

Technical Art History and Heritage Science

npj Heritage Science, Feb 11–Nov 10, 2025

Deadline: Nov 10, 2025

www.nature.com/npjheritagesci

Astrid Harth, City University of Hong Kong

Art-Historical Issues and the Scientific Study of Artworks - npj Heritage Science.

How does technical art history relate to the burgeoning field of heritage science? Has technical art history become part of heritage science? Can both disciplines be considered counterparts within the broader context of cultural heritage research? Or do differences with regards to research scope, approaches and expertise set technical art history apart from heritage science?

This special collection aims to address these questions by bringing together the fields of technical art history and heritage science. We welcome papers that present the latest research and methodological advances in the scientific study of artworks and interpret knowledge about these objects' materiality in relation to their historical context and meaning. The aim of the collection is (a) to demonstrate how the scientific study of artworks can elucidate art-historical questions and (b) to present an opportunity to reevaluate the state of research in the field of technical art history in relation to heritage science. As such, the special collection seeks to acknowledge the current challenges and shortcomings of technical art history as well.

These challenges and limitations mainly emanate from the following developments:

- The emergence of heritage science and its latest advancements;
- The decline in the focus on art-historical questions in cultural heritage research;
- The lack of platforms encouraging collaboration between art historians and scientists;
- The traditional focus of technical art history on European fine arts, the study of old masters and questions of authenticity.

In this special collection, we aim to reflect on these issues by recognizing the evolving role of heritage science in further advancing the field of technical art history. It is intended as a platform to encourage collaboration between the two interdisciplinary disciplines by bringing together expertise from the sciences and humanities, including art history, heritage science, conservation science, archaeometry, and digital humanities. Furthermore, the collection is envisioned to promote a global approach towards the scientific study of artworks and widens its scope beyond the fine arts. We aspire to include a geographic spread of authors and issues. Papers are encouraged that present new approaches and perspectives to the interdisciplinary study of artworks and that connect the objectives of technical art history to heritage science.

- contact-email: aharth@cityu.edu.hk

- for submission details: <https://www.nature.com/npjheritagesci/for-authors-and-referees>

- website for the submissions: <https://www.nature.com/collections/iicdhachhe/how-to-submit>

Reference:

CFP: Technical Art History and Heritage Science. In: ArHist.net, Feb 20, 2025 (accessed Jul 10, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/43930>>.