

Archives and Library Fellowship, Paul Mellon Centre, London

Paul Mellon Centre

Application deadline: Jan 31, 2023

Alice Read

The Archives and Library Fellowship is offered annually to allow an individual to undertake a research project focused on the Paul Mellon Centre's Archives and Library.

This is an exceptional opportunity to undertake sustained, original research focussed on the Centre's collections. These include an extensive Photographic Archive, over 15,000 auction catalogues, and nationally important holdings of art historians' papers, are an outstanding resource for the study of art and architectural history, historiography and theory, photography, publishing, exhibitions histories, and through specific holdings of personal archives, intellectual networks, queer history and the social history of knowledge production. The successful applicant will be expected to pursue a research project using the Archives & Library collections over a period of 12 months and will have the opportunity to disseminate their findings through the Centre's programme of talks, publications, events and displays.

The Fellowship is an award of £10,000 for a period of 12 months. During this time the Fellow will be required to carry out detailed research engaging critically with the Archives & Library collections at the Centre, which is based in Bedford Square, London. For international applicants and those who would need to travel to London there is an additional bursary available to support travel and accommodation.

The Paul Mellon Centre is an educational charity that champions new ways of understanding British art history and culture. Through all areas of our work, including our fellowships programme, we promote activities that enhance and expand knowledge of British art and architecture. As an institution, we pledge ourselves to ensuring that the histories of British art are enriched and made more relevant to a broader range of people in the future. The inclusion of voices, narratives and experiences that have been marginalised or excluded in the past will have a transformational impact on the future of the Centre and upon British art studies. Accordingly, the Paul Mellon Centre particularly welcomes applications to the Fellowship from those who are under-represented within the academic field of the humanities in the UK.

Scope

The Fellowship is expected to focus on the Paul Mellon Centre's Archives & Library collections and explore a relevant theme in art and architectural history, historiography, collections history or another area of research illuminated in specific ways by the collections.

The Centre's Archives & Library collect material concerning British art and architecture of all periods with particular focus on the Middle Ages to the present day. The Centre is a specialist archive repository collecting the papers of art historians and other individuals working in the field. Particular subject strengths are: British artists; collecting and patronage; the Grand Tour; the study of art history in the UK; collections of British art; and the country house. The main emphasis is on the art and architecture of the British Isles, including Ireland; however, material on artists working in the British tradition throughout the world is also acquired.

The Archives & Library consist of separate Library, Archives and Photographic Archive collection. We have a reference Library consisting of extensive holdings of books, exhibition catalogues, periodicals and auction catalogues mainly published from the 18th – 21st centuries including a number of special collections and donations.

The Archives encompass both a series of Collected Archives – over forty collections acquired from outside the Centre, predominantly comprising of the papers of art historians, auction houses, art critics and museum/gallery professionals; and also the Institutional Archive, comprising the records created by the Paul Mellon Centre in the course of its everyday work and selected for permanent preservation because of their long-term historical value.

There are two Photographic Archives: The Paul Mellon Centre Photographic Archive, a digital resource containing reproductions of British paintings from 1500–1920 and the Tate Photographic Archive, formerly an internal resource created by curatorial staff at the Tate containing reproductions of British works of art from 1500–2000.

All applicants are expected to contact the Archives & Library staff to discuss their areas of interest. Subject areas addressed by previous Fellows have included:

Finding a Historiography for Gavin Stamp

Fundamentals of Knowledge: Art History in Britain c. 1940–70

Brian Sewell and British Art History in the 1990s

Fellows are required to produce a substantial piece of original research during the term of their fellowship. Previous examples have included articles for *British Art Studies* and for *Kunst Chronik*, and curation of Drawing Room Displays at the Centre, as well as contributions to PMC-produced films and PMC Notes.

Funding

The Paul Mellon Centre Collections Fellowship is an award of £10,000. This is paid as a lump sum to the Fellow.

For international applicants and those who would need to travel to London there is an additional bursary available for travel, accommodation, and subsistence.

Eligibility

The Fellowship is open to researchers at all levels. However, it is envisaged that the successful

applicant would normally hold a PhD or have relevant research or professional experience, and have practical knowledge of using archive and library collections sufficient to allow them to pursue their research independently. Applicants are encouraged to explore the scope and extent of the Centre's collections in advance of making an application. This will ensure that their proposed research is sufficiently focussed on, and supported by, the Archives & Library, and applicants will need to be able to demonstrate this in making their research proposal.

There is no requirement for the Fellow to give up any existing job or research work: this Fellowship is designed to sit alongside existing commitments. In some cases, the fellowship award could be used to support back-fill for applicants in employment: please refer to the Grants Manager, here, if this is something you would like to discuss.

Timing and duration

The Fellowship is designed to cover the period July 2023–June 2024. The successful Fellow is expected to spend the equivalent of at least 30 days at the Centre over the duration of the Fellowship.

Supervision and support

The Fellow will be supervised by a team of two PMC Staff: the Head of Grants, Fellowships and Networks and a designated member of the Archives and Library team. Fellows will also be supported in their research by Archives and Library staff, and other PMC Staff as appropriate, and are encouraged to engage with the Centre's wide-ranging programmes of research events, activities and networks.

Application

The Paul Mellon Centre Archives & Library Fellowship is next offered in our Spring 2023 round of funding. Applications will open November 2022 and close on 31 January 2023.

To apply for the Fellowship you must use our online system at grants.paul-mellon-centre.ac.uk. Once registered you will be able to fill out the online application form (an example of which can be downloaded below) and provide the details of two referees. Once the application is submitted we will contact the nominated referees with details on how they submit their reference which must be completed through our online system and must be no more than 500 words.

Requirements

In preparing their application, applicants are expected to explore the Archives & Library through our extensive online catalogues and guides, here, and are encouraged to contact the Archives & Library staff to discuss their area of interest and visit or request copies of relevant materials. At the beginning of the Fellowship, the Fellow will be expected to visit the Centre and work with Archives and Library staff and the Head of Grants, Fellowships and Networks to agree a research plan.

Two progress reports must be submitted to the Centre: the first preliminary report setting out core aims and outputs at 6 weeks into the Fellowship; the second, detailed report after 6 months.

The Fellow is required to spend the equivalent of at least 30 days at the Centre over the duration

of the Fellowship for the purposes of their research.

The Fellow is expected to produce a detailed proposal for a research output, submitted as part of a second progress report (at 6 months).

The form and character of the research output will be agreed with the Head of Grants, Fellowships and Networks and the Archives and Library team following the submission of the second progress report and proposal, but would be equivalent to an 8-10,000 word essay. Outputs may include texts prepared to publication, talks, online content, seminars, or a proposal for the PMC's Drawing Room Displays

The research output will be completed within 18 months of the end of the fellowship (ie. by the end of 2025)

The Fellow is required to produce a final report, with a short (250 word) publishable statement about the aims, progress and achievements of the Fellowship, together with a more substantial (maximum 750 words) account for the PMCs' records

If you have specific questions regarding our Archives and Library please contact the Archives and Library staff [here](#). If you have any questions about the Fellowship and the application procedure, please contact the Grants Manager, [here](#), or the Head of Grants, Fellowships and Networks, [here](#).

Reference:

STIP: Archives and Library Fellowship, Paul Mellon Centre, London. In: ArtHist.net, Jan 21, 2023 (accessed Mar 14, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/38383>>.