

JOB DESCRIPTION



Job Title	Head of Academic Partnerships	Duration	Permanent
Division	Collections	Hours/FTE	Full time
Dept	VARI, NAL and Archives	Salary	£55,000 - £62,000
Reports to	Director, VARINALA	Direct Reports	TBC

Context

The V&A is the world's leading museum of art and design. The V&A's Collections Division comprises six curatorial, research and collections management teams. Four of these bring together the V&A's curatorial departments, a fifth conservation and collections management, and the sixth the V&A's Research Institute, National Art Library and Archives, brought together in 2021.

The first national museum to have established a dedicated Research Department, the V&A has also been sector-leading over the last 30 years in the development of museum-delivered postgraduate education, by establishing in 1982, with the Royal College of Art, the world's first MA and PhD programme in the History of Design. In addition to this programme, which continues to be successful today, the V&A also plays a central role in the AHRC's Collaborative Doctoral Partnership (CDP) and Doctoral Training Partnership (DTP) schemes, hosting a thriving community of postgraduate students. Training the next generations of collections-based researchers in museums and universities has long been at the core of the work of the V&A's Research Department, and more recently of the V&A Research Institute, supported by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

VARI's interdisciplinary research community works on projects supported by a major grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation in addition to smaller research grants from UK Research Councils (including Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC)), the Leverhulme Trust, British Academy, and a range of international funders. Our research projects are rooted in the V&A's collections and practices: our projects experiment with new ways of studying, teaching with, displaying and accessibly storing collections; they explore our institutional practices and histories, and are producing new knowledge and new methods for collections-based research through programming, print, digital and public engagement outputs. We also work to develop long-term sustainable models to enable pioneering research to contribute to the V&A's major capital projects and strategic priorities.

The V&A is currently undergoing a significant transformation, moving towards the creation of a family of V&A sites, including V&A Wedgwood Collection, Young V&A, V&A Dundee and two new sites in East London: V&A East Museum and V&A East Storehouse, a new, state-of-the-art collections and research centre due to open in 2024. As we develop in these new areas and relationships, we seek to expand and diversify our HE partnerships and programmes, developing new research collaborations and widening student engagement.

Main Purpose of job

This is a new leadership role within the VARI, NAL and Archives team that recognizes the V&A's important role in designing research-led teaching for the 21C. The postholder will lead on the strategic development of new academic partnerships that build on the V&A's track record in innovative, interdisciplinary teaching to co-develop UG and PG HE programmes that equip students with the knowledge, skills and aptitudes needed to deal with and lead in our fast-moving and ever more complex world. They will be responsible for building and developing relationships, research-led HE curricula, and collaborative research opportunities with emerging partners involved in East Bank (UCL, LCF, ULiL), the wider group of HEIs in East London (UEL, QMUL, Birkbeck) and academic partners for the V&A family of sites (including V&A Wedgwood Collection and V&A Dundee). In this capacity, they will forge new collaborations between cultural institutions and HE and the local/global community. They will also direct the V&A's involvement in doctoral partnerships (such as the AHRC-funded CDP and DTP schemes) and oversee VARI's doctoral students, fostering and supporting students as active members of the V&A's research community. The post holder will work closely with two key roles in the VARI team: the Head of History of Design, to ensure new relationships and activities are complementary to the long-standing relationship with the RCA, and the Research Grants Manager, on the development of new research projects and fellowships with academic partners. Finally, the post-holder will support the Director of VARI, NAL and Archives in the management of the new department, contributing to planning and budgeting, holding line management responsibilities within the VARI, NAL and Archives team and sharing responsibility for relevant ECRs and Research Fellows and the coordination and dissemination of their research outputs.

Key Responsibilities

Deepening Knowledge
Carrying out innovative research in a field relevant to the Museum's collections and/or practices, publishing research-led publications and communicating research to a range of audiences in a variety of forms; actively contributing to the V&A's research culture
Developing and establishing new partnerships with academic partners to lead to new research and/or research-led teaching collaborations; developing and fostering partnerships with industry and government
Exploring, developing and supporting new possibilities for research rooted in the V&A's collections and practices
Developing and delivering innovative research-led HE programmes
Contributing to the strategic leadership and development of the V&A Research Institute
Contributing to the coordination and amplification of existing research activity
Innovating
Developing national and international academic and research partnerships and programmes
Developing pedagogically innovative research-led teaching provision rooted in the V&A's collections and research ecosystem
Contributing to increasing research income from existing and new sources
Understanding the suite and scope of museum projects and public programmes and contributing as appropriate
Supporting Directorate by contributing to National and International programmes and partnerships as appropriate
Leading
Playing a leading role in the V&A's research community of practice
Contributing to departmental planning and budgeting and ensuring adherence to museum processes, and innovation in these processes; taking responsibility for budgets and other resources allocated to the department
Managing research staff: allocating work based on knowledge, skills and available time and resources, providing clear instructions and specifications; recognising the achievement and performance of others and giving them credit; providing others with regular feedback and coaching in a constructive manner; motivating team

members by making them feel valued; celebrating success; encouraging an open, safe and approachable environment by listening and not judging
Ensuring familiarity with relevant legislation (Access, health and safety, GDPR, FOI) and committing to good practice and adherence to V&A policy; ensuring familiarity and cooperation with all Museum security procedures
Undertaking, as a senior member of the Department, projects or managerial responsibilities as delegated by the Director, which will change from time to time

The above job description is intended to be an outline of the duties and responsibilities for this role. This is not exhaustive, and it is likely to change over time. You may be expected to undertake other duties that are commensurate with this role

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Job Spec	Educated to PhD level; significant expertise in an area relevant to the Museum’s mission, with a strong track record in research-led publications and/or other outputs
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	Experience of working in a GLAM or similar organisation in a research capacity; or experience of working in an HEI, in an academic and/or research leadership role
	Demonstrable knowledge of research funding landscape and priorities; knowledge of UK industrial strategy and related policies and strategies
	Proven track record of identifying and nurturing research partnerships and collaborations, including research grants and collaborative doctoral projects
	Proven track record of developing and delivering research-led HE programmes and HE curriculum design
	Track record of research project development and grant capture
	Demonstrable experience of motivating and leading people effectively, building a team and community of practice and promoting collaboration across formal boundaries
	Excellent communication skills and an ability to communicate technical or specialist ideas or information persuasively, adapting the style and message to a diverse audience in an inclusive and accessible way
Core Skills	Excellent standard of written English and highly numerate with the ability to carry out complex numerical analysis
	Significant interpersonal and consultative skills, including the ability to communicate, present, negotiate, influence and build credibility with colleagues and external parties
	The ability to use MS Office and other relevant IT systems as appropriate for the role.
	Significant experience of managing and prioritising a high workload and multiple complex issues and tasks in a changing environment with tight deadlines
Behaviours	<p>Respects others' expertise, time, perspectives and contribution.</p> <p>Takes responsibility for delivering on actions, achieving high-standards and learning from mistakes</p> <p>Open to change, new ideas and suggestions; looks for opportunities for improvement and self-development</p> <p>Works with others outside their own department in a collaborative, understanding, and, engaging way.</p> <p>Actively leads and manages others, taking ownership of corporate decisions and role models positive behaviours.</p>
Desirable	Demonstrable commitment to innovative pedagogical approaches to collections-based teaching

Hours: Net working hours (i.e. excluding meal breaks) are 36 per week.

Normal working hours are 9am-5.15pm Monday to Thursday and 9am-5pm Fridays.