

Royal Museums Greenwich (RMG) Caird Fellowship

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1) Can PhD students apply?

*This depends on your source of funding. We do not accept applications from current PhD students in receipt of UKRI funding, unless the Fellowship proposal is for research to be undertaken **after** the submission of the PhD thesis. However, if you are a self-funded PhD student, you **are** eligible to apply for a fellowship which will take place during your doctorate.*

2) Are international PhD students eligible to apply?

Yes, international PhD Students are eligible to apply for a Fellowship during or after their PhD, as they are not funded by UK public funds (UKRI). However, all overseas applicants, including PhD students, are responsible for ensuring they have the correct permissions to visit and undertake research in the UK.

3) What level of detail does RMG want to see about the project timetable in the application proposal?

We expect you to show the activities you will undertake month by month – both research and any indicative public engagement activities – with at least a couple of bullet points or sentences per month.

4) Can we use the Caird Fellowship to explore other archives in London that are relevant to the proposed project?

Yes, it is fine to spend some of your time researching or responding to RMG's collections, and some of the time undertaking research at other archives. The main focus of your research should be on RMG collections, however.

5) What level of funding is available to support public engagement?

There is 'between £1000 and £5000' of funding available to support practice-based research and public engagement relating to your project. This sum will be agreed with the Museum and will vary depending on the needs of each research project and on the total sum required across the whole RMG Fellowship portfolio each year.

6) Can we use the engagement funding to pay our collaborators, if required?

Yes, it is possible to use this funding to pay collaborators, either to support practice-based research or for public engagement outputs. Initial details should be provided in the application form and will be agreed with RMG if you are successful.

7) Can I approach RMG with queries about my project before I apply?

*Unfortunately, **we do not have the capacity to answer pre-application enquiries about your research topic or its suitability.** We are **only** able to answer technical enquiries relating to your eligibility or the application form or process - email research@rmg.co.uk*

*To formulate a successful application, you **must make a strong link to our collections.** We therefore encourage all applicants to use information on our website to find out more about us and hone their application including our collections information and strategy webpages:*

- [Collections Online](#)
- [Caird Library](#)
- [Research guides](#)
- [Our strategic vision](#)
- [Collections Development Policy](#) – especially section 3 ('An overview of current collections')

8) Is a grant available to more than one applicant?

Yes, we are open to receiving Fellowship project applications where the funding is split between applicants. However, please note that each Fellowship project will only receive a single award of funding e.g. 3 months at £2100 per month. Multiple applicants will therefore share that single award.

9) Is there any ruling that a Caird Research fellowship can only be given to an individual once?

*No, there is no rule that says you can only hold a Fellowship once. Each application is assessed on its merits. In the past, we have had Fellows who have been awarded a subsequent Fellowship either on a new topic or to extend their original research. However, RMG **does** prioritize the widening of participation in the Fellowship scheme and is particularly keen to offer the opportunity of Fellowship funding to those who have **not** had that chance before. In a competitive field, we will look to prioritize these applicants, therefore.*

10) Will you award a Fellowship in an area that has already been funded?

*We are always open to new approaches and ideas, but in a competitive field we are more likely to fund projects on collections or areas that **haven't** been recently funded.*

11) Is it possible to apply to undertake a blend of academic and practical research?

Yes – absolutely. We are very open to creative ways of approaching our collections and subject matter, which could combine traditional archival research with a practice-based methodology or output. Recent Caird Fellow Dr Nydia Swaby used an academic and practice-based approach in this way: see the Information Webinar recording and/or her webpage for more details: [Curating Archives: Black Feminist Pasts, Presents, and Futures at Royal Museums Greenwich](#)

12) I am an artist interested in collaborating with Royal Museums Greenwich. Is the Fellowship for me?

*Possibly – it depends on your approach. RMG works in various ways with contemporary artists on commissions and collaborations, and artist-in-residences, but our practice-based Fellowships are specifically **research**-based i.e. research undertaken to gain new knowledge partly by means of practice (professional or creative) and the outcomes of that practice. Any proposal will therefore need to explain your research approach (or methodology).*

13) Do you have a list of recent successful Fellowships, how long they were and whether they were practice-based?

Yes – see below (any practice-based projects are denoted by an asterisk):

2025-26:

- Building a Feminist Archive: Women mapmakers in the collections (6-month Fellowship)
- Knowledge Exchange at the Royal Observatory Greenwich (ROG) During the Tenure of Airy: Constructing a Colonial Knowledge Network (3-month Fellowship)
- Navigating Welfare: Greenwich Hospital School and state-led childcare and welfare, 1806-1840 (6-month Fellowship)
- Invalidated: Age, Infirmary, and Disability in the British Royal Navy (6-month Fellowship)

- Emancipation 1808-1838: Rhetoric, Reality, and Museum Display (3-month Fellowship, undertaken part-time over six months)

2024-25:

- Sylvia's Odyssey: Anglo-Japanese Encounters in 'the Japanese Mediterranean', c. 1860-1880 (6-month Fellowship undertaken part-time over 12 months)
- The Proof in the Plans - analysis of historic ship plans in pursuit of foreign influence (6-month Fellowship undertaken part-time over 12 months)
- Exploring Alan Villiers' understanding and portrayal of Islam and Arabian culture through his photographs and writing (3-month Fellowship)
- The Afterlives of Slave Ships: Prize Auctions and Abolition in the Atlantic World (3-month Fellowship spread over 12 months)
- *Seeing Ourselves (6-month Fellowship spread over 15 months)

14) Do you have examples of public outputs of recent Fellowships?

Yes, recent Fellows on both 'traditional' and 'practice-based projects' have:

- *Contributed to the RMG blog e.g.*
[*The Afterlives of Slaving Vessels; Armchair Empires: Thomas Pennant's 'Outlines of the Globe'*](#)
- *Given a public talk for our [*Salons in the Queen's House*](#) series*
- *Delivered an in-depth online seminar for our [*Maritime History and Culture Seminar*](#) series*
- *Enhanced our catalogue records and contributed to research guides using knowledge gained via their research*
- *Convened an online seminar with experts in the field of their research: [*Outlines of the Globe: Thomas Pennant's Imaginary Tours*](#)*
- *Worked with our Engagement team to deliver workshops with young people: [*Curating Archives: Black Feminist Pasts, Presents, and Futures at Royal Museums Greenwich*](#)*
- *Worked with a film-maker to produce a creative response to our collections: [*Curating Archives: Black Feminist Pasts, Presents, and Futures at Royal Museums Greenwich*](#)*
- *Created artworks in response to our collections (display, forthcoming)*
- *Shared their research with our wider staff and Trustees at a Research Sharing Event*
- *Mentored students on a relevant design course to respond to our collections and held a public workshop showcasing students' work*

15) I would like to propose an exhibition or display at RMG relating to my research. Is this possible?

*Museum exhibition and display timescales are typically much longer-term than the Fellowship project and we have **very** limited scope to offer display opportunities as a Fellowship output. Please bear this in mind when developing your proposal. We would encourage you to think across a broader range of options from digital (e.g. a webpage, which we can facilitate), to public talks, online seminars. In rare cases, we may be able to facilitate a very small display in our Library display case or a minor update to an existing gallery display.*

16) Is it possible to undertake the Fellowship part time?

Yes, previous Fellows have spread their Fellowship a longer period e.g. 6-month Fellowship over 12 months, or even at 3-month Fellowship over 12 months (for someone who lived at a distance and could only come to the museum for research in separate chunks of time.

17) Can I therefore continue with my existing full-time job while undertaking the Fellowship?

*The Fellowship funds are to support your independent research project. It is typical for Fellows who have existing jobs to take a sabbatical, or to go part-time in order to undertake the Fellowship. If you feel you can dedicate sufficient time to the Fellowship research alongside a full-time job, **then you will need to demonstrate this in your application.***

18) Do I have to be on site all the time at the museum for the fellowship?

Not at all, we are very flexible. Your time will be your own during the fellowship and you are not expected to be onsite all the time. You can arrange your time as you wish e.g. Fellows near to Greenwich may spend several days a week or month undertaking research in the Caird Library (or stores) but may also work on their project offsite at other archives or at home. You will be offered a hot desk within the curatorial team office (if useful) and an RMG staff pass.

19) How will I be expected to engage with RMG?

We will arrange an induction to the museum, the Caird Library, collections database; and introductions to relevant staff members across the museum e.g. from our Engagement team. You will be allocated a curatorial mentor relevant to your subject area, and the research management team will also support you. You will be expected to periodically give updates at our Curatorial team meetings, and we will encourage you to participate in the research community at

the museum. We will support you in facilitating development of public outputs of your research. We may also ask you to give a talk at other events e.g. a Research Sharing Event for staff and trustees.

We pride ourselves on offering a supportive, friendly and inclusive environment for researchers, and we will encourage you make the most of your time with us by getting to know the museum collections and staff.