

The Home Darkroom and the Freedom of Photographic Production in Britain, London

The University of Westminster and the Museum of the Home, London, Oct 01, 2024

Application deadline: May 17, 2024

Dr Sara Dominici, University of Westminster

The Home Darkroom and the Freedom of Photographic Production in Britain, 1950s-present.

The University of Westminster and the Museum of the Home (MoH) are delighted to announce a call for applicants for a fully funded collaborative doctoral studentship from October 2024, under the AHRC's Collaborative Doctoral Partnership (CDP4) scheme.

This PhD will be the first to research the relationship between the home darkroom and LGBTQ+ people's quest for freedom of expression and visual representation in Britain from the 1950s to the present. The project will combine the archival study of LGBTQ+ photographic practices at home with two complementary collecting projects: oral history interviews with LGBTQ+ darkroom users and photographs of and produced in home darkrooms. By working with contemporary practitioners, the student will also rethink how to share such hidden stories with museum audiences.

The successful applicant will be expected to spend time at both Westminster and at the MoH, as well as becoming part of the wider cohort of AHRC-funded students. The student will have access to the same levels of training, support, and expertise as members of staff at the MoH, thus developing core museum skills alongside academic capabilities.

The project will be supervised by Dr Sara Dominici (Senior Lecturer in Photographic History and Visual Culture), Professor Pippa Catterall (Professor of History and Policy) and Dr Alison Hesse (Lecturer in Museum and Gallery Studies) at Westminster; and, at the MoH, by Marina Maniadaki (Exhibitions and Project Manager) and Louis Platman (Curator).

The core research aims are:

_To explore, for the first time, the fundamental role played by the domestic environment in fostering a material and imaginative space within which photographic representation of LGBTQ+ life in Britain could be created;

_To research and collect: i) LGBTQ+ people's memories and lived experiences of the home darkroom in Britain from the 1950s to the present, and ii) photographs of and that were produced in this space, in order to understand how the home darkroom has shaped LGBTQ+ histories and perspectives;

_To diversify the understanding of home, and, consequently, the experience of the museum, by developing a new museological approach to sharing LGBTQ+ stories of image-making at home.

All prospective students are strongly advised to first make informal contact with the lead supervi-

