

PLACEMENT DESCRIPTION



Job Title	Torrijos Ceiling Scientific Analysis Placement	Duration	Three months full time or up to six months part time
Division	Collections Care and Access	Hours/FTE	
Dept	Science Section, Conservation Department	Salary	This is an unpaid doctoral placement that is financially supported by the successful applicant's PhD stipend in line with UKRI guidance.
Reports to	Dr Lucia Burgio and Dr Valentina Risdonne	Direct Reports	

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

The project will focus on the characterisation of samples taken from the Torrijos Ceiling (a carved and gilded wooden ceiling, V&A accession number 407-1905). The samples will be mounted as cross sections, and their layer structure examined.

This will provide information on the materials and techniques used to decorate the ceiling, and identify any later interventions or latent degradation issues.

Under the guidance of the V&A scientists, the student will perform the scientific analysis of the samples, using the following approach:

- Mounting of the samples as cross sections.
- Optical microscopy of the cross sections with visible and UV light.
- Additional digital microscopy for the collection of high-resolution images where appropriate.
- Raman microscopy will provide the molecular identification of pigments, dyes, and their degradation products, if applicable. This will also enable us to suggest a dating for later interventions.
- SEM-EDX analysis will provide additional morphological information for the samples, as well as the elemental distribution of most of the materials used. This will complement the optical and Raman microscopy analysis.

Possible outputs of the placement

- Internal analysis report
- One or more blog post
- Peer-reviewed article (depending on the quality and type of results)
- Internal presentation to V&A staff
- Enhanced catalogue record for the objects

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

- The student will be a Science or Conservation Science graduate, and already possess relevant practical experience in Heritage Science scientific techniques (ideally a selection of XRF, Raman, FTIR and microscopy)
- The student will have a background in the appropriate conservation science subjects (e.g. materials science, mineralogy, petrography, conservation of stone and glass materials)
- English language proficiency

Alternative, suitable profiles may be considered.

Desirable

- Previous experience with museum collection and similar materials/objects

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.