Ishibashi Foundation Network Leader Fellowship in Japanese Arts

Norwich, London, and online, Oct 1, 2026–Aug 30, 2027
Application deadline: May 31, 2026

Eugenia Bogdanova-Kummer, Heidelberg University

We are delighted to share a call for applications for the second round of The Ishibashi Foundation Network Leader Fellowship Programme in Japanese Arts (2026-27) organised by the Sainsbury Institute for the Study of Japanese Arts and Cultures.

The programme supports early-career scholars (PhD candidates, postdoctoral researchers within two years of PhD completion, and early-career curators) from anywhere in the world, and is designed to support fellows' original and well-defined research projects in Japanese arts at their home locations while providing broader academic networking and research support. For information about fellows and projects supported in 2025-26, please visit https://dig.sainsbury-institute.org/ifnet/

The programme aims to establish an innovative new model for transforming how new generations of researchers engage with Japanese art, mentored by the Sainsbury Institute and drawing on its global networks. To the selected fellows, we offer financial support of £7500 for a clearly scoped individual research project; online mentoring and training sessions in the field of Japanese arts; access to the extended professional networks of the Sainsbury Institute; and a one-week trip to the UK in summer 2027, to be funded separately in addition to the research funding outlined above.

Eligibility and Selection Criteria:
- Open to PhD candidates and early postdocs (up to two years post-PhD) specialising in Japanese arts and fields related to Japan’s visual culture, from anywhere in the world.
- In case of countries where PhD programmes in Japanese or Asian art are limited, applications from early career curators or art professionals working with Japanese arts, with up to five years of professional experience, will be considered.
- Priority will be given to scholars from regions without established centres for the study of Japanese arts (outside Western Europe, North America, and Japan), though all applications will be reviewed.
- Applicants should demonstrate exceptional academic potential, a strong interest in Japanese visual cultures, necessary language training, clearly defined project goals, and a vision for their future career trajectory.

Application Materials and Deadline:
CV (including language skills).

One letter of recommendation from home institution (PhD supervisor). For scholars who are not affiliated with PhD programmes, a professional reference that attests to your experience working with Japanese arts is required.
A 5-page proposal including:
- Your background and training in Japanese studies and art.
- Your motivation for applying and how your profile fits into the framework of the project.
- An outline of the proposed project (with clear goals and objectives achievable within one year, and which may relate to your PhD project).
A project timeline.
A draft budget.
The type of support you would require from the Sainsbury Institute to realise your project.
An explanation of how your project will enhance global studies of Japanese arts.

Please submit your application materials in PDF format to sisjac@sainsbury-institute.org. Letters of recommendation should be sent directly by the referee to the aforementioned email address.

More information about the programme, application process, and eligibility can be found at: https://www.sainsbury-institute.org/news/call-for-applications-the-ishibashi-foundation-network-leader-fellowship-programme-in-japanese-arts-2026-27/

The application deadline is May 31, with online interviews for selected candidates scheduled for June 2026 and the online programme commencing in October 2026.

Reference:
STIP: Ishibashi Foundation Network Leader Fellowship in Japanese Arts. In: ArtHist.net, Apr 13, 2026 (accessed Nov 23, 2026), <https://arthist.net/archive/52208>.