

V&A



MAKE
GOOD

RETHINKING
MATERIAL
FUTURES

Call for applications to the Field Notes summer school

15–19 August 2022 5–9 September 2022



Field Notes is a collaboration between the *Make Good: Rethinking Material Futures* programme (supported by John Makepeace OBE) at the V&A and Sylva Foundation. Together they are hosting a summer school inviting creative practitioners with an interest in wood as a material, and forests and woodlands as a place for learning and growing, to take part. The summer school takes place in person at Sylva Foundation's Wood School in Oxfordshire in the first week of September. This will be preceded by a number of talks, seminars and mentoring sessions running online 15–19 August. There will also be further mentoring sessions after the week-long summer school to prepare the work for display. The results of the *Field Notes* project will be presented in a display in the Furniture Gallery at the V&A in London in autumn 2022.

Project Brief

Field Notes will explore how diversity in all its forms is essential when searching for sustainable ways of making in wood. The project will explore a plurality of approaches and solutions shaped and informed by the diversity of people's different experiences to find broad resonances and applications in wider society. As such, this iteration of *Make Good: Rethinking Material Futures* connects with the wider ambition of the ten-year programme to make knowledge around sustainable forestry more widely accessible to practitioners of design. The summer school is searching for prompts and questions that can create a collection of *Field Notes* exploring:



What it means on both a personal and societal level to make with local, natural materials?

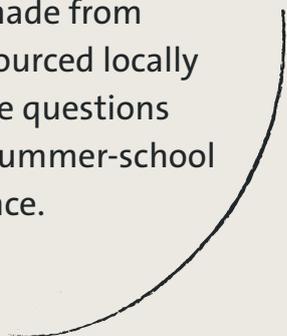
What might sustainable systems for sourcing and making locally look like?

What environmental, socio-economic and political structures need to be considered?

Who are these structures useful to, who do they benefit and how can they be transformed?

How can cross-disciplinary collaboration support sustainable practices?

The outcome of the project will be an object or series of objects made from underutilised, home-grown timber and other natural materials, sourced locally on site. The process of making these pieces will reflect some of the questions above and will be further contextualised with reflections on the summer-school in the form of imagery, spoken or written word, film or performance.



Who can apply to take part?

The *Field Notes* summer school is open to anyone over the age of 18 with an interest in making. As the Wood School at Sylva Foundation is equipped with industry-standard woodworking tools this is a great environment for people to further develop professional making skills. Some prior experience of using woodworking tools would be a benefit to participants. There are eight places available for makers wishing to explore making in wood. This is an opportunity suitable for students, recent graduates, or early-career practitioners.



There are a further four places for embedded observers, to learn from and capture the programme in some format other than making in wood, for example through writing, sketching, podcast making, film making, or photography. This is an opportunity suitable for students, recent graduates, or early-career practitioners. Mentors will be available to all participants, to help realise the different projects.



At the V&A and Sylva Foundation we strive to ensure that opportunities to work and develop are open to all. We treat all applications equally, regardless of age, disability, gender identity or gender expression, race, ethnicity, religion or belief, sexual orientation, or any other equality characteristic. We encourage people from all sections of our community to apply and especially encourage disabled, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic, female and LGBTQ+ applicants, as they are currently under-represented in the fields of forestry and making in wood.

Stipend and agreements

Each participant will receive a £1000 stipend to take part in the summer school and produce work for *Field Notes*.

Each participant will be asked to sign an agreement that they are committing to completing the programme and submit completed work on time for the display.

Food and accommodation is paid for during the week at Sylva Foundation's Wood School, as are materials and tools for making in wood. Other materials and equipment will be discussed on a case-by-case basis and we will endeavour to provide other tools and materials where possible.

Travel to Sylva Foundation's Wood School must be covered by each participant's stipend.

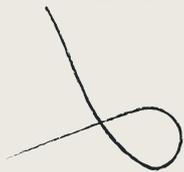
All work produced during the summer school will belong to the maker, but the work will remain on display at the V&A for a period of up to one year and will also exist on the V&A and Sylva Foundation websites in perpetuity.

Your personal details and data (name and email) will be controlled by Sylva Foundation and as part of this project will be shared with the V&A, for the sole purposes of reviewing your application.

How do you apply to take part?

Please apply via this [Google form](#) before 23:59 BST on 11 July 2022. If you want to send any additional imagery to support the application please email summerschool@sylva.org.uk.

In the Google form, we ask you to provide the following information:



Where can we find you? Full name, pronouns, country of residence, email address, telephone number, website or social media account associated with your practice (if any)

Who are you? Write a short introduction about yourself and your practice (max. 300 characters)

What do you want to achieve? Tell us why you are interested in this programme and what you would like to explore during the summer school (max. 550 characters)

If you are selected for the shortlist, what additional support might you need in order to take part in the online conversation on 15 July?

Selection process

A pre-selection of applications will be made by one staff member at Sylva Foundation's Wood School and one staff member at the V&A. A jury made up of Johanna Agerman Ross, V&A; Joe Bray, Sylva Foundation Wood School; and Huren Marsh, educator and designer; will select the twelve participants after an online conversation on 15 July. Each conversation will last for 15-20 minutes.



People selected to take part in the online conversation will be asked the following questions:

Tell us a little about yourself and your practice?

What is your interest in wood, forestry or forests and woodlands as a place for learning and growing?

What do you hope to learn through taking part in the *Field Notes* summer school?

Are you free to take part in the *Field Notes* summer school at the agreed dates?

Please describe any assistance you may require during the *Field Notes* summer school?

What is Sylva Foundation?

Sylva Foundation is an innovative environmental and forestry charity based in Oxfordshire. It envisages a wood culture where people understand and promote the good stewardship of woodlands and are mindful of their utility, while being conscious of their fragility.

The foundation believes that future society will recognise the creative and productive value of forest products which can be derived from growing well-managed forests, and at the same time enhance their wider benefits for people and for nature. This will help result in a halt in the loss of biodiversity, a reduction in climate change, and a human society that can sustain itself.



Sylva Foundation's Wood School was established to support a revival of Britain's wood culture through excellence in creativity and craftsmanship using home-grown timber.

What is *Make Good: Rethinking Material Futures* at the V&A?

Make Good: Rethinking Material Futures is a ten-year initiative at the Victoria & Albert Museum supported by the designer and furniture maker John Makepeace OBE. It invites practitioners from different disciplines ranging from science, design, forestry and academia to share research, knowledge and skills. The programme encourages ideas of stewardship of natural resources and considers the responsibilities of timber-growers, designers and consumers towards the natural world in a time of climate crisis.

Speakers and mentors will include:

Dana Melchar – senior furniture conservator, V&A

Gabriel Hemery – CEO, Sylva Foundation

Hattie Speed – founder of This Girl Makes

Huren Marsh – designer and educator

Johanna Agerman Ross – furniture and product design curator, V&A

Joseph Bray – head of Wood School, Sylva Foundation

Dr Lynn Jones – furniture designer and educator

Mac Collins – designer and maker

Playfool – design studio

Sumitra Upham – head of public programmes, Crafts Council

*more speakers and mentors to be confirmed

Timeline for programme

| | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Middle of June | Call for applications |
| 11 July | Deadline for applications |
| 15 July | Conversations with a selected shortlist of participants to take place (people will be notified by 10am on 6 July) |
| 16 July | All applicants notified |
| 15–18 August | Online symposiums and mentoring sessions (2 hour sessions daily) |
| 19 August | Presentations of initial reactions to the brief in two small groups (2 hour session) |
| 5–9 September | One week-workshop with hands-on making at Sylva Foundation, Oxfordshire |
| Mid-September – Early October | Two mentoring sessions to develop display ideas and <i>Field Notes</i> material |
| Early November | Installation at the V&A |

The call-out for applicants and the Google application form is managed by Sylva Foundation Wood School. If you have any questions about the call-out or the summer school, please email summerschool@sylva.org.uk

