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I. Introduction

The Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A) is the world’s leading museum of art and design. It was established after the 1851 Great Exhibition with the aim of educating and inspiring the public and advancing the arts and sciences that shape the world around us. The Museum holds many of the UK’s national collections and houses several million objects covering most of the world’s cultures; and our scholarly resources include departmental collections, conservation laboratories, the National Art Library, the Archive of Art and Design and the recently opened Clothworkers’ Centre for the Study and Conservation of Textiles and Fashion.

Research has always been at the heart of the V&A, which grew out of the Government School of Design and the Department of Science and Art. It was the first national museum to establish a dedicated Research Department, which works with experts throughout the Museum and a wide range of partners in the fields of art, design and performance; conservation and collections management; and object-led, museum-based inquiry. Research enhances the expertise of our staff, knowledge of our collections, and access to our holdings, ensuring that the collections entrusted to our care will continue to inspire creativity and curiosity for many years to come.

The V&A is closely connected to a range of universities and other educational institutions: it is home to the world’s oldest postgraduate programme in the History of Design (delivered with the Royal College of Art), a member of the Arts and Humanities Research Council’s (AHRC) Collaborative Doctoral Partnership and an external partner in 6 of the UK’s 18 AHRC-funded doctoral training consortia. And with ‘Public Engagement’ and ‘Impact’ playing an ever greater role in the funding and assessment of academic research, museums can help scholars to reach a wider audience.

At the same time, the V&A has entered a period of unprecedented expansion, involving collaborations with partners in higher education, the heritage sector, the creative industries and policymakers across the UK and abroad. The next five years will see the creation of an underground exhibition space and public entrance on Exhibition Road, and the redevelopment of permanent displays for many collections (including Textiles and Fashion, Theatre and Performance, Photography and the Museum of Childhood), alongside the construction of the V&A Museum of Design in Dundee, a pioneering design museum in China, and a major new cultural and educational quarter on the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park.

The V&A Research Department coordinates and manages the Museum’s research grant applications to the national Research Councils, charitable foundations and other funding bodies. We welcome ideas for projects and partnerships – from internal colleagues and external collaborators – that serve our strategic priorities. In addition to the developments listed above, we have particular interests in:

• The history of our collections, and meaning and relevance of our founding ideals;
• The relationship between past and future in the field of design;
• The interface between physical objects and digital tools in the contexts of study, exchange and dissemination;
• The connections between hand, eye and mind, and the place of endangered or invisible skills in the history of making; and
• New approaches to collecting and studying material culture, especially in global contexts.

This Handbook is designed to describe – for V&A staff, academic partners and independent scholars – the opportunities for research in and on the Museum. It outlines the procedures for applying for external affiliations and internal secondments in support of research projects; it provides guidance to holders of research grants based at the Museum; and it introduces the policies for Open Access and Ethical Research that ensure our research is conducted and shared in a responsible manner.

Professor Bill Sherman
Head of Research

February 2015
II. V&A Research Application Review Committee

a. Overview

Research is a core activity at the V&A, serving the Museum’s mission ‘to enrich people’s lives and inspire individuals and everyone in the creative industries, through the promotion of knowledge, understanding and enjoyment of the designed world’. The Museum is a research leader in the fields of art, design and performance; conservation and collections management; and museum-based learning. Our staff are involved in diverse research projects and activities, many of which are made possible through the support of external funders.

The V&A Research Department provides a broad range of services and resources to support staff at all stages of the grant application process (see the staff intranet for information about available support) and to encourage high quality research funding proposals.

The V&A Research Application Review Committee reviews and refines the research funding proposals being developed within the Museum. This enables us to give colleagues constructive feedback about how to improve applications at an early stage, and focus resources on developing particularly promising proposals. The benefits of this new approach are to enhance the quality of V&A research funding applications, to increase funding success, and to ensure the intellectual and practical benefits of research to the Museum. The Committee looks at all research funding proposals (both grants and fellowships) where over £15,000 of funding would come to the V&A.

The Research Department generally needs at least four working weeks to process applications. This timeframe is designed to enable us to help you put together a well-prepared application and properly costed budget, as well as meeting V&A requirements and where applicable having the proposal reviewed by the Committee. Please make every effort to plan applications well in advance.

V&A staff involvement in any research funding application (regardless of the amount of funding involved) must always be authorised by the Research Department on behalf of the Museum, before the application is submitted. Bypassing this authorisation process means that the Museum may refuse to accept any involvement in the project, even if the funding application has been successful.

What you need to provide:

V&A staff should send the Research Grants Manager a completed Approval Request Form (section IX of the Research Handbook) alongside a fully developed rough draft of the proposal and confirmation of support from their Head of Department. The Committee is not necessarily expecting to see a fully-worked out and finalised proposal, but just needs enough information to get a proper sense of what the project involves.
b. Applications via other institutions:

If members of the V&A wish to be named on applications made through other institutions, you must always first discuss this with the Research Department and get approval even if you do not think there will be any costs involved (please contact the Research Grants Manager in the first instance).

c. At the Committee:

The Committee is made up of the Deputy Director, Head of Research, and external academic advisors. When appropriate we will also seek out additional specialist feedback from other colleagues.

In the case of major funding applications, the Committee may ask to see the proposal again at a later stage of development, in order to provide additional advice.

This assessment process is intended to support applicants in improving their applications, and the Research Department will work with you to help prepare and submit your full funding application.

d. Criteria used by the Committee in Reviewing Proposals

Intellectual strength: The proposal must present an intellectually coherent research project and argue a case for it. It needs to relate to existing literature and theory, to V&A collections and/or buildings and history, and to the applicant’s expertise; the methodology needs to be explicit and rigorous, appropriate and justified; it needs to make a new contribution to the field.

Subject area: The proposal must relate to the research priorities of one or more V&A departments, in order to ensure there is sufficient interest and support within the Museum to pursuing the project.

Relevance to funders and scheme: The proposal needs to be relevant to the funder’s general purposes and to relate to the remit of the particular scheme at which it is aimed. It is up to the applicant to ensure that s/he has read the funder’s guidelines and designed and drafted his/her proposal appropriately.

Realistic and achievable: The project must be realistic and achievable given the applicant’s expertise and the time and resources available.

Outputs: The proposal needs to look worthwhile (and realistic) in terms of outputs.

Research career strategy: The proposed project should be consistent in content, size etc. with the applicant’s medium-term research career plans. The size and duration of the project should also be considered in relation to plans for sabbatical leave, the holding of major departmental responsibilities, etc.
Collaboration: The proposal should be considered in terms of the potential for collaboration within the V&A and with outside partners (both academic and non-academic), and the potential to provide career opportunities for other researchers.

User engagement: Projects involving collaboration with users including government departments, practitioners etc. are valued by funders and can contribute positively to the impact of V&A research activities.

Finance: The Research Department needs to consider whether the project will be fully funded on the budget submitted to the funder, including what sort of replacement staff time will be provided, etc. If a project is not/cannot be funded in full, the applicant must consider what financial and other costs might be involved and how these might be funded.

e. Committee Terms of Reference

Name of Committee: Application Review Committee

Date of Formation: 2014

Chair: Margot Finn, UCL (V&A Trustee and Chair of Research Advisory Committee)

Members: Victor Buchli, UCL (external advisor)
Nicola Froggatt, V&A Research Grants Manager
Tag Gronberg, Birkbeck (external advisor)
Christine Guth, V&A/RCA Course Tutor
Beth McKillop, V&A Deputy Director
Bill Sherman, V&A Head of Research

Meeting Frequency: Once per year (ongoing Committee business conducted via email)

Reports to: Research Advisory Committee

Authority: Advisory role on research funding applications

Terms of Reference:

To review proposed applications to outside bodies for research funding (including all applications that would bring at least £15,000 to the V&A).

To help the Museum focus its resources on the most promising proposals and to provide constructive feedback to applicants.

To increase the success rate of applications from the V&A and improve the research culture supported by outside bodies.
III. V&A Research Department Affiliations

The purpose of this document is to explain the range of fellowships and other formal affiliations available within the V&A Research Department. They are designed to facilitate collaborative and individual projects in and on our collections, and to acknowledge the contributions of senior figures with long-standing associations with the Museum and/or international standing in relevant fields. There are separate procedures for the secondment of current V&A Staff to the Research Department and for the Museum's exchange programmes with other institutions.

All V&A Fellowship affiliations fall into one of the following categories:

A) Honorary Senior Research Fellowships;
B) Visiting Fellowships; and
C) Joint Fellowships.

A) Honorary Senior Research Fellow

These non-stipendiary fellowships are awarded to prominent scholars and/or practitioners and acknowledge unusual support for the Museum and its work (financial or otherwise).

Selection Criteria

• International standing in a relevant field of research or occupation (including history of design and the decorative arts, cultural history, museology, conservation and collections management, and art/design practice).
• Exceptional contribution to the research culture of the V&A and other museums.
• Potential for leading or advising the ongoing work of the Museum (including specific exhibition or research projects).
• Demonstrable capacity for bringing or attracting external sources of support to the Museum.

Expectations

Honorary Senior Research Fellows will not normally be based in the Department, but they will be eligible for a V&A pass and the access to spaces, collections and other resources it affords. If they are working on a project for the Museum, and subject to availability, they may be granted working and/or storage space within the Research Department or in another department. Fellows may be called upon to offer their advice to other scholars and members of staff; to present their work at seminars and/or conferences; and to serve as advocates and ambassadors in advancing knowledge of the V&A and its collections.

Application Process

Honorary Senior Research Fellows will be nominated by a member of staff and proposed by the Head of Research to the Research Advisory Committee.
Term of Appointment
Honorary Senior Research Fellows will normally be appointed for three years. The position can be renewed with the approval of the Research Advisory Committee. There is no limit to the number of fellows or to the number of times their fellowship can be renewed.

B) Visiting Fellow
These non-stipendiary fellowships allow scholars from outside the Museum to carry out a specific programme of research related to the V&A and its collections—in some cases as part of an exhibition or publication project and in some cases an independent project that has a bearing on the Museum and its work. Fellows will be given working and/or storage space in the Research Department or elsewhere in the Museum, and they will be eligible for a V&A pass and the access to spaces, collections and other resources it affords.

Selection Criteria
- A record of achievement and demonstrable potential for high quality research in a field related to the V&A and its collections.
- The ability to advance an existing or developing project that clearly serves the strategic priorities of the Museum and its Research Department.

Expectations
Visiting Fellows will usually be based in the Department and will be expected to work in the Museum for the duration of their tenure. They will make every appropriate effort to share the results of their research both inside and outside the Museum: they may be called upon to offer their advice to other scholars and members of staff; to present their work at seminars and/or conferences; and to serve as advocates and ambassadors in advancing knowledge of the V&A and its collections.

Application Process
Visiting Fellows must submit a Visiting Fellow Application Form (section VII of the Research Handbook). The Head of Research will make a decision based on consultation with relevant colleagues (including the Application Review Committee and/or Research Advisory Committee) and consideration of available space and other resources.

Term of Appointment
Visiting Fellows will be appointed for a specific period determined by the proposed project. The appointment will not normally be renewed, and extensions of proposed work and new projects will normally require the submission of a new application.
C) Joint Fellow
These non-stipendiary fellowships allow scholars based at (and funded by) other institutions to carry out a specific programme of research related to the V&A and its collections—in some cases as part of an exhibition or publication project and in some cases an independent project that has a bearing on the Museum and its work. Joint Fellows will be given working and/or storage space in the Research Department or elsewhere in the Museum, and they will be eligible for a V&A pass and the access to spaces, collections and other resources it affords.

Selection Criteria
• A record of achievement and demonstrable potential for high quality research in a field related to the V&A and its collections.
• The ability to advance an existing or developing project that clearly serves the strategic priorities of the Museum and its Research Department.

Expectations
Joint Fellows will usually be based in the Department for the duration of their project but some will spend at least part of their time carrying out agreed duties at their home institution (who will have the final say in such arrangements). They will make every appropriate effort to share the results of their research both inside and outside the Museum: they may be called upon to offer their advice to other scholars and members of staff; to present their work at seminars and/or conferences; and to serve as advocates and ambassadors in advancing knowledge of the V&A and its collections.

Application Process
There is no specific form for application. Joint Fellowships will emerge from conversations between relevant members of staff at the V&A and the partner institution(s), and the purpose of and parameters for the arrangement will be outlined in a Memorandum of Understanding. They will be proposed by the Head of Research and approved by the Research Advisory Committee.

Term of Appointment
Joint Fellows will be appointed for a specific period determined by the timetable for the proposed project or initiative. The appointment may be renewed—with the written agreement of both parties—as long as the work is ongoing.
IV. V&A Research Ethics Policy

1. Introduction

This document sets out the V&A’s Research Ethics policy for all members of the Museum engaged in research, including staff and students and anyone conducting research under the auspices of the V&A.

The V&A values the ability of its staff to conduct research to the highest standards of professional integrity. This policy sets out the standards of performance and conduct expected of all staff, students and contracted personnel engaged in research at the V&A. It is designed to ensure that research carried out at the Museum is conducted in an ethical and accountable manner. It aims to ensure the delivery of high quality research, to safeguard all stakeholders, to meet the requirements of relevant funding bodies and to manage risk in relation to Research Misconduct.

This policy replaces the V&A’s Code of Good Practice. It is based on standard expectations of good practice as outlined by the RCUK Policy and Guidelines on the Governance of Good Research Conduct (2009), Universities UK’s Concordat to Support Research Integrity (2012), our legal requirements, and professional guidance issued periodically from funders and other relevant bodies. It is based on policies already published by UK Universities and Independent Research Organisations, including the University of Oxford and the British Museum.

All Museum staff, students and those contracted to undertake research for the Museum must familiarise themselves with the policy and ensure that its provisions are observed. The Museum will also draw attention to the policy in its induction process for newly appointed researchers. Line Managers and Project Managers have a responsibility to seek to ensure compliance by their staff. V&A co-supervisors of students engaged in research will aim to ensure compliance with the Code by their students; students should refer to this document alongside the Ethics policy of their own university.

Failure to comply with this policy may give rise to an allegation of Research Misconduct (as further defined in Section 5). Research Misconduct is a very serious matter and may require the Museum to take measures including dismissal of the member of staff involved.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies and procedures:

- V&A Ethical Clearance Process for Research Projects (section X of the Research Handbook)
- V&A Open Access Policy (section V of the Research Handbook)
- V&A Records Management and Archives Policy (Staff Intranet)
- V&A Safety Policy (Staff Handbook)
2. Definitions

“Research” is understood to involve original investigation undertaken in order to gain knowledge and understanding. This definition includes the following:

- Scholarship: the analysis, synthesis and interpretation of ideas and information.
- Pure Research: work undertaken to acquire new knowledge without a particular application in view.
- Strategic Research: work which is carried out to discover new knowledge which might provide for an envisioned future application.
- Applied Research: work which is undertaken to discover new applications of existing or new knowledge.
- Action Research: the development of new knowledge through engagement in practice.

Within the Museum setting some of the above work takes place within the context of research informing the identification, selection and acquisition of objects into the Museum’s collections and exhibitions. Research may also focus on collections, or audiences, or both. Audience research may address (for example), the diversity of audience needs and behaviour; the effectiveness of exhibits, programmes and other public provision; and issues of cultural policy. Research also plays an active part in the conservation, presentation and interpretation of objects in the galleries and is essential in providing appropriate levels of documentation.

All research supports the creation of knowledge whereby information about objects in the Museum’s collections is enriched by a broader comprehension of their wider historical context and their social, intellectual, technological and aesthetic significance. The central types of knowledge required by the Museum are the ability to identify and care for objects in the collections and to enhance the interpretation of their meanings for diverse audiences. Members of staff and students must, therefore, maintain a constant dialogue between the objects, archival material and the relevant secondary literatures, between data and methods of care and interpretation, and between the Museum and its users. Audiences may themselves be active researchers, as students, academics, or specialist professionals, as well as informed participants.

“Researcher” is understood here as any person who conducts research, including but not limited to: as an employee; as an independent contractor or consultant; as a research student; as a visiting scholar or honorary fellow; or as a member of staff on a joint or honorary contract.

“Ethics” is defined by the Oxford English Dictionary Online (2014) as “Moral principles, or a system of these”.
3. Overarching Principles of Good Research Practice

The ‘Nolan Principles’ form the basis of the ethical standards expected of anyone who works as a public office holder, including everyone who works at a non-departmental public body such as the V&A.1 They are:

1. Selflessness
2. Integrity
3. Objectivity
4. Accountability
5. Openness
6. Honesty
7. Leadership

V&A staff and students should adhere to these principles in all aspects of their research. In particular they should:

- Demonstrate integrity and professionalism;
- Observe fairness and equity;
- Avoid, and/or declare, conflicts of interest;
- Ensure the safety and well-being of those associated with the research;
- Observe all relevant legal and ethical requirements; and
- Be open to scrutiny and debate.

Good research practice should also include:

- Securing and storing primary data appropriately;
- Documenting results clearly and accurately;
- Attributing and acknowledging the contributions of others;
- Co-operating with other researchers; and
- Taking special account of the needs of less experienced researchers.

V&A staff and students are also expected to be familiar with the established values and principles shared by the international museum community, including the Museums Association, ICOM and ICON.2

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4. Ethical Standards and Requirements

All staff at the V&A must conduct their research according to the following standards of good research practice:

i. Openness and Attribution

Researchers will be honest in respect of their own actions in research and in their responses to the actions of other researchers. This applies to the whole range of research work, including designing experiments, generating and analysing data, applying for funding, publishing results, and when peer reviewing the work of other researchers. Researchers will strive to ensure the accuracy of research data and results, and acknowledge the direct and indirect contributions of colleagues, collaborators or other individuals where appropriate.

ii. Managing Conflicts of Interest

Researchers will disclose any potential or actual conflict of interest in research. Such conflicts include (but are not confined to) legal, ethical, moral, financial, personal or academic interests. Potential conflicts of interest include a researcher’s personal or familial affiliation to or financial involvement with, any organisation sponsoring or providing financial support for a project they are undertaking. Financial involvement includes direct personal financial interest, receipt of personal benefits (including travel and accommodation) and receipt of material or facilities for personal use.

Any perceived conflict of interest must be disclosed to your Head of Department or line manager, who will determine what further action should be taken. Further disclosure may need to be made to other key Museum staff and/or completion of a register of interests.

Where it is unavoidable that a purchase is made from a company in which a researcher has a direct or familial financial interest, the researcher is required to disclose that interest to their line manager, with reference to the Head of Research, and will be barred from authorising the purchase him or herself.

iii. Confidentiality

In general, research requires openness, but restrictions relating to publication and dissemination may apply in circumstances where the Museum or its partners have made or given confidentiality undertakings to third parties or confidentiality is required to protect intellectual property rights. It is the duty of the researcher to enquire of their relevant Project Manager, with reference to the Head of Research, as to whether confidentiality provisions apply and of the Project Manager and/or Head of Research to inform researchers of their obligations with respect to these provisions.
iv. Professional Standards

Researchers will take all reasonable measures to comply with ethical and legal obligations as required by statutory and regulatory authorities, including seeking ethical review and approval for research when appropriate. This applies to the whole range of research work including methodological planning, generating and analysing data, publishing results and acknowledging the contribution of others. They will ensure that any research undertaken complies with any funder terms and conditions relating to the project.

Researchers will follow the requirements and guidance of any professional bodies in their field of research. Researchers who are members of a regulated profession\(^3\) will also follow the specific requirements and guidance of the body regulating their profession.

v. Purchasing and expenditure for research

Purchasing and other expenditure of funds should take place in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Museum’s financial regulations and staff Code of Conduct and of any grant or contract held for research.

vi. Research Involving Human Participants, Personal Data or Human Remains

All research projects involving human subjects or participants, personal data, or human remains must be approved under the V&A’s Ethical Clearance Process for Research Projects before data gathering commences. Approval will also be sought from other regulatory bodies as necessary.

Human Participants

Researchers will ensure that all participants in a research project understand the process in which they are to be engaged, including who is undertaking and financing it, why it is being undertaken, and how it is to be disseminated and used. Participation should be based on the freely given, informed consent of those studied and participants should be made aware of their right to refuse participation for any reason. Researchers will always strive to protect the rights of those they study, their interests, sensitivities and privacy.

Personal Data

Researchers will at all times ensure that personal data is processed lawfully and in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act (1998) and Human Rights Act (1998).

\(^3\) A regulated profession is one where access to or practice of a profession is restricted by national law to those holding specific qualifications.
Human Remains

Researchers will ensure that human remains are treated in accordance with the Human Tissue Act (2004) as well as other regulatory and professional guidelines. This policy follows the definition of human remains as used in the DCMS *Guidance for the Care of Human Remains in Museums*. Within the V&A collections, this includes but is not limited to osteological material (for example bones or fragments of bone and teeth). Frequently, these remains have been modified by human skill and/or bound-up with other non-human materials. Some items in the V&A collections incorporate human hair and nails. In line with The Human Tissue Act, hair and nails are not considered to meet the formal definition of human remains, however V&A researchers will recognise that these may be of sacred importance to particular communities and therefore require sensitivity of approach.

vii. Training and leadership

Senior researchers and managers should create an environment of mutual cooperation in which all researchers are encouraged to develop their skills and in which the open exchange of ideas is fostered. They must also ensure that appropriate direction of research and its supervision are provided through normal project management procedures, mentoring and the Museum’s Performance Management scheme. All researchers should ensure that they have the necessary skills and training for their field of research.

viii. Data

Research data must be recorded in a durable and auditable form, in accordance with the Museum’s Records Management and Archives Policy, so that it can readily be discovered. It must be retained intact for a period of at least five years from the date of any publication, gallery scheme or exhibition which is based upon it (Staff Handbook part 3). It is the duty of the principal investigator to comply with the Data Protection Act, and to ensure that copyright is not breached in line with the guidelines laid down in the Staff Handbook (section E1).

ix. Research Outputs

Outputs arising from research may include books, articles, lectures, web content, galleries or exhibitions. All outputs must report research accurately and with appropriate references to the contribution of all contributors.

x. Submitting research funding applications

Principal Investigators will take all reasonable measures to ensure the accuracy of information contained in applications for funding. Any research projects involving V&A staff or students must go through the V&A’s Ethical Clearance Process for Research Projects (section X of the Research Handbook) before the research can begin.

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5. Research Misconduct

Researchers must not commit any act of Research Misconduct. This is defined as non-compliance with the Museum’s Research Ethics Policy and includes, but is not restricted to:

- Plagiarism - the copying or use of ideas, data or text without permission or acknowledgement.
- Fraud - deliberate deception, involving the invention of data or the fabrication of results.
- Collusion - aiding or attempting to aid, or obtaining or attempting to obtain aid from another person in an examination, and aiding in the concealment of research misconduct by others.
- Interference - intentional damage to, or removal of, the research-related property of another.
- Non-compliance - the deliberate failure to comply with obligations to the Museum, sponsor, funding body, professional body or partner, including accounting requirements, ethics, and health and safety regulations.

Research Misconduct is a highly serious disciplinary matter. It does not include honest error or honest differences in the design, execution, interpretation or judgement in evaluating research methods or results; or misconduct unrelated to the research process.

All members of the V&A have a responsibility to report Research Misconduct, where they have good cause to believe it is occurring. Members should report an allegation to their line manager, with reference to the Head of Research. The Museum will investigate allegations or complaints about Research Misconduct in line with the disciplinary procedures laid down in the Staff Handbook (section C1 and F2), and with due regard to the obligations placed on the V&A by any third party(ies) or the law.

Suspicious reported in confidence and in good faith will not lead to disciplinary proceedings against the person making the complaint. However, in the event of a frivolous, vexatious and/or malicious allegation the Museum may consider recommending that action be taken against the Complainant.

Prior to making any formal allegation, sources of advice and support for V&A members include:

- Fellow researchers and colleagues
- Research Grants Manager
- Supervisors
- Mentors
- Heads of Department or Section
- Head of Research
V. V&A Open Access Policy

1. Introduction

The V&A’s mission is to be the world’s leading museum of art and design. To enrich people’s lives and inspire individuals and everyone in the creative industries, through the promotion of knowledge, understanding and enjoyment of the designed world.

This document sets out the V&A’s Open Access policy for staff engaged in research. At the end of the document you can find practical advice for those needing to publish in ways that comply with the Open Access requirements of particular funding bodies.

Open Access is the principle that the results of publicly funded research should be publicly available, free of charge, in one format or another. This principle is currently in place for specific types of academic publications resulting from research funded by the UK Research Councils or certain other funding bodies. It is likely to be extended to all academic publications in the near future and might be more widely applied to the results of research funded by other parts of the UK Government.

Open Access helps the V&A to improve the accessibility, visibility and profile of V&A research, and increase its impact. Open Access is believed to:

- enable the prompt and widespread dissemination of research findings
- benefit the efficiency of the research process and allow publicly funded research to drive economic growth
- deliver social benefits through increased public understanding of research.

(see Higher Education Funding Councils for England, July 2014)

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5 This policy covers all V&A members of staff who are engaged in research. In the case of students who are co-supervised by V&A staff, the student must abide by the Open Access policy of their own university.
2. Open Access Requirements and the V&A

The outcomes of V&A research take various forms, including research articles, monographs, book chapters, other long-form publications, working papers, conference proceedings, creative or practice-based research outputs (including exhibitions), and datasets.

At the time of writing, the principle of Open Access is being applied to the results of some publicly funded research in the UK, including all research funded by the AHRC and by the Wellcome Trust. At the time of writing, Open Access requirements are only required for peer-reviewed research articles and conference proceedings (AHRC), or for research articles, scholarly monographs and book chapters (Wellcome Trust). However, there are discussions about extending the principle further. UK universities are also likely to adopt Open Access as a standard requirement for staff publications in coming years.

In practice Open Access means that a copy or a version of an academic article, paper, edited volume or book should be freely available to anyone via the web immediately when it is published, or after a reasonable agreed time period. The principle also appears to datasets that have been created during publicly funded research.

At the time these guidelines were approved there is no general requirement for all academic research carried out by Museum staff to be published in ways that comply with open access. However, there are obligations for staff to publish the results of research in ways that comply with Open Access requirements if:

(1.) particular external funders of research (such as the AHRC or Wellcome Trust) require it
(2.) any co-authors of the research are required to publish in these ways.

It may also be that in the future some key academic journals will only publish in ways that meet Open Access requirements and this might require the V&A to find funds to pay to publish with these journals.

The specific requirements of Open Access vary from one funding body to another, and have changed in the last two years. As this situation is likely to change, staff should always consult the most up to date version of this policy and any terms or conditions of research funding they have received.
3. V&A General Policy on Open Access

The V&A has agreed the following:

1. The Museum in principle encourages the results of original research carried out by V&A staff to be as widely available as possible, and expects many of the academic publications written or co-written by our staff to eventually be as widely and freely accessible as the available channels for dissemination will allow.

2. The Museum encourages all staff to provide copies of their publications to **either** download free from the Museum’s website **or** to provide an active link from an appropriate part of the Museum’s website to another website (such as academia.edu) where the publication can be accessed, free or for a charge - *but only if the member of staff has the clear permission of the publisher to do so*. It will be the responsibility of staff members to provide assurance that they have this permission.

3. At the time this guidance was approved, the Museum’s staff are not obliged to publish the results of their scholarship and research in ways that comply with the rules on Open Access unless there is an **explicit requirement to do so** from funders or partners.

4. Where staff are required by a funder, or to meet the needs of a co-author, to make an academic publication freely available they should consult the specific requirements of the funding body or partner. In most circumstances a copy of the publication will need to be available in some form via the V&A website:
   - **This might be a machine readable PDF or other form of the actual publication made available on the V&A website either from the time of publication or after an embargo period.**
   - **It could be a link to another website where such is legally available as a free download.**
   - **Alternatively, it might be a copy of unformatted text of the final submitted version of the publication that was sent to the publisher in a machine readable format free on the Museum website.**

5. The V&A will ensure that journals published by the Museum are freely available via the Museum’s website in a machine readable format.

6. There will be situations where the research for an exhibition, new gallery or public programming has received Research Council or other support which requires the publication of research or datasets to comply with Open Access rules. In these circumstances Museum staff will submit results of the original supporting research to an appropriate academic publication that meets the funder’s requirements for Open Access, for example an academic journal or an edited volume. This will be in addition to commercial publications such as exhibition catalogues, or paid access online content.
4. Open Access and V&A Staff: A Practical Guide

a) When is there an explicit requirement for Museum staff to publish in ways that are Open Access?

At the time this guidance was written the rules on Open Access only apply to Museum staff where:

1. The member of staff is the author or co-author of an article submitted to an academic journal that is the result of any research that has been funded by one of the UK's Research Councils (such as the AHRC) or the Wellcome Trust. This includes articles in journals that are the result of research funded by a Research Grant, Fellowship, or PhD studentship.

2. Where the member of staff is working on publications with researchers from other organisations who require their staff to publish in ways that comply with rules on Open Access. For example, staff employed in UK Universities will require most of their journal articles and papers in edited conference volumes to comply with Open Access rules by January 2016.

3. Where the specific terms of any funding a member of staff or the Museum has received explicitly require publications that comply with rules on Open Access.

Whenever there is an obligation to publish in ways that comply with Open Access rules, staff should consult the most up-to-date version of the funder’s requirements. Please ask the Research Grants Manager for advice.

b) Adding a copy of your research publication to the online V&A repository

Where staff members are required by funders or others to make available copies of their publications via an online institutional repository to comply with Open Access rules, please inform the digital media team in advance (webchanges@vam.ac.uk).

The preferred format for storing such publications online is an accessible PDF. Authors need to ensure that the PDF is designed to be read with the aid of assistive technology such as screen reading software. Further information on how to create accessible Adobe® PDF files can be found here.

c) Do V&A Research Publications comply with Open Access rules?

Museum Publications are not currently made available free of charge after an agreed period from their original publication in print form, and therefore do not meet Open Access requirements. The V&A Online Journal and Conservation Journal, however, do already meet Open Access requirements.
d) **How does Open Access affect outputs linked with V&A Galleries, Exhibitions or other Public Programming?**

In some circumstances the research for new exhibitions, galleries or public programming might be supported by funders who require the publication of their funded research in ways that comply to their rules on Open Access, or with collaborators with similar obligations.

In these circumstances the Museum has agreed that research to support an exhibition or similar project should be submitted to an academic publication that will comply with Open Access requirements, in addition to any exhibition catalogues, commercial books or paid to access digital media.

e) **Paying for the costs of making publications Open Access via journals that issue Article Processing Charges**

Some academic journals charge authors an Article Processing Charge (APC) to cover the costs and potential loss of sales and subscriptions when they make a copy of the final published version of an academic paper freely available to all (not just paying subscribers) immediately from the date of publication.

Some funders who require the outcomes of their funded research to be Open Access will pay for these costs. Others, including the AHRC, do not pay the V&A for these costs. The V&A Research Department will therefore seek to allocate a small sum of money for a Publication Support Fund that can pay for such charges. Only in exceptional situations, i.e. if the research is of an importance and type that merits publication in a world-leading journal that charges publication fees, will the Museum consider paying an APC.

This does not mean that you cannot publish in an academic journal that charges for immediate Open Access. Many journals offer other routes for those who cannot pay for the APC which still allows their publication to meet Open Access requirements. Staff are advised to check with a journal before submitting a paper or article as to what their Open Access policies are, especially if the V&A cannot pay the APC.

Please always check the current arrangements for any journal you wish to publish an article in before you submit your article.

f) **Further Information**

For further information about the V&A’s Open Access policy please contact the Research Grants Manager (Nicola Froggatt, n.froggatt@vam.ac.uk).
VI. Guidance for V&A Staff Working on Research Grants

Introduction

This guidance is aimed at V&A investigators working on projects funded through external research grants, and particularly Principal Investigators (PIs) who lead these projects. It is designed to provide a quick reference to general questions about the roles and responsibilities in research administration and compliance.

This guidance must be read in conjunction with the specific terms and conditions of the research award in question, as well as any other applicable contracts or formal agreements. In case of any discrepancy between this guidance and an award’s specific terms and conditions, the award’s own terms and conditions shall govern.

Levels of Involvement:

V&A staff involvement in a research grant generally falls under one of the following categories:

1. **Principal Investigator (PI):** takes responsibility for the intellectual leadership of the research project and for the overall management of the research or other activities.

2. **Co-Investigator (CI):** assists the PI in the management and leadership of the research project. The CI can also undertake research activity themselves.

3. **Project Partner/Collaborator:** provides a specific contribution (cash or in kind) to the research project, but does not hold the same responsibilities or level of involvement as a PI or CI.

This guidance is primarily aimed at V&A PIs, however much of it will be relevant to staff acting as CIs, partners, or collaborators.
The administration of externally funded research grants is a shared responsibility, between the PI and the V&A:

The PI is accountable for the scientific and intellectual direction of the project and its proper fiscal management. The PI is responsible to the V&A for ensuring that the scope of work for which the award was made is completed, that V&A policies and procedures are adhered to, and that funds are spent in accordance with the awarded budget and funder terms and conditions.

The V&A is legally and financially responsible and accountable to the funder for the performance of the activities funded and the proper use of funds, but cannot fulfil this stewardship role without the full cooperation and oversight of the PI.
Respective Roles and Responsibilities in Post-Award Administration:

The specific responsibilities of managing external research funding are shared amongst the PI, Finance Department and Research Department; each has unique areas of primary responsibility.

The PI assumes the primary responsibility for the management of the project in accordance with the funder’s management, financial and ethical rules and V&A regulations and procedures. They are responsible for the following functions:

- Execute their part of the project as outlined in the funded proposal and the terms and conditions of the award, using sound management techniques.
- Authorize only those expenditures that are reasonable and necessary to accomplish the project goals and are consistent with the funder’s terms and conditions.
- Carry out the project’s financial plan as presented in the funded proposal, and spend no more than the amount authorized by the funder for the project period.
- Notify the Research Grants Manager of any proposed changes in: the scope of work, the PI or other key research personnel, the budget, or the period of performance.
- Follow all applicable V&A policies and procedures such as travel, purchasing, employment, contracted services, and compensation policies.
- Assure that cost-sharing or matching commitments are fulfilled and reported to the Research Grant Manager in a timely manner.
- Where applicable, ensure that project timesheets are completed accurately and in good time.
- Review project expenditures (including the regular Project Financial Reports provided by the Management Accountant), in a timely fashion to assure they are correct and appropriate.
- Write project reports as required by the terms of the award.
- To maintain documentation for costs incurred on the project. This will be requested in the event of an audit. Examples of this include receipts and transport tickets, meeting agendas and reports (minutes), attendance certificates.

The Research Department assists staff with all aspects of securing research support from external funders. The Department (via the Research Grants Manager) is responsible for the following functions:

- Negotiation of award terms and conditions
- Arranging acceptance of awards on behalf of the V&A
- Arranging the drafting and issuance of grant agreements and subcontracts
- Advising PIs regarding sponsor guidelines and regulations
- Coordination with the PIs and departments to assure compliance with applicable sponsor regulations and V&A policies and procedures
• Supporting the efforts of Investigators and administrators in managing funds awarded as grants and contracts as described in detail below.

• Serving as the primary liaison between the PI and the funder in all areas requiring funder prior approval, including changes to the project’s scope and budget.

• Ensuring the fund is established in the V&A’s financial system

• Maintaining official projects files and records (unless this authority has been delegated to the PI)

• Sending Finance award information and budget information

• Coordinating award reporting

The Finance Department helps to administer the award. They play a key role in the financial management of a project. The Department (via the Management Accountant) is responsible for the following functions:

• Maintaining budgetary control through departmental accounting systems, assuring that expenditures comply with the approved budget.

• Generating monthly project financial reports to be made available for the PI’s review.

• Assisting the Investigator in reviewing expenditures to assure appropriateness and correctness.

• Monitoring, along with the Investigator, grant expenditures to assure there is no overspend.

• Manages the collection of grant funding as required by the terms of agreements.

• Preparing the required financial reports that are sent to funders.

• Having knowledge of and understanding V&A policies and procedures related to grant management, as well as the terms and conditions that apply to individual awards.

• Where applicable, coordinates funder audits.
Key Steps upon the Offer of an Award:

- **Award Offer and Acceptance**
  - Review of terms and conditions
  - Negotiations with funder if necessary
  - Official sign-off on behalf of V&A

- **Closing of the Project**

- **V&A Project Management**
  - Key Steps
    - Submission of final funder report(s)

- **Project Setup**
  - Project code setup
  - HR arrangements
  - Liaison with Finance

- **Project Monitoring and Reporting**
  - Liaison with Finance and Research, e.g. progress reporting, HR arrangements, any necessary rebudgeting

Key Points of Liaison with V&A Support Staff during a Project
Upon an Award Offer

The funder will usually notify the PI directly to inform them of the award. All award documentation must be sent to the Research Grants Manager to be reviewed and accepted on behalf of the V&A and any documents that are sent to the PI should be forwarded to the Research Grants Manager immediately upon receipt, for review and distribution to other appropriate V&A Departments.

Negotiation/Acceptance of the Award

The acceptance of an award, once official notification has been received, represents a formal obligation by the V&A; therefore the PI, Research and Finance Departments should review the provisions of each offer before acceptance:

- The PI should review the award terms and conditions, ascertain that the scope of work and budget are consistent with their proposal, and review the schedule for reporting progress or other deliverables.
- The Research Department reviews the award terms and conditions and will involve the Finance and Contracts Departments in discussions where necessary, to ensure that the provisions of the award do not conflict with V&A policies and procedures.

Should changes be required in a sponsor’s offer, the Research Grants Manager will coordinate the V&A’s response. The Research Department takes the lead in negotiating terms between the V&A and the funder. PIs are not expected or encouraged to negotiate directly with the funder, although they may be asked to participate in discussions concerning particular issues. If a PI is contacted directly by a sponsor regarding the terms of an award under discussion, the sponsor should be referred to the Research Grants Manager.

Award documents that require a signature for acceptance are to be signed by an authorized V&A official, usually the Head of Research or Deputy Director. The PI may not make commitments on behalf of the V&A. The Research Grants Manager is responsible for obtaining the appropriate institutional signature. Investigators are cautioned not to sign any grant agreements on behalf of the V&A without first obtaining approval from the Research Department.

Once the Award has been Accepted

- The Finance Department will set up a project code to allow expenditures to be incurred and the funder’s money to be paid in. Please ask your Departmental Administrator to submit a new project code request to Finance. When doing so, please give the Research Grants Manager authorisation to view the project reports on NAV, so she can more easily help with any issues that arise during the project. Once you have been given the project code, you may charge allowable project expenses to the account in accordance with the project start and end dates and the approved budget.
• The PI should contact the HR Department directly to arrange the hiring of any new members of staff or the extension of an employment contract for someone working on the award.

• The PI needs to ensure that the project remains within the planned budget, so when your project involves significant sums of money we strongly recommend you arrange quarterly meetings with your management accountant to track spending and make sure spending is going well. At the least, review all financial updates sent to you by Finance.

• You may need to submit progress reports during the project – liaise with the Research Grants Manager and Finance on preparing these.

During the Award

Charging expenses to a sponsored project is initiated by the PI or others authorized to spend funds under the grant. Expenditure must be consistent with grant requirements and purchasing procedures. Expenditures on sponsored project accounts must conform to the line item budgets included in the award and bills submitted for payment must have proper documentation (e.g., original invoices).

Occasionally, a project’s financial resources need to be reallocated due to the nature and progress of the research. For example a piece of equipment may become unnecessary, while another expense becomes necessary. Rebudgeting will be allowed only to the extent the terms of the award or contract allow it. Therefore, before any attempt to rebudget, the PI must review the terms of the specific award. PIs should contact their Research Grants Manager or Management Accountant to determine whether the proposed rebudgeting is authorized under the award and whether it requires funder approval.

If you anticipate serious problems in accomplishing grant activities, discuss the problems and their most viable solutions with your Research Grants Manager.

Closing the Award

When a grant is completed, you must submit all required reports within a certain time period (check your award documentation for the specific timeframe). Future awards may be denied or fines imposed upon the V&A if existing awards are not closed in good time.

The Finance Department is primarily responsible for drawing up financial reports in conjunction with the PI. The PI is also responsible for drawing up the content of the narrative reports. Both can call upon the Research Grants Manager for assistance in the award reporting. A copy of any reports submitted to the funder should be lodged with the Research Department.

Be sure to abide by regulations regarding accountability for equipment, retention of records, or a future audit.
VII. Visiting Fellow Application Form

APPLICATION TO BE A VISITING FELLOW IN THE V&A RESEARCH DEPARTMENT

NAME

JOB TITLE/INSTITUTIONAL AFFILIATION, IF ANY

PROJECT TITLE

DATE OF APPLICATION

1. Length and dates of proposed visiting fellowship period:

2. Museum-related outcome (e.g. book, book chapter, article, exhibition, display, web project etc.).

3. How does your project relate to the Museum’s Five Year Strategic Plan (available on the V&A website)?

4. How does your project relate to the Museum’s Strategy for Access, Inclusion and Diversity (available on the V&A website)?

5. How will this visiting fellowship assist your ongoing professional development?

6. If your project relates to a V&A publication, exhibition or a web project has the project been agreed by the relevant advisory board or group?

7. If a non-V&A outcome, has the project been approved within the Museum? (e.g. by Head of Department)
8. Please specify any other contributors to the project (e.g. other Museum staff, external contributors).

9. Would you need any special technical or other access support for your work while undertaking a visiting fellowship (beyond the provision of standard office facilities)?

10. How will your visiting fellowship be funded?

PROJECT DESCRIPTION (500 words maximum):

* Please submit your visiting fellow application to research@vam.ac.uk*
VIII. Secondment Application Form for V&A Staff

APPLICATION FOR SECONDMENT TO THE RESEARCH DEPARTMENT

NAME

DEPARTMENT

PROJECT TITLE

DATE OF APPLICATION

1. Length and dates of secondment applied for: (We prefer to accommodate secondees for their total weekly hours. If you wish to propose a secondment for fewer than your total weekly hours please give details and reason.)

2. Museum outcome (e.g. book, chapter, article, exhibition, display, web project, gallery etc.).

3. How does your project relate to the Museum’s Five Year Strategic Plan (available on the Intranet)?

4. How does your project relate to the Museum’s Strategy for Access, Inclusion and Diversity (available on the Intranet)?

5. How will this secondment assist your ongoing professional development?

6. If your project relates to a V&A publication, exhibition or a web project has the project been agreed by the relevant advisory board or group?

7. If a non-V&A outcome, has the project been approved within the museum? (e.g. by Head of Department, Head of Publications)

8. Please specify any other contributors to the project (e.g. other Museum staff, external contributors)
9. Will there be any external sponsors? If so please give details.

10. Will you need any special technical or other access support for your work while on secondment (beyond the provision of standard office facilities)?

11. Please indicate filing and storage requirements while on secondment (important for Research Department Preparation).

12. What value would external research funding sources bring to your project and where might they be sought (we encourage you to speak with Nicola Froggatt, Research Grants Manager, to identify grants and funders).

13. How will your time/research while on secondment enhance the Museum’s resources and collections e.g. adding to CMS or commissioning new object photography?

14. Will you need any financial support for research costs or travel while you are on secondment?

PROJECT DESCRIPTION (500 words maximum):
*Please provide a description of the proposed project, outlining its aims, objectives, intellectual issues to be addressed, working methods, and timescales. Indicate what you expect the project to contribute to knowledge of the V&A collections, and highlight the benefits envisaged for the Museum’s Strategic Plan.*

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT SIGNATURE (This indicates full support of the secondment to the Research Department)

* Please submit your secondment application to the Research Department Administrator*
IX. Approval Request Form for Research Grant Applications

V&A staff involved in a research funding proposal (including grants and fellowships) should complete this form. It is also intended as a useful checklist as you prepare your application.

If members of the V&A wish to be named on applications made through other institutions, please submit this form in order to request V&A approval, even if you do not think there will be any costs involved.

When complete, please email with accompanying documentation to the Research Grants Manager (Nicola Froggatt, n.froggatt@vam.ac.uk). You are also welcome to get in touch if you would like to informally discuss your project prior to submitting an approval request form.

## Description

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name of Project</td>
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<tr>
<td>V&amp;A Applicant contact name(s) and department(s)</td>
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<td>Partners (if applicable)</td>
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<tr>
<td>(names of institutions and individuals involved)</td>
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<td>Funder</td>
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<td>(e.g. AHRC, Leverhulme)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scheme</td>
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<td>(e.g. research network)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Duration of Project</td>
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<td>(also say how much of your time you would expect to spend working on this project)</td>
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<tr>
<td>How do the project outputs relate to the strategic priorities of your V&amp;A host department?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Main budget components</td>
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<td>(e.g. salary backfill, RA costs, equipment, travel costs)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Approximately how much funding would go to the V&amp;A?</td>
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**Deadlines (work back from Funder’s Deadline)**

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<tr>
<th>Deadlines</th>
<th>Funder’s Deadline</th>
<th>Partner Institution Deadlines (if applicable)</th>
<th>V&amp;A Research Department Deadline to sign-off bid</th>
<th>V&amp;A Department Head’s Deadline to sign-off bid</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Funder’s Deadline</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Partner Institution Deadlines (if applicable)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>V&amp;A Research Department Deadline to sign-off bid</strong></td>
<td>(Please consult the Department. Generally we need at least 4 working weeks to process applications, and longer in the case of very complex bids)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>V&amp;A Department Head’s Deadline to sign-off bid</strong></td>
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**Elements of the Bid**

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<th>Elements of the Bid</th>
<th>Yes/No/To be Confirmed</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>All relevant V&amp;A departments have contributed their part of the bid?</strong> (give details if applicable)</td>
<td>Yes/No/To be Confirmed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>V&amp;A Digital Media has been consulted?</strong> (if technical elements)</td>
<td>Yes/No/To be Confirmed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>V&amp;A Conservation has been consulted?</strong> (if conservation elements)</td>
<td>Yes/No/To be Confirmed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>V&amp;A Events have been consulted?</strong> (e.g. if V&amp;A conferences will happen)</td>
<td>Yes/No/To be Confirmed</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Will any other V&amp;A departments be directly impacted by the project? Have they all been consulted and have any resource implications been agreed?</strong></td>
<td>Please give details</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Have external partners provided a clear sense of their commitment and expectations?</strong> (if applicable)</td>
<td>Yes/No/To be Confirmed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Have you read the V&amp;A’s Research Ethics Policy, and do any ethical issues regarding the project need to be declared?</strong></td>
<td>Please give details</td>
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</table>

**Endorsement**

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<tr>
<th>Endorsement</th>
<th>Yes/No</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>By Applicant’s Line Manager:</strong></td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>By Applicant’s Head of Department:</strong></td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
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**Attachments**

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<th>Attachments</th>
<th>Yes/No</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Proposal draft</strong></td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Statement of support from Applicant’s Head of Department</strong></td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
</tr>
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</table>
X. V&A Ethical Clearance Process for Research Projects

The V&A values the ability of its staff to conduct research to the highest standards of scholarship and ethical integrity. The Ethical Clearance Process helps to ensure that the V&A is meeting its obligations to consider and assess ethical issues involved in research.

Ethical issues may include the involvement of human participants*, human remains* or personal data* in research; research that may result in damage to the environment; and the use of sensitive economic, social or personal data. V&A Ethical Clearance starts from the presumption that all members of the Museum will take their responsibilities seriously and conduct their research according to the established principles and good practice in their fields as well as relevant legal requirements.

The V&A Application Review Committee, alongside co-opted members of staff with expertise in the issues involved, authorises all V&A research that involves ethical issues. This Ethical Clearance must have been granted before any research project undertaken by a V&A researcher can begin. Ethical issues relating to such projects therefore need to be identified well before the project is due to start. Any V&A researcher making a research funding application should therefore:

1. Read the V&A’s Research Ethics Policy (section IV of the Research Handbook)
2. Complete this form in advance of starting the project and send it to the Research Grants Manager
3. If the project is deemed higher-risk, submit further information before approval can be granted

This form is designed largely for Social Sciences and Humanities research that does not involve a high level of risk to subjects. If you have any questions or doubts as to whether this is the appropriate form for your project, please contact the Research Grants Manager for advice.

This form does not cover research governance, satisfactory methodology, compliance with the requirements of publishers, or the health and safety of researchers. It is the Principal Researcher’s responsibility to ensure that such requirements are met. Do note that if research is to be carried out at institutions other than those of the V&A, it is likely that separate ethical approval may also be needed from the bodies which cover those sites.

Note on anonymised data and audit: you do not need to obtain ethical approval for your study if you are conducting research on behalf of or at the request of a service provider that matches the definition of audit* rather than research* in the glossary.

If your research is audit, please check this box: ☐

You do not need to seek V&A ethical approval or complete any more of this form.
## SECTION A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Are you using research methodologies commonly used in biomedical or behavioural laboratory sciences?</td>
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<tr>
<td>2) Is there a significant risk that the research will induce anxiety, stress or other harmful psychological states in participants that might persist beyond the duration of any test or interview in which they are participating?</td>
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<tr>
<td>3) Will the research involve participants recruited by means of their status as present or past NHS patients or their relatives or carers?</td>
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<tr>
<td>4) Does the research involve human participants aged 16 and over who do not have capacity to give informed consent* for themselves?* (See the Mental Capacity Act 2005)</td>
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</table>

If you answered ‘yes’ to any question in Section A, please consult the Research Grants Manager immediately for next steps.

## SECTION B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principal Researcher* name:</th>
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<tr>
<td>V&amp;A Department:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email and phone contact:</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title of research project:</td>
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</table>

Title and brief lay description of the research (c. 150 words), plus description (c. 200 words) of the nature of participants (including the criteria for inclusion/exclusion & method of recruitment, how professional guidelines are being applied (if applicable) and use to which the results/data will be put.

Please describe how you will obtain informed consent, citing and attaching documentation where applicable to support your application e.g. participant consent form*.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location(s) where project will be conducted, if known:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If your research involves overseas travel or fieldwork, have you completed a V&amp;A travel risk assessment form?</td>
<td>YES / NO / N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anticipated duration of project:</td>
<td>___ months</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anticipated start date:</td>
<td>/ /</td>
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<td>Anticipated end date:</td>
<td>/ /</td>
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<tr>
<td>Name and status (e.g. post-doctoral research assistant) of other researchers* taking part in the project:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Please indicate what training on research ethics the researchers involved with this study have received, if applicable:</td>
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**SECTION C**

Methods to be used in the study (tick as many as apply).

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<th>Please tick</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Interview</strong></td>
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<td>Further Information:</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Questionnaire</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Further Information:</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Analysis of existing records</strong></td>
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<td>Further Information:</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Participant performs verbal/paper/computer based task</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Further Information:</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Audio recording, video recording or photography of participant</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Further Information:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Participant observation</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Further Information:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Covert observation
Further Information:  

Systematic observation
Further Information:  

Other (please specify)
Further Information:  

SECTION D

Have you read one or more of the following professional guidelines and do you undertake to use the principles therein as a guide for your own work? (Please note that this is not an exhaustive list).

| Please tick |  
| --- | --- |
| European Confederation of Conservator-Restorers’ Organisations (ECCO) Professional Guidelines | http://www.ecco-eu.org/about-e.c.c.o./professional-guidelines.html |
| Museums Association Code of Ethics for Museums | http://www.museumsassociation.org/ethics/code-of-ethics |
| RCUK Policy and Guidelines on Governance of Good Research Conduct | http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/Publications/researchers/grc/ |
| Other relevant professional guidelines (please specify): |  |

SECTION E

If any answers below are in a shaded box, please indicate whether all those aspects of your project are fully covered by professional guidelines that you will be following (see Section D)? If any answers in this section are in a shaded box and not covered by professional guidelines, please explain why.

1) Will you obtain informed consent according to good practice in your discipline before participation?  
If Yes, give further information:  

Yes | No
2) Will you ensure that personal data collected directly from participants or via a third party is held and processed in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act?
If Yes, give further information:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

3) Does the research involve as participants people whose ability to give free and informed consent is in question*?
If Yes, give further information:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

4) As a consequence of taking part in the research, will participants be at serious risk of rendering themselves liable to criminal prosecution (such as by providing information on criminal activities)?
If Yes, give further information:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

5) Does the research involve the deception of participants?
If Yes, give further information:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

6) Will all participants in your research be given the opportunity to withdraw?
If Yes, explain at what stages they can withdraw:
If No, explain why not and give further information:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**SECTION F**

Principal V&A Researcher

I understand my responsibilities as principal researcher, and have disclosed all potential conflicts of interest* that may apply to this project.

I declare that the answers above accurately describe my research as presently designed and that I will submit a new checklist should the design of my research change in a way which would alter any of the above responses so as to require fresh scrutiny. I will inform the V&A’s Research Grants Manager if I cease to be the principal researcher on this project and supply the contact details of my successor if appropriate.

Signature: .......................................................... Date: ............

Print name (block capitals) ...........................................................................
Other V&A Project Researcher(s)

I understand the questions and answers that have been entered above describing the research, and I will ensure that my practice in this research complies with these answers, subject to any properly authorised modifications made by the principal researcher.

Signature: .......................................................... ..................................... Date: .................

Print name (block capitals) ..........................................................................................

V&A Head of Department

I have read the research project application named above. On the basis of the information available to me, I:

(i) consider the principal researcher aware of their ethical responsibilities relating to this work;

(ii) consider that any ethical issues raised have been satisfactorily resolved or are covered by relevant professional guidelines, and that it is appropriate for the research to proceed without further formal ethical scrutiny at this stage (noting the principal researcher’s obligation to report should the research design change in a way which would alter any of the above responses so as to require further scrutiny);

(iii) am satisfied that the proposed project has been/will be subject to appropriate peer review* and is likely to contribute something useful to existing knowledge and/or to the education and training of the researcher(s) and that it is in the public interest*.

Signature: .......................................................... ..................................... Date: .................

Print name (block capitals) ..........................................................................................

FINAL CHECK

• Have you completed Sections A-F? □
• Have you defined all technical terms and abbreviations used? □
• If you have produced documentation in support of your application (e.g. questionnaires, participant information, consent forms, surveys), have you attached a copy? □

* Please send your completed checklist and any supporting documentation to the Research Grants Manager (Nicola Froggatt, n.froggatt@vam.ac.uk). *
SECTION G: GLOSSARY OF TERMS USED

Audit  An investigative activity that does not aim to generate new knowledge, but to enquire systematically into the actions of an institution/service, with the aim of improving service. Although audit involves human participants, it does not require ethical approval. Seek further guidance if you are unsure whether your project counts as audit or research.

Conflicts of Interest These arise when a researcher’s professional actions may be influenced by considerations of personal gain (whether financial or non-monetary) beyond that simply accruing from successful research in general. Where personal interests could directly and significantly affect the design, conduct, or reporting of the research, they must be disclosed to the V&A.

Consent Form A form which competent participants sign and date to give their informed consent to participate in research, or which competent adults sign to record their consent to the participation of a third party for whom they are responsible. It must also be signed and dated by the researcher who explained the project to the participant. The use of a signed consent form is desirable, although in certain cases this may be impossible (e.g. if participants are illiterate) or impracticable.

Deception Where a researcher deliberately misleads a participant about the purpose or nature of the research. This is acceptable only if lack of deception would hurt the gathering of data essential to achieve the purposes of the research, or would endanger the researcher’s safety. Participants should if possible be told the true purpose of the research as soon as possible after its completion. As deception may sometimes be justified, the V&A will therefore not withhold approval for research simply because it entails deception. It however will require that no unwarranted harm which could reasonably have been foreseen come to participants as a result of the deception.

Human Participant A person who is the subject of study and whose personal information is used in that research, whether obtained directly from the individual or indirectly. Research which involves direct personal contact of any kind, including interviewing and/or observing participants, and research which involves the administration of questionnaires and use of personal data (other than anonymised, non-traceable data) where there is no contact with any individual.

Human Remains DCMS Guidance for the Care of Human Remains in Museums (2005) defines human remains as:

“The bodies, and parts of bodies, of once living people from the species Homo sapiens (defined as individuals who fall within the range of anatomical forms known today and in the recent past). This includes osteological material (whole or part skeletons, individual bones or fragments of bone and teeth), soft tissue including organs and skin, embryos and slide preparations of human tissue.

In line with The Human Tissue Act 2004, the definition does not include hair and nails, although it is acknowledged that some cultural communities do give these a sacred importance. Human remains also include any of the above that may have been modified in some way by human skill and/or may be physically bound-up with other non-human materials to form an artefact composed
Researchers must ensure that human remains are treated in accordance with the Human Tissue Act (2004) as well as other regulatory and professional guidelines.

**Informed Consent**

The process by which a fully informed competent person chooses whether to become a research participant. This is normally a necessary pre-condition for research involving human participants. It involves:

(a) Describing who the researchers are and what institution they are from;
(b) Explaining that the potential participant has free, rescindable choice about whether to participate, and that refusal or withdrawal carry no attendant disadvantages for them (It must be made clear where there are practical limits to the participant's ability to withdraw: e.g. once material has been published).
(c) Explaining the purpose and nature of the research and the potential participant's intended role.
(d) Explaining the nature of any benefits, risks, and uncertainties for the participant.
(e) Assessing the competence of the potential participant. Only those judged to have appropriate competence should be accepted as participants.
(f) Obtaining the individual's agreement to be a participant, ideally recorded on a consent form.

Potential participants should where possible be given an information sheet detailing (a) to (d) to keep. The researcher should also verbally seek to ensure that the potential participant has understood the form, and give further explanation as necessary. Also see ‘People Whose Ability to Give Free and Informed Consent is in Question’.

**Participant**

A person who is the subject of study and whose personal information is used in that research, whether obtained directly from the individual or indirectly.

**Peer Review**

Scrutiny of the design and methodology of a piece of research by (an) expert(s) in the field. Proposals for research which involves human participants will normally undergo peer review, for example by a supervisor, Review Committee or funding body.

**People Whose Ability to Give Free and Informed Consent is in Question**

This includes ‘incompetent participants’ (e.g. young children, and people with conditions which severely affect their judgement) and ‘vulnerable participants’ (e.g. older children, people with conditions which affect their judgement less severely, prisoners, people taking medication which affects their capacity). They:

(a) cannot understand the consequences of participating in the research; and/or
(b) cannot communicate a decision about their willingness to participate; and/or
(c) their social circumstances call into question their ability to make a free choice about participation.

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If the principal researcher is in any doubt as to the competence of participants, they must discuss this with their Head of Department and the V&A Learning Department. Their collective judgement must be used to identify vulnerable people and act accordingly in designing the research.

The following two key groups may be judged competent or incompetent depending upon the project’s complexity and the capacity of the individual involved. In some cases a person with legal responsibility (e.g. a parent or caregiver) will be able to consent to that person’s participation:

i) People aged under 18.

ii) People with a mental health or neurological condition that impairs their capacity to exercise judgement.

If a person is judged incompetent to consent to participation in an experiment it is still good practice to ask them whether they want to participate. Even if appropriate consent has been secured the researcher must stop research immediately if it causes distress to the person, and must exclude them permanently from the research if distress continues.

**Personal Data**

Information about living individuals who are identified or identifiable (e.g. through the use of a code devised by or accessible to the researchers).

The following category of data does not count as personal data in this context: anonymised data collected previously by someone other than the researcher and for which neither the researcher nor any other V&A researcher or person involved in the project holds a code to identify individuals or ascertain information from which individuals might be identifiable. An example is census data.

If V&A researchers receive data from participants that is confidential in nature, or in respect of which assurances of confidentiality have been provided, that confidence should be respected. Whilst such information may be disclosable under exceptional circumstances (e.g. if there is a risk to an individual, or in the course of criminal proceedings) unwarranted disclosure may give grounds for legal action and be a serious disciplinary matter. Personal data may only be processed lawfully if the processing is in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act.

The V&A is required at all times to comply with the Data Protection Act (1998) and Human Rights Act (1998). Information about the V&A’s data protection policy can be found on the intranet.

**Principal Researcher**

A person who helps to design and who monitors research carried out by them him/herself and/or others, and assumes responsibility for the ethical standards of that research.

**Public Interest Research**

The common good, as opposed to benefit to individuals or to special interest groups.

**Researcher**

A person conducting research. Researchers must either have the experience, qualifications and competence appropriate to the research, or be under the supervision of such a person or persons. Researchers should have had appropriate training in ethical matters relating to research.

**Third party**

A person or institution other than the participant and the researcher.