **Equal opportunities at the V&A**

At the V&A we strive to ensure that opportunities to work and develop at are open to all. We treat all job applications equally, regardless of age, disability, gender identity or gender expression, race, ethnicity, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, or any other equality characteristic. We particularly encourage applications from disabled people and people from black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds, as these groups are currently under-represented in the cultural sector. At the V&A we have a good gender balance however in certain departments, such as IT, we welcome female applicants and, in our exhibitions, or development teams, we welcome male applicants.