



## **VARI EMBEDDED RESIDENCY OPEN CALL FOR NOMINATIONS AND APPLICATIONS**

### **SUMMARY**

Residency dates: October 2017 – October 2018

Residency Stipend: £12,000

Production/Research/Public Engagement Budget: £2,000

Deadline for applications: 7 July 2017

Interview date: 20 July 2017

The Victoria & Albert Museum (V&A) is seeking nominations for a yearlong residency at the Museum from individuals working within the global arts and design community. Nominations can be for contemporary artists, makers and designers of any age and nationality who meet the criteria of the residency outlined below. We welcome nominations/applications from applicants based in or outside of London (in the UK and internationally) but please note that there is no separate budget for accommodation or travel.

**Nominators will be asked to submit a joint application with the nominated practitioner.**

### **VARI (VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM RESEARCH INSTITUTE) AND VARI RESIDENCIES**

‘VARI’ is the Andrew W Mellon Foundation supported Research Institute nestled within the V&A Research Department. Over the five years from 2016 to 2021, VARI will support and resource a portfolio of specific research projects as well as responsive research positions involving academics, makers, designers, conservators, and other practitioners of all kinds, creating a unique research environment.

In line with VARI's aims to incubate new methods for interdisciplinary collections research, a new strand of VARI Residencies has been launched, both onsite at the V&A South Kensington and offsite in East London in collaboration with different partner organisations.

The purpose of the VARI Residencies is to bring together creative practitioners with curators, scholars and diverse audiences to explore cross-disciplinary connections, strategies to see and show our collections in new ways, by creating encounters with new constituencies and/or exploring new methodologies of disseminating and communicating research. VARI Residencies are explicitly for research and do not require residents to exhibit artwork, although the creation of new work is encouraged and the display of work in the museum may be considered depending on the circumstances. A link to the V&A Research Handbook can be found here for reference: [Research handbook link](#).

This open call for nominations is for a yearlong Embedded Residency based at the V&A South Kensington's Research Department on a part-time basis. VARI Embedded residencies constitute a new and experimental model of residencies whereby the Museum is inviting an external and independent voice to help us develop new ways of working with our collections and members of the public. Proposals can envisage the creation of new work, interventions, learning and/or public programmes that engage directly with the site but we are also interested in suggestions for interventions in the digital realm. Each VARI Embedded Residency will have a defined thematic focus.

#### **THEME FOR THIS YEAR'S VARI EMBEDDED RESIDENCY**

For the 2017/2018 VARI Embedded Artist Residency we are inviting applications from practitioners working with data as their medium.

The V&A Museum holds considerable quantities of data and of information about our collection objects, and digital infrastructures increasingly form the connective tissue between objects, information, curators and visitors – both in house and online. Artists working in code and as developers are producing artworks, experiences and events with museum data, creating visualisations, systems and software design, hackathons and more by employing and repurposing digital tools and languages such as (but not limited to) JavaScript, algorithms, GIS, text/image mining and semantics.

Working with the multiple layers of collections information held in the V&A Museum, we would like the VARI Embedded Artist to make data-focused works that propose new points of entry, navigation and engagement with both collections and the information that we hold about them, eliciting meaningful forms of participation both onsite and offsite, and by the

widest range of possible publics. Access to the V&A data will be given within the legal and security frameworks and policies of UK law and V&A Information policies and standards.

#### **ROLE AND EXPECTATIONS OF VARI EMBEDDED RESIDENTS**

The appointed Resident will be expected to:

- Spend a time equivalent to at least two days per week<sup>1</sup> throughout the duration of the residency, carrying out research, meeting with/presenting ideas to museum staff and developing ideas for public programmes;
- Present their research and work in progress both offsite and at the V&A South Kensington to museum staff and the general public on a regular basis;
- Undertake museum-focused and/or collections-based research;
- Develop an online presence for their practice on the V&A website, including blogging (technical support will be offered);
- Develop their practice into new areas in collaboration with VARI staff and Fellows;
- Author a reflexive document concerning their methodologies and processes that can be a contribution to VARI's developing modus operandi;
- Make the VARI Artists in Residence Programme their primary commitment, although a part-time role.

N.B.: The copyright and other intellectual property rights in any works created during the Residency shall vest with the Resident. The V&A and any partners shall be granted a non-exclusive, non-commercial, royalty free licence to copy and to reproduce the works for any purpose whatsoever relating to VARI and the V&A Residency Programme.

Works created during the residency period at the V&A shall remain the joint property of the V&A, any partners and the Resident until the end of the Residency, when the V&A will transfer ownership of the Works to the Resident with the agreement of all Parties (the V&A, any partners and the Resident). Work produced with the public as part of this residency is owned by the V&A.

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<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that there is flexibility to accommodate other commitments that the Resident may have (travel, teaching, exhibitions etc.) so the Resident can work more intensively during some periods and less during others but we are looking for a practitioner that will make the Residency a primary commitment.

#### **VARI EMBEDDED RESIDENTS WILL BE OFFERED:**

- Direct involvement in the culture of the Museum through the activities and mechanisms listed above;
- Formal affiliation with VARI (V&A Research Institute) as part of the Museum's Research and Collections Division;
- Appropriate introductions to staff and departments of the Museum and support from the V&A Residencies Programme Manager;
- Access to relevant curatorial expertise and collections on display and in storage;
- Access to a personal computer, including V&A intranet login and email address;
- Temporary V&A Museum Security pass for the duration of the Residency, subject to Security clearance.

**NB:** The V&A cannot offer secretarial or administrative assistance to Residents beyond access to the desk mentioned above and any related stationery required to support the research needs of the Residency. Moreover, the V&A cannot offer technical support for the production of new work and depending on the resident's practice, he/she may have to use their residency budget to rent equipment or hire specialised support.

#### **RESIDENCY BUDGET**

The VARI Residencies are supported through a stipend of £12,000 and a production/research/public engagement budget of £2,000.

The £12,000 will need to cover the Resident's living costs, including accommodation in central London (if required and to be arranged by the Resident), subsistence and travel costs to and from the artists normal working location and the Victoria and Albert Museum.

The £2,000 production/research/public engagement budget can be used for research travel, equipment rental, consumables and costs attached to displays and/or public programmes.

Residency grant funding is disbursed over two installments of 50% of the grant amount, based on the completion of project-specific contract-specified benchmarks, so planning for good personal cash flow and host venue collaboration is essential.

#### **APPLICATION PROCESS: SHORTLISTING, INTERVIEW AND OFFER**

Anyone can be a nominator and nominated applicants can be contemporary artists, makers and designers of any age and nationality who meet the criteria of the residency outlined below.

Nominators and nominated practitioners will be required to submit a joint application form (enclosed) and supporting documents (namely a CV and their portfolio).

All supporting documents must be in PDF format and emailed to [vari residencies@vam.ac.uk](mailto:vari residencies@vam.ac.uk) by the deadline.

Short listing will take place within a few days after the application closing date. Applications will be considered by at least three members of V&A staff. Once a short list has been selected, unsuccessful candidates will be informed by email and short listed candidates are invited to interview. Please note that we are unable to provide any feedback on unsuccessful applications (we will only be able to provide feedback to shortlisted applicants that are interviewed).

Interviews will include a short presentation and a series of interview questions. The interview panel will most likely consist of the V&A Residencies Programme Manager, a museum curator, a member of the VARI team, a V&A Learning staff member and frequently an external curator or creative practitioner.

**NB:** Please note that we cannot cover travel costs for the interviews. International applicants will be interviewed via skype.

#### **ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

We are looking for outstanding practitioners who meet the following Essential Criteria:

- (i) A strong track record of public presentation of their work (through exhibitions, talks, publications etc.) and a demonstrated record of artistic accomplishment;
- (ii) The ability to create a strong research proposal that responds to the defined residency theme and makes use of the V&A's resources;
- (iii) An interest in working in research-led creative practice and an understanding and desire to work collaboratively with both the public and the Museum community;
- (iv) Ideas for innovative ways to respond to opportunities to work with the V&A's collections;
- (v) Dynamic and inspiring ideas about how they would use this opportunity to develop their practice and how they intend to meet the Residency brief and aims;
- (vi) Creative originality and professionalism in their work;
- (vii) The ability to work independently;
- (viii) A working knowledge of spoken and written English;
- (ix) Past experience working with collections, historic sites, archives or museums is desirable.

NB: Please note that we cannot accept applications from those who are already an employee of the Victoria and Albert Museum. V&A staff can however nominate practitioners for the residency.



## VARI EMBEDDED RESIDENCY APPLICATION FORM

*Please do not alter this form in any way and complete each section in the relevant boxes adhering to the word count.*

### 1. NOMINATOR

First name	
Last name	
Nationality (as indicated in passport)	
Current Address	
Telephone no	
Email address	
Relationship to nominated practitioner	

### 2. NOMINATED PRACTITIONER FOR THE RESIDENCY

First name	
Last name	
Nationality (as indicated in passport)	
Current Address	

Telephone no	
Email address	
Website	

**3. SECTION TO BE COMPLETED BY THE NOMINATOR**

Describe your relationship with the nominated practitioner and why you think he/she would be a good candidate for this residency (maximum 1000 words).

**4. SECTION TO BE COMPLETED BY THE NOMINATED PRACTITIONER FOR THE RESIDENCY**

- A. Describe your creative practice and the thinking behind it (maximum 1000 words).
- B. Give details of any experience you might have working with a museum, historic collection or archive and/or community or educational setting (maximum 1000 words).
- C. Give details of how you propose to use this opportunity to develop your practice (maximum 1000 words).
- D. Give details on how you propose to respond to the V&A's collections (maximum 1000 words) and in particular collection's data and information about our objects.
- E. Give details of how you might engage with V&A staff and the V&A's diverse audiences both on site and online. (maximum 1000 words).
- F. Give an outline of how you envisage drawing on V&A expertise and engaging museum staff and the public with the process of developing creative work. (maximum 1000 words).
- G. Please provide any other information or skills that you think are relevant to this application / opportunity (maximum 1000 words).

In one email, applicants are expected to submit:

- A. A completed version of this application form in PDF format.
- B. A CV/resume
- C. Portfolio (only one pdf file with all images and texts).

In the subject line of your email, please write: LastName FirstName.

Important: Do not include any important information in the body of your email. Only information in your application form and the requested documents will be assessed. Also do not submit more than the three required attachments.

### CONFIRMATION

I confirm this information to be correct. I have completed the application form and submitted all additional required materials, by email only.

\_\_\_\_\_

Place and date

**Nominator**

Type or input electronic signature

\_\_\_\_\_

Place and date

**Nominated practitioner**

Type or input electronic signature