

PhD Position, University of Manchester and Tate Liverpool

University of Manchester and Tate Liverpool

Application deadline: May 2, 2025

Ana Baeza Ruiz

PhD Opportunity: Art from the North 1979-1990.

About the Project

This PhD studentship will critically examine artistic practices and cultural activism in Northern England during the 1980s.

The 1980s represented a pivotal era in the UK, characterised by profound political and economic transformations. Notable events include the 1981 uprisings in Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, and Leeds, the influence of Thatcherism, industrial decline, and the miners' strikes. Despite these challenges, the arts in Northern England flourished in diverse ways, opposing the political context through practices rooted in feminism, post-colonialism, class struggle and socialism.

This doctoral project is an opportunity to consider the contexts in which art outside London was produced, the ideological and aesthetic discourses that emerged, and the practices that were cultivated during the 1980s. Given the strong, historic international ties through migration and trading in Northern England, the research will take a trans-national approach that starts with the local. It will consider how diaspora shaped the demographic diversity of the North and its art scene, at a time that saw the flourishing activity of a new generation of diasporic artists.

Key research questions may include:

- In what ways did the economic, social, and political conditions of 1980s Northern England influence new artistic developments and to what extent did these diverge from popular trends in the capital?
- How did diaspora shape the northern art scene?
- What role did Northern England's art and artists play in post-industrial regeneration?
- How did the opening of Tate Liverpool reflect and contribute to artistic and economic regeneration in the North in the 1980s?

The research developed in this studentship will contribute to an exhibition at Tate Liverpool in 2028 and there will be opportunities to develop experience within its curatorial team.

The project will be co-supervised by Dr Danielle Child (Lecturer in Creative and Cultural Industries, University of Manchester), Dr Ana Baeza Ruiz (Lecturer in Museology, University of Manchester) and Dr Leanne Green (Head of Exhibitions and Displays, Tate Liverpool).

Benefits and opportunities

The successful candidate will be hosted by the Department of Art History and Cultural Practices at the School of Arts, Languages and Cultures at University of Manchester, whose research community is distinctive for its strong interdisciplinary interests and longstanding partnerships with cultural organisations. The successful candidate will be based at the Institute for Cultural Practices (ICP), and will benefit from innovative research and professional development opportunities. At Tate, the candidate will join a community of doctoral researchers, benefitting from access to Tate's collection, resources, and events. They will be embedded within Tate's Curatorial Department and will develop an advanced understanding of research for exhibitions, conducting interviews with artists, collections-based research, and archival research.

Candidates will also be expected to engage in a minimum of 3-6 months professional development throughout the studentship period, allowing them to gain transferable skills and practical knowledge. Throughout the PhD, they will also have the opportunity to engage in networking and events with Tate and the wider network of museums, galleries and heritage organisations affiliated with the AHRC CDP scheme as part of the CDP Cohort Development programme.

Eligibility Criteria

We encourage applications from a wide range of candidates with suitable qualifications and/or equivalent experience.

Academic Entry Qualification

- Bachelor's (Honours) degree at 2:1 or above (or overseas equivalent).
- Master's degree in a relevant subject such as Art History, Curatorial or Museum Studies, History, Cultural Studies, Postcolonial Studies, Urban Studies, History, or Visual Culture – with an overall average of 65% or above, a minimum mark of 65% in your dissertation, and no mark below 55% (or overseas equivalent).

English Language

All applicants must demonstrate proficiency in English. Full details on the required language tests can be found [here](#).

Desirable Requirements

We welcome applicants who demonstrate equivalent experience. This might include, but is not restricted to, a strong track record of employment in a museum, non-commercial gallery, or a comparable cultural institution. Applicants should demonstrate an interest in and enthusiasm for developing their skills and critical thinking in the museum sector or interdisciplinary curatorial practice.

Application Procedure

The application deadline is Midnight (BST) on 02/05/25. Please apply online for PhD Art History and Visual Studies at the University of Manchester: <https://www.manchester.ac.uk/study/postgraduate-research/programmes/list/02898/phd-art-history-and-visual-studies/#course-profile>

- Under Section 6, select 'Yes' to 'Are you applying for an advertised project?' and insert the project title as per the top of the advert. When entering the name of the supervisor, type rather than use the supervisor search function.
- In Section 9, indicate your intention to apply for the AHRC Tate CDP PhD Studentship.

The application must include:

- Academic CV, detailing your education, qualifications, employment history, publications, and any other relevant information.
- Copies of your Bachelor's and Master's academic transcript and degree certificate. If your Master's degree is pending, please provide an interim transcript.
- Supporting statement (max. 500 words) explaining why you would like to undertake this studentship and how your focus, experience, and skills align with the research outlined above.
- Example of a piece of academic writing (up to 5,000 words). This may be an academic essay or dissertation chapter(s); if submitting a dissertation excerpt, include an abstract or introduction outlining the study's context, aims, and research questions. In Section 12, upload the Writing Sample under Research Statement/Proposal and label it clearly as "Writing Sample."
- Names of two academic referees, including one from your most recent institution who can assess your suitability for PhD study and relate their comments to the advertised project.
- Submit a completed AHRC ED Monitoring Form
- A PhD Proposal is not required.

If you have any questions about the project or would like to discuss further, please contact Dr Danielle Child (danielle.child@manchester.ac.uk).

Formal interviews are expected to take place virtually on 27 May 2025.

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

You can read the University's Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion statement [here](#).

Reasonable Adjustments and Support for Applicants

Should you require any reasonable adjustments or support throughout the application process, please contact HUMS.doctoralacademy.admissions@manchester.ac.uk or studentships@tate.org.uk.

Support or adjustments may include, but are not limited to: opportunities to speak with supervisors or relevant contacts regarding the project and process, institutional support systems and spaces, and interview arrangements.

Funding Notes

AHRC CDP PhD Studentship with Tate, starting October 2025, is funded for 4 or 8 years, covering UKRI tuition fees and a £20,870 annual stipend (2025/26). This studentship is open to international candidates. The difference between the international and UKRI tuition fees will be provided by the University of Manchester.

Additional funding includes:

- £750 per year (RTSG) for research support.
- £600 per year (CDA uplift) for collaboration costs.
- Up to £1,300 per year from Tate for research expenses (£650 for part-time).

Reference:

JOB: PhD Position, University of Manchester and Tate Liverpool. In: ArtHist.net, Apr 6, 2025 (accessed Dec 16, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/47181>>.