

Oxford University Museums Collaborative Doctoral Studentships: Frequently Asked Questions

1. What are Oxford University Museums Collaborative Doctoral Studentships?

Oxford University Museums Collaborative Doctoral Partnership (CDP) studentship programme is funded by AHRC and runs from October 2016. Led by Dan Hicks (Pitt Rivers Museum), the CDP scheme supports fully funded (for students ordinarily resident in the UK) Ph.D. studentships that are jointly supervised through a partnership between a member of staff at Oxford University Museums and an academic from a UK Higher Education Institution (HEI) – but not from Oxford University). The PhD student will be based at the partner HEI. The studentships are funded through an award through the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) Collaborative Doctoral Partnership scheme. Further information can be found here: <http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/funding/opportunities/current/collaboratedoctoralpartnerships> and www.ahrc-cdp.org/

2. Who can apply for an Oxford University Museums Collaborative Doctoral Studentship?

We are currently inviting proposals for collaborations for doctoral projects commencing in October 2018. Applications are invited from partnerships between potential doctoral supervisors based at UK Higher Education Institutions, and staff of Oxford University Museums.

3. I am a prospective PhD student. How can I apply for a studentship?

The successful proposals for studentships starting in October 2018 will be advertised in early 2018 on www.ahrc-cdp.org/ and www.museums.ox.ac.uk.

4. How many Oxford University Museum CDP studentships are there?

Oxford University Museums are offering up to three new fully funded doctoral studentships per year to study for a PhD in collaboration with one or more of the museums. Each proposal will be for one studentship

5. What are Oxford University Museums?

Oxford University Museums comprise four museums: the Ashmolean Museum of Art and Archaeology, the Museum of the History of Science, Oxford University Museum of Natural History, and the Pitt Rivers Museum. Together, we represent the largest group of university museums in the UK and a leading global centre for cross-disciplinary collections-based research, teaching and curatorial practice. Our 8.5 million objects range from fossils, geological specimens and scientific instruments to art and material culture from across the globe and all periods of the human past, from prehistory and classical antiquity to the modern world. Since 1683, Oxford's museums have cared for a unique material archive of thought about art, the humanities and science. Today they are a world-leading centre for collections scholarship,

education, exhibitions practice, public engagement, digital curation, knowledge exchange, and the global accessibility of cultural heritage.

6. What will the Collaborative Doctoral Studentships do?

The Collaborative Doctoral Studentships will facilitate new Arts and Humanities research that is embedded in the Oxford University Museums: developing new perspectives on the museums and their collections, sharing knowledge with a range of audiences, and training a new generation of scholars working between the academic and heritage sectors.

7. What is the role of the HEI and Oxford University Museums?

The HEI partner for a CDP studentship can be anywhere in the UK. They are responsible for administering the studentship in line with the AHRC's terms and conditions. Once the AHRC has checked and approved the nominated PhD studentship projects, these will be set up as Doctoral Training Grants to the HEI involved in each project, and will follow the same process for activating grants and funding students as for successful applications made under the CDA Open call (i.e. the funding award will be made directly to the collaborating HEI rather than to Oxford University Museums).

The HEI supervisor is formally the lead supervisor for the studentship. They and their department should demonstrably provide the right expertise and support for the topic.

The student is expected to spend a significant period of time researching with Oxford University Museums, and attend training and other activities that the CDP Consortium and the Museum organises for them in Oxford and elsewhere, including London. Oxford University Museums will also provide up to £2,000 to the student towards their travel and related research costs.

8. Can I propose more than one studentship?

Separate applications from the same supervisor, with different partners or topics, are acceptable. However, the number of supervisory commitments will be one element of assessing feasibility, and since there are only three studentships per annum competition is likely to be strong.

9. How are the studentship topics decided upon?

The topic of each studentship application is developed through close collaboration between the proposed supervisory team – from the partner Higher Education Institution, and Oxford University Museums. Projects may focus on collections-based research or on any other aspect of museum practice, including (but not limited to) the history of collections, public programming and engagement, knowledge exchange, education, archival research, and digital curation.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to discuss their applications with Dan Hicks, and also with their Heads of Department (in both the museum and the HEI), with the Research Office of the partner HEI, with any other members of museum staff involved or affected by the research.

There are no thematic priorities for the Oxford University CDPs. Studentships may, or may not, involve more than one OU museum. Applications received by the November deadline will be assessed according to four criteria:

- I. **Academic excellence.**
- II. **Feasibility.** The feasibility of the proposed research, including the strength of the partnership, the suitability and track record of the supervisors.
- III. **Innovation.** The degree to which the proposal represents a new or unexpected collaboration across AHRC's subject areas, which have not previously been developed by the museum or museums in question.
- IV. **Impact.** The potential impact of the research within academic, cultural sector, and public spheres. As part of this, the degree to which the embedded nature of the studentship brings genuine 'added value' (rather than just, for example, allowing access to collections that any researcher could gain).

Please note that all studentship proposals must fall within AHRC's areas of subject coverage - <http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/documents/guides/ahrc-s-subject-coverage>

10. What does the studentship fund?

The doctoral studentship is administered by the partner HEI. The studentship award pays the student's university fees and a maintenance grant in line with the standard AHRC doctoral awards for 3 years. In addition to the studentship award for fees and maintenance, Oxford University Museums also provides up to £2,000 per annum per student to cover the costs of travel between the HEI and Oxford, and related costs in carrying out research.

The students will spend a significant period of time undertaking research at Oxford University Museums, and will gain training through the museums and also through the Collaborative Doctoral Training Programme offered by the 12 members of the CDP Consortium.

A further fund – the Student Development Fund – can be used to support students in gaining skills training or other important experience (for up to 6 months in addition to the 3 years of the studentship), or for public engagement activities, by agreement with Oxford University Museums and AHRC.

The studentships can only be taken up by UK/EU citizens and residents. For non-UK EU citizens the award would only pay tuition fees, not a maintenance grant.

11. How are students recruited?

Particular students are not named in this application process. An open call for applications for each funded studentship will be issued in early 2017, in a recruitment process led by the HEI supervisor in close partnership with the Museum supervisor.

12. How to Apply

Applicants should complete the application form, with close reference to the Frequently Asked Questions, through the links on the Oxford University Museums website.

Studentship projects should be jointly proposed by a member of Oxford University Museums staff and a colleague from a UK Higher Education Institution.

Applicants are strongly advised to contact Dan Hicks – dan.hicks@prm.ox.ac.uk and/or harriet.warburton@ashmus.ox.ac.uk – before submitting an application.

Completed forms must be submitted by email to harriet.warburton@ashmus.ox.ac.uk by **5pm on Friday 24 November 2017** in order to be considered for the 2017 round. NB Each Museum will have its own internal deadlines and review procedures before this date, and so potential supervisors should make contact as soon as possible.

Informal enquiries from potential partners from non-Oxford Higher Education Institutions who are unsure of whom to approach within Oxford University Museums are welcome. These should be sent to dan.hicks@prm.ox.ac.uk and/or harriet.warburton@ashmus.ox.ac.uk

Oxford University Museums, August 2017