

‘The Shed’ Design Placement, Young V&A // OPEN CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

Placement Dates: 12 June to 15 December 2023

Placement Stipend: £8,000

Deadline for Applications: 1 May 2023

Interview Date: Thursday 18 May

Young V&A Induction Dates: Week Beginning 12 June 2023 (Dates TBC)

Young V&A is inviting applications from designers with a playfully investigative, or collaborative practice and demonstrable experience of actively engaging with young audiences. We are interested in designers or design collectives that would like to develop their practice through exploring accessible, inclusive, and sustainable design processes and a playful approach to engaging children and young people. We are particularly interested in designers who are socially engaged and have a connection to and experience of working with East London communities.

This opportunity comes at an exciting time for Young V&A, as this will be the first on-site placement at the Bethnal Green site formerly known as the Museum of Childhood. Young V&A is a museum designed for children from birth to 14 years. Its permanent galleries are dedicated to the power of creativity and The Design gallery is aimed at primarily 11–14-year-olds with an integrated workspace ‘The Shed’ that is visible to the public. This is a unique opportunity for our audiences to gain tacit insight into a busy and active design studio.

The Design gallery’s three key areas will explore material and manufacturing processes, design as a catalyst for change through a series of case studies, and the idea of usefulness and user-centred design. The case studies will explore sustainability, designing inclusively, micro transport, design activism and more, through focus on a particular project and its historic context illustrated through objects from the V&A’s collections.

‘The Shed’ Placement

The placement will take place at the Young V&A Bethnal Green in London over a six-month period from 12 June – 15 December 2023. Young V&A will provide a £8,000 bursary and a workspace within the Museum’s Design Gallery. This placement is a two day a week commitment. For part of this, alongside their own research and practice, the Designer will need to commit to delivery, physical activity, and open engagement with the Museum’s audiences. Specifically, they will need to commit to public engagement activity in the integrated creative workspace or adjacent Open Studio for a minimum of four hours a week split over a day in the week and a day on the weekend.

This placement intends to give insight into the world of a designer and their design process. Their visible presence will bring the Design Gallery to life highlighting the role of a designer. We anticipate that the Designer will make use of and embed themselves into ‘The Shed’ workspace space in Bethnal Green during opening hours and will be committed to creating a

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visual representation of their design values and processes to deepen our audiences understanding of design.

Further anticipated engagement activities include workshops, Continual Professional Development sessions, peer to peer opportunities and gallery interventions of work in progress displays. The designer will benefit from monthly mentoring/crits with the Learning team and Senior Producer for design education and mentoring opportunities with a Young V&A curator. They will have access to a workspace space during opening hours, with wider opportunities to undertake research trips to other V&A sites with curatorial and gallery access, as well as opportunities to network sharing research and practice with V&A Residents.

We encourage applicants to outline in their application how they envision their design practice and 'The Shed' placement will respond to the vision of Young V&A through practice-based research that can inform the museum's creative pedagogies. Our aims for this placement are:

- To support practice-based research in investigative, inclusive, or collaborative design.
- To offer Young V&A audiences the chance to see a designer working live in 'The Shed', revealing 'work in progress' to provide further insight into design's diversity.
- To diversify the range of designers and creative practitioners working with Young V&A.
- To support research that will inform the museum's creative pedagogies.

Vision for Young V&A

Our vision for Young V&A is to build creative confidence in young people from birth to early teens, harnessing the potential of the full V&A Collection and the expertise of creative practitioners, through a collection-centred and audience-led approach. The museum's transformation takes place in the context of its heritage as a key cultural resource and place of learning in East London since 1872. The vision is driven by the desire to offer dynamic, meaningful, relevant content for young people and their families. Young V&A is underpinned by leading research in early childhood development and cognitive science on the critical role of learning through play. Finally, in the context of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, there is growing global recognition of the importance of creative skills – a focus that will be supported by the museum's focus on applied creativity as a critical skill for the future.

Young V&A will respond to this context with four aims:

- To INSPIRE children and young people's creative agency through engagement with art, performance and design;
- To EMPOWER educators to drive forward creative education in art, performance and design from early years to secondary school, becoming a national museum resource for creative education;
- To CONNECT children and young people with the ingenuity of designers, entrepreneurs, innovators and inventors, and;
- To INFLUENCE the sector in building creative confidence through inclusive museum practice for children and young people.



What we're looking for

- Must be an early to mid-career individual designer, Design Studio or Design Collective.
- Must have a participatory, collaborative or socially engaged practice.
- Inclusivity and sustainability design processes at the centre.
- Have an investigative or research driven approach to their design practice.
- Be interested or inspired by responding to contemporary and/or historical collections.
- Have a connection to East London and experience of working with East London communities.
- Demonstrable experience of engaging children and young people creatively, especially between the ages of 11-14.

'The Shed' Placement Duties

- Spend two days per week throughout the duration of the placement carrying out research and developing their design practice, meeting with/presenting ideas to museum staff and engaging the public.
- Spend a minimum of 4 hours split over two days to run Show and Tell, demonstrations or Open Studio activities, actively engaging children and young people in their design practice.
- Contribute to the Young V&A Design Learning programme through:
 - 1x CPD Workshop/talk
 - 1x Peer-Peer event
 - 1x Staff Show & Tell
 - 1x Support session with the YV&A Collective or after school Design Club.
- Undertake collections-based research primarily in Young V&A Design Gallery, with support of Young V&A Play and Imagine Galleries.
- Undertake a design project that enriches the audiences experience and connects them to the galleries through investigative or research-based design practice.
- Build on their networks in East London, playing an active role in creating engagement opportunities.
- Contribute to the dissemination of the placement on the Young V&A website and networks, through photography, podcast, blog posts and social media.

Benefits & Support

- £8,000 bursary inclusive of materials.
- Workspace 'The Shed' - There are small windows and shelves to display work that can be viewed from the gallery, it can be closed off via a sliding door and is sound proofed. Please note there are conservation limitations on materials and making practices that include heat and water.
- Participate in monthly 121s with the Young V&A's Senior Producer - Design Education and wider learning team to support practice and engagement.
- 'Work in Progress' presentation in late Summer 2023 (an informal 'crit' session with V&A and Young V&A curators).
- Opportunities for mentoring with the YV&A's Curators.
- Research visits to V&A's other sites such as V&A South Kensington and V&A Wedgwood.

- Access by prior arrangement to V&A South Kensington's ceramics workshop.
- Potential paid opportunities to run extra learning workshops at V&A sites.

Application process for this 'The Shed' Placement

We want to know about your design practice, experience, what that looks like day to day, and how you would plan to embed yourself in 'The Shed' space. We want to know your approach to design and in what ways you are participatory, collaborative or socially engage. We would like examples of your engagement experience particularly with children and young people.

You may present your placement proposal in a PDF or Word document. You may link to relevant projects from your website, portfolio or social media that support your outlined proposal.

Shortlisting and Selection

Applications will be reviewed by at least two members of Young V&A staff. We regret that we will not be able to provide feedback to unsuccessful candidates. Shortlisted candidates will be informed by email and invited to an interview. This will take place on the on **Thursday 18 May** through **Microsoft Teams**. The interview will include a series of interview questions and the panel will most likely consist of the Young V&A Senior Producer - Design Education, V&A Residencies Producer, A past placement candidate and a Young V&A museum curator.

Please apply through Microsoft Forms by 1 May 2023 5pm

[Click here to access the form](#)

If you have any questions regarding this opportunity, your eligibility, or access related queries please email TheShed@vam.ac.uk