JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title: VARI   Creative   Technology   Fellow
                      (Show+Tell+Share)

Division: Collections

Department/Section: V&A Research Institute

Contract: Fixed term Research Fellowship for 15 months (1 December 2019 – 28 February
                      2021), 18 hours per week (0.5 FTE)

Salary: £36,935 - £39,178 per annum, pro rata.

Reporting to: VARI Project Leads: Show+Tell+Share (Head of Digital Media & Publishing and
                      Chief Curator, V&A East)

Show+Tell+Share

- The V&A Research Institute (VARI) is part of the Collections Division and conducts, facilitates and promotes research across all aspects of the Museum's collections and activities. The Research Institute directs the research strategy and activities across the Museum. It manages a portfolio of externally-funded research projects; hosts and supports R&D for exhibitions, publications and other public outputs; and promotes and broadcasts research produced across the Museum. VARI consists of a small number of permanent staff and a much larger number of visiting scholars and seconded staff engaged in specific research projects. It also hosts a large postgraduate community: in addition to co-delivering the V&A/RCA History of Design Programme, it plays a central role in the AHRC's Collaborative Doctoral Partnership (CDP) and Doctoral Training Partnership (DTP) schemes.

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Through the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation's support, VARI currently hosts a number of flagship research projects, led by highly interdisciplinary teams. These research projects experiment with new ways of studying, displaying and accessibly storing collections, in order to inform the Museum's current and future plans in London and elsewhere, producing new knowledge and new methods for collections-based research.

The VARI project, Show+Tell+Share, seeks to understand the current barriers to museum access. By better understanding the changing expectations of audiences, both on- and offline, it hopes to develop new models to improve access to, and encounters between people and the V&A's collections. The three research questions that underpin the project are:

- How can we increase direct engagement and interaction with the V&A's objects and knowledge?
- How can we make the V&A's collections more relevant to future generations?
- What is the potential to increase the relevance of our collections to a local and global audience?

Within Show+Tell+Share these questions have been interrogated from three different stand points - 'object', 'data' and 'public engagement'. Each of these three strands has had a dedicated role. The first phase of Show+Tell+Share has concluded. The appointment of a new Creative Technology Fellow is

needed to support the second, and final, phase of Show+Tell+Share, which will focus on the Collection and Research Centre (CRC), part of V&A East.

Purpose of the Fellowship

For Phase 2 of this four-year project we are now looking to recruit a Creative Technology Fellow to support the data strand. The Creative Technology Fellow will work closely with the Object Fellow and Public Engagement Fellow to explore new possibilities for how digital experiences might help increase engagement with the V&A's objects and knowledge.
- The Object Fellow is exploring the potential for sensory, experiential and embodied engagements with objects, particularly those in storage.
- The Public Engagement Fellow is developing ways of empowering people in the co-curation of our objects.
- The Creative Technology Fellow will draw on these two strands to create a series of prototypes that explore ways that digital technologies might create new object encounters within the new Collection and Research Centre at V&A East.

The Creative Technology Fellow will develop three digital prototypes that will be based on themes emerging from the object and public engagement strands. These themes include, for example, 'movement and the body', 'serendipity' and 'haptic imagination' and will form the starting point for the Creative Technology Fellow's work. We do not want to be prescriptive about the kinds of technologies these prototypes might be built in. They might involve augmented/virtual/mixed reality, interactive or educational tech, or immersive soundscapes. Or perhaps very minimal tech.

The goal of these multi-sensory prototypes is to identify different approaches that the V&A might take in building a compelling user experience for visitors to the CRC, and how we might reduce barriers to access to both collections objects, and the knowledge we hold around them.

The Creative Technology Fellow will have a background in digital technology, with hands-on experience in developing digital experiences, particularly those that take place in physical environments. They will work with two V&A Project Co-Leads, the Head of Digital Media and Publishing, and the Chief Curator for V&A East.

Main tasks

1. Promote equality and diversity in all aspects of your work by developing and maintaining positive working relationships, ensuring that colleagues are treated fairly and with respect/dignity and actively contributing to developments that support the museum's strategy for widening access, inclusion and diversity.

2. Be committed to health and safety and ensure that you are familiar with all of the Museum's health and safety policies and procedures. Enforce the Museum's safety and security policies, in particular ensuring that the badge display, keys control, No Smoking and Health and Safety policies are observed

3. Be security conscious, ensure familiarity and co-operation with all museum security procedures and ensure you wear a security pass at all times when on museum premises.

4. Carry out ad hoc duties as requested and be able to undertake all of the duties detailed within Security Supervisors job description.

- Explore the potential for digital technology to improve or augment access to collections objects and at the Museum (with a focus on the new CRC).
- Deliver three digital prototypes that are based on themes emerging from the Object strand, that support the ambitions of the Public Engagement Fellow (and of the V&A East outreach team).
- Author and co-author high quality reports and/or journal articles on your work to support the Show+Tell+Share project.
- Present your research at academic conferences, and more widely through the VARI website and blog.
- Help identify and adapt research methods, techniques, approaches and models that are suitable for Show+Tell+Share.
- Support the design, delivery, and analysis of research workshops, user testing sessions, and other meetings that are relevant to the project.

Also,
- Assist in all aspects of day to day operations and development of the Project and VARI.
- Contribute to the intellectual life of the V&A Research Institute.
- Be committed to health and safety and ensure familiarity with all of the Museum's health and safety policies and procedures.
- Be security conscious, ensure familiarity and co-operation with all museum security procedures.
- Promote equality and diversity in all aspects of your work.

Person Specification

Essential Requirements
- Software engineering experience in a modern programming language (e.g. Python, Ruby, or as appropriate for the applications developed through this research programme)
- Practical experience in one of the following areas:
    - 3D design
    - Video/sound production
    - Game development
    - Educational technology and digital making
- UI/UX experience
- Experience of user testing and troubleshooting

Essential Skills and Behaviours
- Outstanding creative problem-solving skills
- Excellent communication and inter-personal skills
- An ability to quickly acquire new knowledge and methods, and to apply known methods in new contexts
- Strong interest in interdisciplinary research
- Self-motivated and proactive
- Ability to work effective and efficiently as a team member and independently
- Ability to work under pressure and meet deadlines

Desirable
- Experience of working with diverse audiences and stakeholder groups

- Experience of audience development, visitor experience, or working with museum and collections data
- A good knowledge of data protection laws and best practice data management

Further information

The V&A is the world's leading museum of art, design and performance, holding over 2.3 million objects spanning more than 5,000 years of human creativity. Research has always been central to the V&A: it was the first museum to establish a dedicated Research Department and has held Independent Research Organisation status since 2006. In addition, the V&A has been home since 1983 to the UK's leading postgraduate programme in the History of Design and Material Culture, co-delivered with the Royal College of Art.

The V&A is currently undergoing a period of unprecedented expansion, refreshing galleries in South Kensington, engaging in new national and international initiatives and creating a new museum and Collection & Research Centre in East London (on and around the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park), bringing new opportunities for research and teaching partnerships. In 2016 the V&A was awarded a major grant by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to transform the Research Department into the V&A Research Institute, fostering innovative, interdisciplinary research through a series of flagship research projects and developing new research-led teaching and training programmes.

The Collection and Research Centre will reinvent the idea of a museum store. Visitors will be invited on behind-the-scenes journeys that reveal how and why objects are collected, how they are cared for, conserved, researched and displayed, and how they help make sense of our past, present and future. The centre will be a purpose-built home for 250,000 objects and an additional 917 archives spanning the breadth of the V&A's collections.

OTHER INFORMATION

Hours/Salary:
Net working hours (i.e. excluding meal breaks) are 18 per week.
The salary for this role will be £36,935 - £39,178 per annum, pro rata. Salaries are reviewed on an annual basis.

Annual leave:
28 days plus 8 days public holidays

Pension benefits:
You will be auto enrolled into the Museum's Group Personal Pension Scheme and have the opportunity on completion of Probation to an enhanced pension provision, including an employer contribution of 10%.

Other benefits:
Non-contributory life assurance policy (to value of 4 x annual salary)
An interest free season ticket or bicycle loan is available after completion of your probationary period.
Free entrance to all the major museums and exhibitions in London as well as many others.
Subsidised staff restaurant
Discounts on purchases in V&A shops

Application process:
Please apply online via the V&A's website at www.vam.ac.uk/jobs

We are committed to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion through all our employment policies and practices. For this role, we particularly welcome applicants from those who are significantly underrepresented at the V&A such as men and individuals from black and minority ethnic communities, who meet the requirements of the person specification.

If you are having technical difficulties applying online, please use the online chat functionality which can be found on the bottom right hand side of the form. Alternatively, you can contact **Vacancy Filler** directly on **01509 236434**, and quote the role reference number and your application number (if known). Please note, Vacancy Filler are contactable, Monday – Friday between 9.00am – 5.00pm.

If you have any queries regarding the role and/or the V&A's recruitment process, you can email us – contacthr@vam.ac.uk or telephone us on 020 7942 2937 (Working hours Monday – Friday 9.00am – 5.00pm).

Closing date for receipt of applications is Sunday 10 November 2019.

Interview date: Week starting 18 November 2019.

Interview expenses will not be paid unless there is a prior agreement.