

A global network

Afghanistan, Armenia,
Azerbaijan, Bhutan, Brazil,
Bulgaria, Cambodia, Chile
(Rapa Nui), China, Colombia,
Croatia, Cyprus, Ecuador,
Egypt, Ethiopia, Georgia, Ghana,
Greece, Guatemala, Hong Kong,
India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq,
Jordan, Kenya, Kiribati,
Kurdistan, Lebanon, Lesotho,
Libya, Malaysia, Mexico,
Mozambique, Myanmar (Burma),
Nepal, New Zealand, Nigeria,
North Macedonia, Oman,
Pakistan, Palestine, Peru,
Philippines, Romania, Rwanda,
Saudi Arabia, Singapore,
South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan,
Syria, Tajikistan, Tanzania,
Thailand, Tunisia, Türkiye,
Uganda, United Arab Emirates,
United States of America,
Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Vietnam,
Yemen, Zimbabwe.

International
Training
Programme
Annual report 2025



Introduction

‘The programme’s unique blend of learning, site visits, and networking has proven to be instrumental in shaping my professional journey. As a Senior Fellow, I am fortunate to participate in sessions across different departments, and I am eager to absorb as much knowledge as possible.’
Chantal Umuhoza, Rwanda,
ITP 2018 Fellow and Senior
Fellow 2025

Crowned Buddha seated
on an three elephant throne,
Myanmar (Burma), 1700s.

The annual programme

The annual programme is at the core of the International Training Programme (ITP) experience. Here, fellows are introduced to a global network of colleagues and exposed to a variety of museum practices. This year, from 5 July to 17 August, the British Museum welcomed 20 participants to the programme from 18 countries, including Brazil, China, Colombia, Cyprus, Ecuador, Egypt, India, Iran, Iraq, Oman, New Zealand, Sri Lanka, Syria, Thailand, Türkiye, Ukraine, the US and Vietnam.

Our network

The 19th annual programme saw the addition of four new countries to our growing global network, which now totals 393 fellows from 65 countries. This year we were joined by fellows from Ecuador, Syria, Thailand and Ukraine – new connections that we hope will develop into long-term, sustainable and rewarding partnerships.

Our fellows

ITP Fellows come from countries that have identified themselves as needing support to develop their museum services. Fellows tend to be in the early stages of their careers or in positions of influence to help develop others. They are passionate about collaboration, working internationally and pursuing careers in the museum and cultural sectors. See *Appendix 1* for a full list of fellows, departments, UK Partners and supporters for 2025.

Our mission

Through sharing knowledge, skills and experiences, the ITP is working to create and promote a sustainable global network of museum and heritage professionals. The programme aims to help shape the museums of the future through creating a space for global conversations around world histories. While the scope and range of the ITP has grown and developed over the past 19 years, the aims and motivations for the programme remain the same.

Our supporters

The ITP is entirely externally funded through the generosity of individuals, companies, trusts and foundations. Their support allows the Museum to cover the costs of travel, visas, accommodation and subsistence as well as resources for fellows’ personal research and their institutions’ libraries. It also provides future opportunities for fellows to join additional development and sustainability projects that aim to ensure the continued development of both our alumni and their institutions.

ITP annual programme 2025

This summer the British Museum and eight UK partner museums welcomed 20 museum professionals from 18 countries between 7 July and 15 August. Fellows took part in sessions, workshops, working groups, behind-the-scenes tours and study visits, all designed to give a broad overview of museums and cultural heritage in the UK.

For six weeks over the summer, the 2025 cohort was provided with a detailed overview of many different aspects of the Museum’s work, both front of house and behind the scenes. Sessions for 2025 included:

- Archives
- Collections documentation
- Collections management training
- Community engagement
- Conservation
- Equality, diversity and inclusion
- Interpretation
- Learning
- Libraries
- Permanent displays
- Storage
- Temporary exhibitions

Subject-specialist sessions enabled fellows to work together with colleagues in the ITP group who have similar projects, programmes and personal interests. In smaller groups voices can be better heard and institutional challenges directly addressed. Working groups this summer looked at:

- Conservation
- Collections documentation
- Fundraising
- Leadership
- Learning and engagement

Object in focus displays at the British Museum.





Kataraina Poi and Daniel Lira in the Conservation Studios at the British Museum.

Fellows with specific individual specialisms were able to spend time in other museums as part of their Subject Specialist time, talking to curators and looking at the Museum's collection. This year, visits were made to Horniman Museum & Gardens and the Wellcome Collection.

An important part of the programme are the social events which give fellows an opportunity to spend more time as a group and with the ITP team. Evening and weekend events provide an informal setting and a memorable experience that the fellows could enjoy together, while promoting friendships and collaboration. In 2025, the fellows took part in a welcome reception and final night BBQ, as well as an evening trip to a West End show. At Kenwood House, Frances Carey, Chair of the Marie-Louise von Motesiczky Charitable Trust, explained the fascinating history of the house and its collection. Following a walk across Hampstead Heath, Frances hosted the cohort for afternoon tea at her home.

New for 2025

In 2025 we saw the addition of four new countries to our global network – Ecuador, Syria, Thailand and Ukraine – new relationships we hope will continue and develop in the future.

This year, to include a wider range of voices and experiences to the annual programme, we devised a more formal offering of day trips to other museums and heritage institutions. At Stonehenge, fellows met members of English Heritage's visitor and operations teams to explain how the organisation manages the care of Stonehenge and delivers its visitor offering. At Tyntesfield, fellows were introduced to colleagues from the National Trust. Between tours of the historic house and gardens, participants networked with the team and discussed issues ranging from visitor engagement, conservation and reinterpreting historic collections. A day spent with the V&A took the fellows to three sites across London. At the recently opened V&A Storehouse, participants were shown a different approach to museum storage which grants visitors more access to the behind-the-scenes work of a museum. At Young V&A, fellows met with colleagues to discuss approaches to engaging young children and families in museum displays and exhibitions. Finally, at South Kensington, participants had the opportunity to experience a late-opening event and visit the current exhibitions.

New to this year's annual programme was a visit to the Museum's Archaeological Research Collection (BM_ARC) in Reading. The state-of-the-art research and storage facility opened for visitors in 2025, giving ITP Fellows the chance to meet with the Collections Management team based at BM_ARC. During our visit, fellows were given a tour of the facility's textile store, presented archaeological material in the facility's study room, and took part in a workshop exploring how BM_ARC manages pests.

We were pleased to welcome back Siddhant Shah, Museum Access Consultant and Founder, Access for ALL (India, ITP Fellow 2021) who delivered a session for the annual programme looking at accessibility and inclusion. Siddhant's inclusion in the programme helped to introduce the 2025 participants to the wider ITP global network and the future engagement opportunities which are available to ITP alumni.

In 2024 we introduced a new workshop to the annual programme which we called *The Future of Museums*. This session returned for 2025 and was once again led by the ITP Senior Fellow, this time by Chantal Umuhoza (Rwanda, ITP Fellow 2018, Senior Fellow 2025). Taking place on the final day of the programme, fellows reflected on their experiences of the last six-weeks and, working in groups, discussed how they address some of the challenges which museums of the future might face. The session was linked to the work the fellows had done earlier in the programme for Museum Project Day. In groups, fellows visited another museum in London and assessed how these museums were addressing the challenges faced by the global culture and heritage sector. For this workshop we were delighted to be welcomed by colleagues the fellows have met over their six-weeks in the UK including representatives from our UK partner institutions, British Museum staff, and ITP alumni currently based in the UK.

'I realised that the power of a display or educational programmes is not only in the objects but also in how we tell their stories. When a story touches emotions and creates connection, that's when a museum truly comes alive. That's something I deeply value and strive for in my work.'
Thuy Pham Thi Mai,
Vietnam, ITP 2025 Fellow



At the British Museum

An essential element of the ITP is allocated departmental time. During this time the fellows can work closely with staff and collections relevant to their professional specialisms. Department time allowed fellows to tour galleries and storerooms with specialists, learn more about curators' current projects, and share skills and expertise on the Museum's collections. Fellows are often given the opportunity to see objects from the collection that they expressed a desire to see in their pre-programme paperwork.

Departmental time is spent in smaller groups, enabling closer relationships with museum colleagues. These relationships can lead to future collaborations such as fieldwork and excavation support, publications, collections research projects, co-curation projects, loans, and exhibitions.

Department colleagues also participate in the *Object in focus* project. Working with their departmental groups, they mentored fellows to propose a new interpretation for an object currently on display in the Museum. These proposals were presented at a reception on the penultimate night of the annual programme.

Departments for 2025 were Africa, Oceania and the Americas, Asia, Egypt and Sudan, Greece and Rome, and the Middle East.

Apron made of yellow and red glass beads, Suriname, possibly 1700s.

Hanan Abd Alhamza in the Conservation Studios at the British Museum.

'I am so excited to have had the opportunity to participate in the ITP programme. It has been a wonderful opportunity for me to get to know this year's ITP participants from all over the world. We have become like a family in such a short time. It has been my dream to visit the British Museum. What a feeling!'

Hanan Abdul Hamza,
Iraq, ITP 2025 Fellow



Africa, Oceania and the Americas

This year the Oceania section welcomed Kataraina Poi, Assistant Guardian of Taonga Māori at Tairāwhiti Museum in Gisborne, Aotearoa (New Zealand) and La’akea Ai, a Digital Humanities Specialist from the Bishop Museum on O’ahu in Hawai’i.

Our departmental days were busy for the Oceania fellows as we wanted to ensure that they met a wide network of people and saw material from Aotearoa and Hawai’i both within the Museum and in other collections. It was especially important to Kataraina to connect with material from Iwi Rongowhakaata, Ngāti Porou, and her home region. We also spent time with our colleagues, conservators Nicola Crompton and Monique Pullan. In conservation, Kataraina and La’akea focused on kapa (barkcloth) from Hawai’i, and fortuitously Hattie Keonaona Hapai, a conservator from UCL Getty joined them.

The first departmental trip included all our AOA fellows and we travelled to our offsite collection store in East London. We were met by Thomas Heal who gave us a tour of the AOA collections, followed by AOA colleagues Claudia Zhert, Ian Taylor, Ava Salzer and Taryn Foss who all spoke about the work they are undertaking tied to the Documentation and Digitisation project.

British Library (left to right) Fernando Astudillo (ITP), Magdalena Peszko (BL Maps Curator), Julián Roa Triana (ITP), Katie Sampeck (University of Reading).

Kew Gardens (left to right) Santiago Valencia Parra (SDCELAR), Julián Roa Triana (ITP), Daniel Lira (ITP), Fernando Astudillo (ITP), Louise de Mello (SDCELAR).

Cambridge (left to right), Santiago Valencia Parra (SDCELAR), Julián Roa Triana (ITP), Daniel Lira (ITP), Louise de Mello (SDCELAR), Fernando Astudillo (ITP), Clara Ruiz (SDCELAR).



Three other departmental days were spent in other institutions. Firstly, we visited the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology in Cambridge and met with the collection manager Rachel Hand and curator, Eve Haddow. They showed us collections from Kataraina’s home, and La’akea and Eve talked about the Museum’s database and processes. We then took a tour of *Fault Lines*, an exhibition curated by indigenous artists and curators.

Our second trip outside London was to see colleagues at the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford. We met curator Marenka Thompson-Odlum and digital specialist Kathy Clough. They had prepared some barkcloth for La’akea and some paddles and woven material for Kataraina and the morning was spent looking at taonga (treasures). In the afternoon we were given a tour of the permanent galleries and the temporary exhibition, *Hawai’i: Ma uka to Ma kai: Quilting the Hawaiian Landscape*.

Our final trip included the Americas fellows, and we visited the British Library where we attended a show and tell of some Americas maps with colleagues at the Library. Manuscripts curator William Frame and Oceania curator Lucy Rowland had prepared a journal for Kataraina to view. It was written by William Monkhouse who was the surgeon on the first Cook voyage the Endeavour. The journal describes the first encounters with people from Kataraina’s region in October 1769 and the lamentable battles that took place in the next few days, which resulted in the loss of nine Māori men.

For the *Object in focus* task, we chose a piece of stone currency from the Island of Yap in the Caroline Islands, Micronesia. La’akea and Kataraina reimagined the stone’s display, focusing on the quarrying of the stone on the Island of Palau and how people sailed the stone across to Yap in a feat of engineering and navigation. Kataraina and La’akea did an amazing job of researching and preparing their display and the crowd were so engaged – their table was busy all evening.

The time spent in with the Oceania fellows was focused on collaboration, knowledge sharing, discussing our shared histories, and learning from each other. I thoroughly enjoyed every moment spent with our AOA fellows and all the conversations I had with them. They brought great energy and passion to the programme and were not afraid to raise difficult topics and ask the hard questions.

Polly Bence
Project Curator, Oceania collections
Department of Africa, Oceania and the Americas

‘The ITP has strengthened my confidence and identity as an individual, a Iwi/Hāpori (Tribe/Community) person, and a museum professional. It gave me the resilience to navigate foreign, often colonised, spaces while holding firm to my cultural values. This experience highlighted the importance of creating safe pathways for future Indigenous museum professionals to feel support in such contexts’
Kataraina Poi,
New Zealand,
ITP 2025 Fellow



Fa, stone currency,
Micronesia, 1900–40.

La'akea Ai & Kataraina Poi at
the *Object in focus* reception.

'I am thankful to have shared this journey with the staff of the Americas Department and SDCELR: Danny Zborover, Louise Cardoso de Mello, Santiago Valencia Parra, and Clara Ruiz Álvarez. Their generosity, expertise, and friendship gave form to this experience.'
Julián Roa Triana, Colombia,
ITP Fellow 2025



On this year's edition of the International Training Programme, SDCELR had the pleasure to host three fellows from Latin America: Daniel Lira, from the National Museum of Indigenous Peoples in Brazil, Fernando Astudillo, from the University of San Francisco de Quito in Ecuador, and Julián Roa Triana, an independent museology consultant in Colombia and the Dominican Republic. Their collaboration with SDCELR strategically aligns with the Centre's recently defined key regions of focus and strengths for collection research, knowledge exchange and partnership building: Amazonia, the Caribbean, and the Pacific.

Over the course of the programme the fellows participated in a range of activities and discussions led by the SDCELR team and collaborated with the Centre's ongoing project for remapping Amazonian collections at the British Museum. As part of their *Object in focus* presentation, the fellows shed light on an 18th century Surinamese beaded apron from the foundational Sloane collection, which may be among the earliest ethnographic objects from Amazonia in the British Museum's holdings. In addition, SDCELR sponsored an extended stay for Daniel Lira, curator and Macuxi descendant from Northern Amazonia, to work on the participatory documentation of the Macushi collection.

The collaboration with the ITP also created a valuable opportunity for SDCELR to strengthen its ties with partner institutions across the UK. Highlights included visits to the Museum of Anthropology and Archaeology in Cambridge and its new state-of-the-art storage facility, hosted by senior curator and colleague Jimena Lobo Guerrero; the ESCALA collection at the University of Essex —the largest university collection of Latin American Art in the UK — led by Giselle Girón; and Kew Gardens' ethnobotanical collection from Amazonia, accompanied by Erin Messenger.

The collaboration between SDCELR and the ITP stands as a testament to the benefits of two BM programmes with shared visions working in synergy and further reaffirms their potential for fostering more sustainable networks and enduring partnerships worldwide.

Louise C de Mello
Head of the Santo Domingo Centre of Excellence
for Latin American Research (SDCELR)
Department of Africa, Oceania and the Americas

Asia

This year the Department of Asia welcomed six ITP Fellows: Vineet Kajrolkar, Exhibition Manager, MAP Bengaluru, India; Deemanka Jayakodi, Museum Curator, Colombo National Museum, Sri Lanka; Yingchong Li, Head of the Section for Education Programmes, Department of Social Education, The Palace Museum, Beijing, China; Nachanok Wongkhaluang, Museum Curator, Queen Sirikit Museum of Textiles, Thailand; Thuy Pham Thi Mai, Head of the Department of Education and Community, Vietnam National Museum of History, Vietnam; and Komal Pande, Deputy Curator, Numismatics and Epigraphy, National Museum in New Delhi, India.

The fellows took part in a series of activities designed to provide a broad overview of what happens behind the scenes with the Department of Asia team, including Jessica Harrison-Hall, Yu-ping Luk, Sang-ah Kim, Minju Song, and Wenyuan Xin, as well as staff members of the loans and display section. The fellows were introduced to the Chinese, South Asian, Korean, and Japanese galleries, as well as given a tour of the *Hiroshige; artist of the open road* exhibition by Alfred Haft. During these talks, not only were the objects introduced, but the ideas, planning, and rationales used in the design of the content were also discussed.

Asia Department fellows in a textiles session.



Akiko Yano introduced her ESRC-funded *Creative collaborations: salons and networks in Kyoto and Osaka 1780–1880*, and Jennifer Morris discussed her AHRC-funded research project, *Interpreting Borneo in Britain* and showed the fellows the extensive Borneo collections in storage. Mei Xin Wang examined recent China-section acquisitions with the fellows, and Anais Da Fonseca brought out some Indian paintings from the museum's substantial collection. Imogen Laing arranged her usual wonderful textile session that explored how to pack, prepare, and care for textiles in storage to prevent damage and ensure long-term survival. The fellows also got to practice rolling, packing, and wrapping textiles and were given extensive information sheets to take away.

As part of the ongoing Documentation and Digitisation programme, Sophie Sorrondegui, Ishani Sinha, and Sing Kwan explained their work in documenting the Asia department collections through photography, rigorous audits, and archival research. Simon Prentice gave a clear overview of the department's collection management work.

Finally, I spent one and a half days with them in storage. We discussed various groups of Southeast Asian materials, including the collections formed by Stamford Raffles when he was lieutenant-governor of Java between 1811-1816. We had a great time opening cabinets and drawers and seeing what was inside. The fellows also supplied the registration numbers of objects they particularly wanted to see, which provided leads into which drawers and cabinets to open. We looked at Chinese export ceramics, Indian archaeological material and jewellery, more Indian paintings, Sri Lankan sculptures and paintings on wood, Vietnamese ceramics and 20th century drawings, and Tibetan sculpture.

I also worked with them on the *Object in focus* project, providing guidance, answering questions, and reading drafts. This year the fellows formed two groups of three for the exercise. One group was assigned the eighteenth-century Burmese Buddha image seated on elephants (1872,0701.1) that is on display in the Enlightenment Gallery (Gallery 1). It was collected by Hindoo Stuart before the late 1820s and given to the museum by the Bridge family in 1872. The group reinterpreted the image in the context of the different schools and practices of Buddhism. The other group rethought the display of a third-century lute (1907,1111.90) from what is today China's province of Xinjiang displayed as part of the Silk Roads section in Gallery 33, the China and South Asia gallery. It is the earliest surviving example of a pyriform (pear-shaped) lute known today, and the group rethought its display through the concept of journeys.

As always, the ITP was thoroughly enjoyable, a wonderful opportunity to be part of a global network of curators, and a fabulous chance to look through collections and learn from others.

Alexandra Green
S P Shaw Curator for Southeast Asia
Departments of Asia, and Money and Medals

'Inspired by the Ancient India exhibition, we will seek to invite ethnic minority students living in Beijing, and connect with relevant communities through partner organisations, to share their stories of life in Beijing, and even stories related to the Palace Museum.'
Li Yingchong, China,
ITP 2025 Fellow



Gehad Shawky Ali and Shimaa Goma
with their *Object in focus* display.

Wooden folding-stool,
Egypt, New Kingdom.

Egypt and Sudan

In the 2025 programme, the Department of Egypt and Sudan had the pleasure of hosting two fellows – Gehad Shawky Ali, Community Engagement and Outreach Programme Coordinator at The Archaeological Awareness Administration of Luxor, and Shimaa Goma, Deputy Director of Technical Affairs at Egypt's Capitals Museums.

During their days in the Department, the fellows participated in a variety of sessions which gave them insight into the scope of work we undertake. This included discussions with curators on a broad range of current research projects spanning animal mummies to ostraca (potsherds used for writing everyday notes), collaborative workshops on planning future displays, guidance on the complexities of delivering large international touring exhibitions, insight into best practice for working with human remains, and practical sessions on the libraries, archives, documentation and digitisation. The fellows were also given access to one of our neighbouring institutions, the Petrie Museum of Egyptian and Sudanese Archaeology at UCL. Curator Anna Garnett generously provided a tour of the museum and shared the work and planning behind the museum's displays and projects.

Several collaborative sessions were also held with other departments at the British Museum, which highlighted some important areas of cross-departmental research. With the support of colleagues in the Departments of Conservation and Scientific Research, the fellows received in-depth and practical study of ancient jewellery and the different considerations for analysis, conservation and display. A session entitled *Culture in Crisis* gave the fellows in the Departments of Egypt and Sudan, Greece and Rome, and the Middle East insight into some of the threats to cultural heritage in the world today. This session ended with a valuable discussion where the fellows shared personal stories from their own countries.

For the *Object in focus* project, the fellows were especially creative in their proposed redisplay of a folding stool from the New Kingdom (1550–1069 BC). The fellows focused on the production of the stool, highlighting the incredible skill of the carpenters, especially seen in the inlaid design of duck heads at the end of the stool's legs. They integrated a variety of interactive modes of engagement to help visitors of all ages understand the story of the craftsmen, including a picture book, activity sheets, videos, and a modelling set.

It was a great delight and privilege to have Gehad and Shimaa in our Department this year. We learned a lot from their knowledge and experience, and we greatly enjoyed our time with them. We wish them all the very best for their future endeavours.

Georgia Barker
Curator: Egyptian Archaeology
Department of Egypt and Sudan

'By the end of a day [in the Department of Egypt and Sudan] rich with knowledge and experience, I gained a deeper appreciation for the complexity and diversity of museum work, which goes beyond preserving artifacts to understanding their historical and ethical contexts and engaging with contemporary communities.'

Gehad Shawky Ali,
Egypt, ITP 2025 Fellow





Demetra Igantiou, Perihan Donertas and Olena Shevchenko in Colchester.

Thomas Kiely and the Greece and Rome fellows.

Greece and Rome

The Department of Greece and Rome were privileged and delighted to welcome three outstanding delegates for our 2025 programme: Demetra Ignatiou, Associate Curator at the Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation and freelance curator/museographer from Cyprus; Perihan Dönertaş, a specialist in urban archaeology from the General Directorate of Cultural Heritage and Museums, Ministry of Culture and Tourism, in Ankara, Türkiye; and Olena Shevchenko, head of archaeological collections management and the research department at Odessa Archaeological Museum, Ukraine (currently on secondment at the Department of Classics, King's College, London).

Colleagues from across the Department of Greece and Rome introduced Demetra, Perihan and Olena to the collections, archives and library, while our collection care team provided a memorable introduction to the challenges of managing the collections, including decanting large-scale sculpture (with the help of the heavy lifting team). Allison Kidd introduced the group to the Museum's Masterplan. The group had a chance to engage with the proposals that curatorial teams are currently preparing for submission and learn more about our aims for engaging external specialists and origin communities in our research. Anna Willi kindly introduced our fellows to her work on everyday life in the ancient Mediterranean and how she plans to display this theme in the museum in the future. Ollie Croker guided our guests around the bonkers but brilliant Soane Museum, following on from Vicky Donnellan's session on the history of the classical collections in our department. Kate Morton meanwhile provided an excellent overview of archaeological illustration, past and present, which helped Demetra, Perihan and Olena to plan the visuals for the *Object in focus* project.

Thomas Kiely took the team to Greenwich – a beautiful and inspiring place, brimming with great museums and heritage sites – as well as to Colchester to visit the Castle Museum and Roman Circus Visitor Centre. In addition to experiencing a smaller regional museum, and a fascinating example of how modern development reveals ancient remains (the circus), the team were able to see Roman-era mosaics discovered in and around the oldest town in Britain. This was very relevant to their *Object in focus* topic – the Hinton St Mary Mosaic. Their proposals for its redisplay was bursting with great ideas, beautifully and engagingly presented, and attracted a lot of attention and praise from the other fellows and from our visitors.



‘Throughout the programme, Thomas Kiely displayed an extremely kind, helpful, and instructive attitude. The field trips we undertook with him became much more meaningful. Especially during our Object in focus project, his ideas and guidance were both instructive and enlightening.’
Perihan Dönertaş, Türkiye, ITP 2025 Fellow

Our delegates also took part in several joint-organised activities. Courtesy of Aurelia Masson-Berghoff (Egypt and Sudan), and colleagues from Conservation (Rachel Berridge) and Scientific Research (Aude Mongiatti and Frederik Rademakers), they joined our delegates from the Department of Egypt and Sudan for a fascinating session on the analysis, conservation and display of jewellery. Marcel Marée (Egypt and Sudan), Olga Zagorodnia (Scientific Research), Maria-Gabriella Micale (Middle East) and Allison Kidd (Greece and Rome) facilitated an excellent, day-long seminar on Culture in Crisis, which explored the various challenges and solutions curators and archaeologists face with the illegal art market and in times of conflict.

It is always a pleasure to welcome colleagues from overseas to the ITP, and this year was no different. Everyone in Greece and Rome enjoyed their warm and friendly company and we learned so much from Demetra, Perihan and Olena. We were privileged to hear about their work, experiences and aspirations. We wish them well in the years ahead, and look forward to future collaboration and, of course, friendship.

Thomas Kiely
Curator: Ancient Cyprus and the Aegean Bronze Age
Greece and Rome

The Hinton St Mary Mosaic, Dorset, England, early AD 300s.



Middle East Fellows at the
Object in focus reception.

Stucco wall panel, Iran,
date unknown.



Middle East

This year, the Department of the Middle East was delighted to host four ITP Fellows from Syria, Oman, Iraq, and Iran, whose enthusiasm and commitment brought real energy to the programme. Throughout their time with the department, they took part in presentations, tours, and hands-on ‘show and tell’ sessions led by the curators and collection care staff. They responded with thoughtful questions and lively discussions that revealed their curiosity and eagerness to learn from the Museum’s practices.

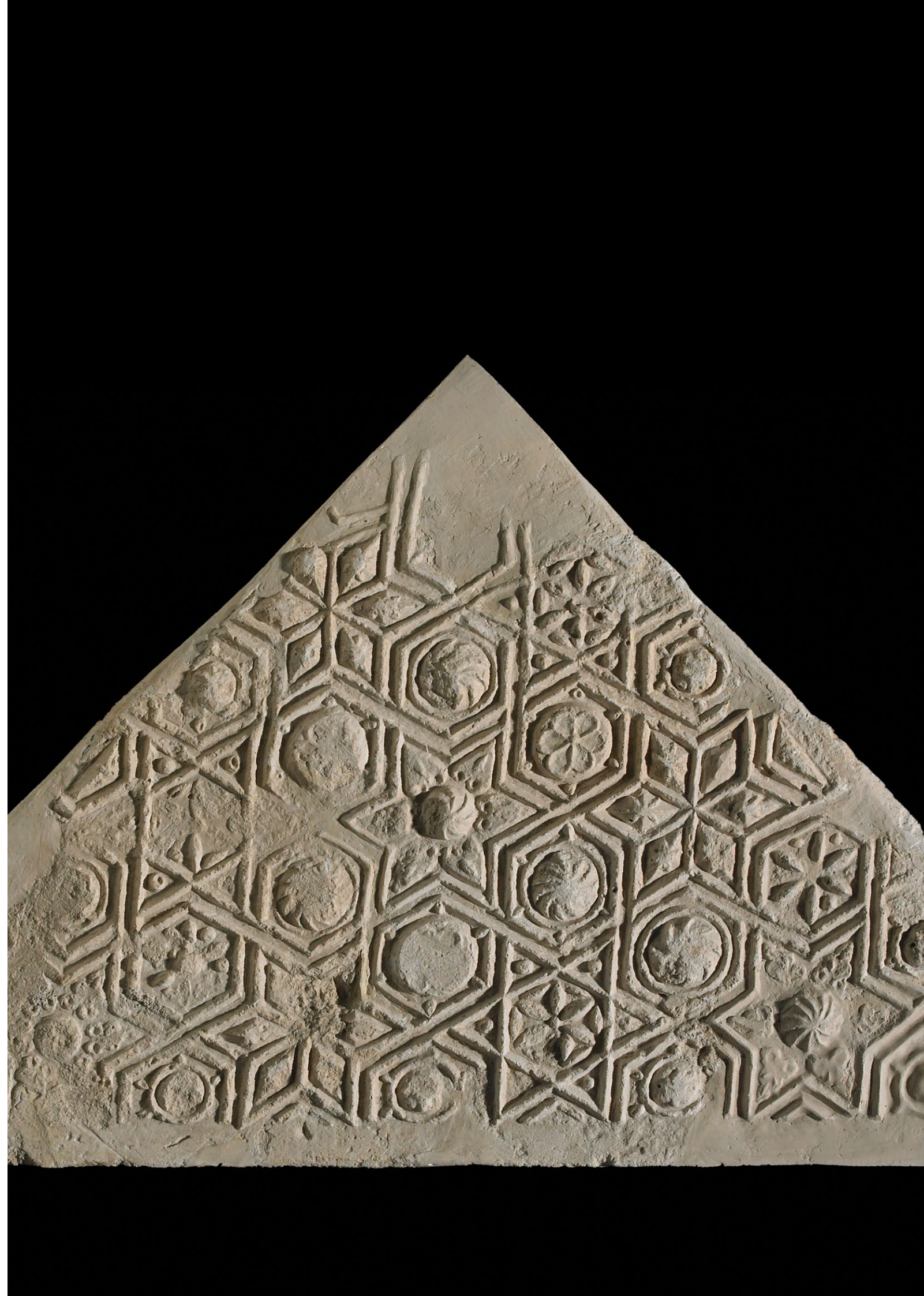
The fellow’s experience was broadened by study trips across the UK, including visits to Glasgow, Newcastle, Norfolk and Manchester, and a particularly successful day in Cambridge, where they explored Islamic manuscripts at the University Library, toured colleges, and enjoyed the Pre-Islamic and Islamic collections at the Fitzwilliam Museum.

Collaboration on their *Object in focus* group project further demonstrated the fellows adaptability and teamwork for exhibitions on the scale of the British Museum, resulting in a joint outcome that drew on their diverse chronological and geographical background and expertise.

The fellow’s participation left a lasting impression on colleagues in the department and reaffirmed the importance of the ITP in fostering professional growth as well as building global networks with museum professionals from the Middle East.

Shiva Mihan
Curator: Islamic Collections (Persianate World)
Middle East

A key aspect of the programme was spending time in the Middle East department and meeting its experts. They generously shared their knowledge and answered many of our questions.’
Safoura Kalantari,
Iran, ITP 2025 Fellow



Senior Fellow 2025

The 2025 Senior Fellow was Chantal Umuhoza, Curator, Rwanda Cultural Heritage Academy (Rwanda, ITP Fellow 2018). Chantal arrived on 23 June and was in London until 29 August as the programme's 12th fellow to take on the role.

Having participated in the programme previously, Chantal provided the 2025 cohort with knowledge of the course, London and our UK partner museums. In return, the role offered Chantal the opportunity to further her knowledge in the delivery and development of skills sharing programmes, to reconnect with the British Museum and UK partner colleagues and to make new connections across our global network.

Working with the ITP team, Chantal devised a new iteration of the *Future of Museums* workshop, which was first introduced to the annual programme in 2024. Taking place on the final day of the programme, fellows were encouraged to reflect on their learning and experiences over the last six-weeks and consider the future of the global cultural heritage sector. Working in groups, fellows were assigned a potential issue which a global museum of the future may face. These issues were linked to the work participants had done previously for their Museum Project Day exercise. After discussions in their groups, fellows share their ideas for facing these global issues. Chantal's workshop was a fun and engaging way to round off the previous six weeks, while also allowing time to discuss some of the themes covered by the annual programme.

‘The year 2018, when I participated in the British Museum International Training Programme, marked a pivotal turning point in my career. This invaluable experience not only broadened my cultural and professional horizons but also served as a catalyst for substantial personal growth. The training provided me with skills, and perspectives that have significantly contributed to my development, shaping me into a more knowledgeable and confident professional. Attending this programme was a truly transformative milestone that continues to influence my career trajectory in a positive and meaningful way.

Chantal Umuhoza (ITP Senior Fellow 2025) giving her presentation.



Since that time, I never envisioned myself becoming a senior fellow. However, I must acknowledge that the ITP has consistently provided me with valuable opportunities for professional growth. Through participation in key conferences such as the Museums Association Conference in 2022 and the ICOM UK Conference in 2024, I have been able to expand my knowledge and network within the industry.

I never miss the weekly emails from the ITP team, which share current news as well as a variety of opportunities for fellows to develop further. When the ITP team announced the call for the senior fellow position, I viewed it as an excellent opportunity to improve my leadership skills and to learn how to organise international-level training programmes. Claire’s email confirming my selection was the best news I received this year.

I joined the ITP team two weeks before the start of the annual programme, assisting with logistical and practical tasks. It was during this time that I truly came to understand the incredible effort and dedication the ITP team invests to ensure the programme’s success.



Chantal Umuhoza (ITP Senior Fellow 2025) in The Wellcome Gallery, British Museum.

During the annual programme, I had the privilege of collaborating with a talented and highly engaged group of fellows. Their collaborative spirit and insightful perspectives not only made my goals more attainable but also transformed our collective learning experience into an enriching and enjoyable journey. I was particularly impressed by their active contribution and engagement during the workshop I conducted on *The Future of Museums*, where we explored emerging trends, innovative practices, and ways museums can adapt to remain inspiring in an ever-changing global landscape. I sincerely hope that this ongoing dialogue and collaboration will continue to shape the future of museums we aspire to create. Additionally, I was fortunate to participate in sessions across various departments, visiting museums in Newcastle, Glasgow, and Oxford. These experiences further deepened my understanding and made my overall journey both educational and memorable.

I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to the British Museum staff from SDCELAR, Africa, Oceania and the Americas, and Egypt and Sudan for their warmth and kindness. My sincere appreciation goes to Claire, George, and Amelia for selecting me for this position, and for their unwavering support, humility, and encouragement. I also wish to thank Frances Carey and the Marie-Louise von Motesiczky Trust for their ongoing support and generosity. Last, but not least, I am deeply grateful to the ITP Fellows of 2025 for their friendship and collaboration throughout this journey.’

Chantal Umuhoza
Curator
Rwanda Cultural Heritage Academy
(Rwanda, ITP Fellow 2018 and Senior Fellow 2025)

‘One of the highlights of the programme was undoubtedly the series of presentations delivered by the fellows. Each presentation was more impressive than the last – showcasing their diverse skills, creative ideas, and deep passion for their work.’

Chantal Umuhoza,
Rwanda, ITP 2018 Fellow
and Senior Fellow 2025

UK Partner Institutions

Ten days of the ITP were spent at UK partner institutions, allowing fellows to explore regional museums across the UK. Time away from the British Museum and London presents fellows with a very different set of benefits and challenges as museum professionals. Fellows often find regional museums more relevant to their home institutions, holding strong local – as well as international – collections and having to be constantly creative in their approach to developing and engaging with their audiences.

Placements are decided in consultation with our UK partners, ensuring that suitable partnerships are made and that fellows can make the most of their experience. As with departmental time at the British Museum, partners deliver programmes to smaller groups which enables them to tailor their programmes and be reactive to the needs of individual fellows.

As demonstrated in the reflections by our UK partner museum colleagues, these placements provide valuable skills and knowledge sharing opportunities for our fellows and partners and will ensure that the ground is laid for potential future collaborations.

UK Partner museums for 2025 were Glasgow Museums; Lincoln Museum; Manchester Art Gallery; Manchester Museum; Norfolk Museums Service; North East Museums; Whitworth Art Gallery and University of Nottingham Museum.



Fragment of a wooden lute,
China, AD 200s.

Glasgow Museums

This year Glasgow Museums were fortunate to welcome four fellows, Gehad Shawky Ali (Egypt), Julián Roa Triana (Colombia), Kataraina Poi (New Zealand), and Safoura Kalantari (Iran), who arrived along with George Peckham from the British Museum. We were also delighted to host ITP Senior Fellow 2025, Chantal Umuhoza (Rwanda) who joined the group on the Friday and was present throughout the rest of the Glasgow Museums' programme.

After checking into their accommodation, the fellows were introduced to Glasgow with a brief walk around the city, concluding with dinner and a chat about their time in Glasgow and the hopes and aspirations for the programme. The programme began the following day with an introduction to the Museum's service, its history and relationship with the people of Glasgow delivered by Martin Bellamy (Research and Curatorial Manager). In the afternoon, Julie Taylor (Senior Programme Manager) and Fiona MacLeod (Editor) held a session introducing Glasgow Museums display and exhibition guidelines, with a chance to see examples within the galleries of Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum.

ITP Glasgow 2025 – with Michael MacKinnon exploring Digital Interactives at the Burrell Collection.



ITP Glasgow 2025 –
Riverside Museum.

In what is always a full programme, the fellows spent their time in Glasgow between venues, with sessions held across several of the museum service's sites, including Kelvingrove, The Burrell Collection, The Riverside Museum and Glasgow Museum of Modern Art (GoMA), allowing for fellows to interact with a range of staff and explore a variety of collections and approaches to display and curation. Visting us at a time of redevelopment to one of our venues, the People's Palace Museum, the fellows were able to contribute to a consultation event focused on engagement around slavery and empire, its legacies, and how we can reflect this in the new galleries. Interpretation, community engagement and co-curation were common threads throughout the sessions in Glasgow, and these topics inspired much conversation and reflection amongst the fellows and Glasgow Museum's staff.

Poor weather and the arrival of storm Floris did unfortunately impact the fellows' time in Glasgow with a day lost due to high winds. Fortunately, we were able to make some changes to the programme and re-schedule a visit to the museum stores at the Glasgow Museum's Resource Centre. This was a particularly poignant visit for some of our fellows who were able to connect with culturally significant pieces within our stores.

I am thankful to all the staff who helped deliver another busy schedule and to colleagues at the University of Glasgow who gave up their time to contribute to this year's programme and meet with some of the fellows. I would also like to thank the fellows themselves, who despite some poor weather and ill health were a delight to host, being engaged, enthusiastic and warm throughout. I look forward to finding opportunities to work together in the future.

Ed Johnson
Curator of Medieval and Renaissance Art
Burrell Collection

'In Glasgow all institutions are openly acknowledging this darker chapter of Glasgow's history and are actively working to incorporate these narratives into their museum spaces. It's a noble effort, and in some ways inspiring. The kind of work more institutions should be doing.'
Kataraina Poi, New Zealand,
ITP 2025 Fellow

At the Lincoln Museum we were shown how to plan a general reorganization of the exhibition. I am going to apply this knowledge in the reorganization of the exhibition that the Odessa Archaeological Museum where I work needs.'
Olena Shevchenko,
Ukraine, ITP 2025 Fellow

Lincoln and Nottingham

This year it was wonderful to welcome Leila Al-Sammak, Curator of the Ancient Archaeological Department, National Museum of Damascus, Syria; Deemanka Jayakodi, Museum Curator, Colombo National Museum, Sri Lanka; Olena Shevchenko, Head, Archaeological Collections Management and Research Department, Odesa Archaeological Museum, Ukraine and Demetra Ignatiou, Associate Curator at Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation (BoCCF) to the University of Nottingham Museum. We were also delighted to welcome Amelia Kedge from the ITP team to the Museum for the first time.

The visit to Nottingham was for three days. We introduced the Museum and its programme, and we also made introductions to internal and external colleagues and partners. This included a visit to the Department of Classics and Archaeology, including the Department Labs, and to the Digital Transformation Hub. Other visits included the School of Computer Science and Manuscripts and Special Collections. Ann Inscker, Curator of Human History at Nottingham City Galleries and Museums, gave us a great tour of the Nottingham caves. Following the visit to Nottingham the fellows then travelled over to Lincoln Museum.

The ITP programme provides the incredible opportunity to meet with international colleagues and gives us all the time to share, discuss, support, and build friendships. As this is a collaborative regional partnership it also provides the great opportunity to work with Andrea Martin and Dawn Heywood at Lincoln Museum and meet other ITP Partners throughout the UK.

With sincere thanks to the British Museum and the ITP for this wonderful opportunity.

Clare Pickersgill
Keeper
University of Nottingham Museum



ITP Fellows 2025 at Lincoln Castle.



ITP Fellows at the seaside.

In Lincoln, our four fellows, Demetra Ignatiou, Leila Alsammak, Olena Shevchenko and Deemanka Jayakodi arrived to find an empty museum as we are currently undergoing development and refurbishment of our main gallery space. It led to an interesting opening discussion with lots to share about how we got here and where the museum is currently within this project. There were many similarities with the fellow's current situations at their own museums. This also came across in their afternoon presentations which they did for Museum colleagues. They were then able to view and discuss the temporary storage of the larger objects that are not currently on display, whilst waiting for conservation assessment before going back into the Museum.

Across the week we were able to discuss how the Heritage Service operates and what Lincoln and Lincolnshire has to offer, as well as finding out where the fellows worked and their interests.

Managing the heritage and material culture across the city and county takes a joined-up approach, and the fellows had the opportunity to meet our colleagues in the Historic Places Team, who are responsible for the Historic Environment Record and advising the planning process, which guides the archaeology the museum receives through commercial projects. The fellows were given tours of the museum stores, the repositories of Lincolnshire Archives, and a visit to our conservation labs which was key to their interests and prompted another session on the use of our collections database.

Due to the inclement weather due on Sunday and Monday we had to rearrange some of our schedule and asked the fellows what they would like to see and a trip to the seaside was requested, with of course time for ice cream! They agreed that they wanted to get a feel for the place they were staying.

We discussed managing sites and had interesting tours around the standing Roman remains to show the development of Lincoln and an in-depth tour of Lincoln Castle with reference to the management and display of the Magna Carta and Charter of the Forest. We discussed the work of the exhibitions team within the Usher Gallery looking at the current rehang and how we work with our wider communities as part of our Arts Council funded programme. We finished their time with us with a trip to Temple Bruer Preceptory, an early 13th-century tower that formed part of the Templar church.

The ITP programme this year has, as ever, been of mutual benefit to all through the generosity of the fellows and staff sharing their interests and cultures.

Andrea Martin
Exhibitions and Interpretation Manager
Lincoln Museum

Dawn Heywood
Senior Collections Development Officer
Lincoln Museum



Janet Boston and Vineet Kajrolkar,
India, ITP 2025 Fellow.

Manchester

The fellows visited Manchester Art Gallery on the first morning, with an excursion to Platt Hall, near Rusholme's famous *Curry Mile* in the afternoon. The morning at the Gallery was spent touring the collections galleries, discussing how displays have recently been refreshed to introduce diverse voices to address colonial histories and the urgent issue of climate change. Re-curating the displays has involved working with global majority artists, volunteers, visitor engagement staff climate activists and students, including students of English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL). There was a frank discussion of some of the difficulties in overhauling long established displays, including conservation and storage issues, the need to retain certain works used in support of the National Curriculum for schools and managing the expectations of external partners. Before lunch the fellows met the Collection Information Manager and discussed documentation issues, including strategies for decolonising the data associated with collections.

In the afternoon, the fellows visited Platt Hall, once the 18th-century home of the Worsley family and from 1947, home to the city's costume collection. The team at Platt Hall now concentrates on working with local communities and partners, with a focus on everyday creativity and wellbeing. There was an exchange of experiences working with community groups, and how such projects need to develop slowly and iteratively.

The second day at Manchester Art Gallery began in reflective mode in the Room To Breathe gallery, a space which encourages visitors to experience art in a more mindful way. The fellows then explored how work at the Gallery is funded and reflected on similarities and differences in funding models of each other's institutions. This was followed by a tour of *Taking Stock*, a project reviewing over 200 years of collecting. We reflected on the legacy of historic collecting in the fellows' institutions, including one museum which is currently only 2 years old and rapidly expanding its collections. The collections review theme continued in the afternoon with a discussion about working with communities to re-evaluate historic collections, a central theme of the forthcoming *Splendours of the Sikh Raj* exhibition. The afternoon concluded by meeting the Retail, Events and Cafe team and celebrating with tea and scones.

Janet Boston
Curator, Craft and Design
Manchester Art Gallery

'Our visits to museums [in Manchester] were not just tours, but intellectual stops where we exchanged insights, reflected on curatorial practices, and discussed museum policies and cultural narratives with passion and openness.'

Shimaa Gomaa,
Egypt, ITP Fellow 2025

Our two, jam packed days with fellows at the Whitworth started with a welcome from Ed Watts (Head of Civic Engagement and Education) and Steven Roper (Schools Producer) to hear about the team, our values, programme delivery and goals and actions driving our work. A highlight of the morning was unveiling the brand-new Civic Engagement and Education team participation strategy (2025-30) hot off the press that very morning! We invited the fellows to dive into the guide that champions are three core values *Play, Care and Together* before heading upstairs to see Everyday Art School space— ideas to bring art into the everyday life.

After lunch, the cohort met Fiona Cariss (Volunteer and Civic Engagement Manager) to chat about on-going partnership work with Venture Arts, a fantastic, local art organisation that works with disabled artists. Fiona also shared an insight into her plans with the volunteer team for the upcoming summer programme that's aimed towards family's *Playtime*. The afternoon ended with a deep dive into the colours and moods, and the yellows and blues of J M W Turner and the exhibition *In Light and Shade* with curator Imogen Holmes-Roe.

The following morning our fellows met Darren Pih (Head of Exhibitions and Collections) to explore the new exhibition Santiago Yahuarcani's *The Beginning of Knowledge*. This show resonated with the cohort as the show addresses documentation of indigenous knowledge and profound visual storytelling. Shortly afterwards, the team met with Dominic Bilton (Project Producer) for an engaging walk through Dominic's latest project, *Recoverist Curators* – a co-curated exhibition exploring the Whitworth's collection through the lens of recovery with the visual arts charity *Portraits of Recovery*.



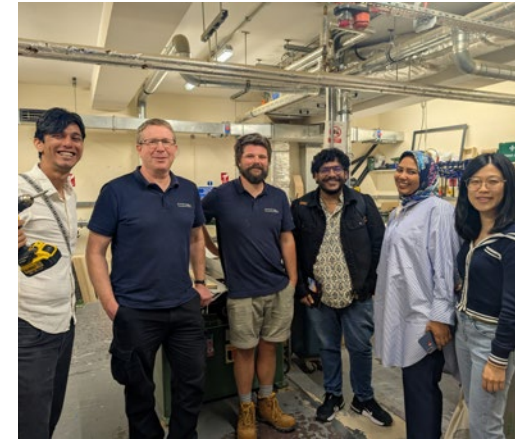
Nusrat Ahmed with ITP 2025 Fellows
at Manchester Museum.

After an enjoyable and animated lunch in the gallery café, with heated debates over milkshake flavours, wild guesses about the soup of the day, and a unanimous vote that fish finger sandwiches are elite, we made our way to meet Amy George (Senior Curator – Collections, Textiles and Wallpaper) for a look into some of our collections which prompted a friendly exchange on storage processes and challenges before meeting Claire Cowell (Age Friendly Producer). Claire spoke about her research project *Creative Menopause* and her ongoing, sector leading work in this area and the relationships she has built over the years with her age friendly programme. Finally, we had a behind the scenes tour in our collections store with Collections Care Manager and Conservator, Ann French. Ann then took us all around our exhibition spaces and led a wonderful and engaging hour on the *art of display* which proved to be a big hit with the fellows who, after two full days, still had energy, warmth and the curiosity to ask questions and share their own styles and methods.

The ITP continues to shine, and these two days were nothing short of joyful, inspiring, and energising. We had a brilliant time with the fellows and can't wait to stay connected. Until the next time!

Steven Roper
Producer (Schools)
Whitworth Art Gallery

Campbell Price with the ITP Fellows
2025 at Manchester Museum.



ITP 2025 Fellows at
Manchester Museum.

At Manchester Museum, after a brief but responsible *Health and Safety* tour of our spaces before we opened to the public, fellows were welcomed by our Director, Esme Ward. After lunch, the group met African Provenance Researcher Lucy Edematie to hear about her work on our Anthropology collections and then took a tour of our Chinese Culture Gallery with curatorial adviser Fang Zong.

Fellows were introduced to the wider staff over tea and homemade cake in our staffroom, allowing more informal discussion about our ethos. Finally, fellows joined Curator of Egypt and Sudan, Campbell Price, to explore storerooms and think about research access, public communication of collections, and ethical consideration of displaying human remains.

The next day, our Senior Conservator Sam Beath highlighted what goes on in the department and Bob O'Connor, Senior Technician, gave an in-depth tour of the workshops (with now-obligatory laser-cut museum keyrings as souvenirs) – leading to some detailed discussions about fixings and paint! Next, South Asia Gallery (SAG) curator Nusrat Ahmed gave an animated tour of the SAG, which resulted from a partnership with the British Museum and the first major co-curated gallery of its type. After lunch there was a chance to talk to different members of our Learning and Engagement Team, to hear about the wide range of their work, including meeting our Social Justice and Environmental Action managers. Finally, there was an opportunity to experience our current, wildly popular installation exhibition - *The Cat That Slept For 1000 Years* - and to take in the (few) bits of the Museum that had been missed.

With visits to various other museums around the city of Manchester and across in Liverpool, all in all this years' group probably enjoyed (and offered) the most action-packed ITP experience Manchester has ever seen!

Campbell Price
Curator of Egypt and Sudan
Manchester Museum

Across all three museums, it was evident that staff were motivated and deeply invested in their projects, which reflected in their openness and passion'.
Vineet Kajrolkar, India,
ITP 2025 Fellow



Norwich

Our 2025 ITP Fellows arrived in Norwich at an exciting time, days before the opening of *A Royal Palace Reborn* at Norwich Castle, including the unveiling of the brand-new Gallery of Medieval Life, a British Museum partnership gallery.

We were delighted to welcome Paint Wongkhaluang Nachanok, Curator at Queen Sirikit Museum of Textiles, Thailand, Thuy Pham Thi Mai, Head of Education and Community at Vietnam National Museum of History, La'akea Ai, Digital Humanities Specialist at Bishop Museum, Hawaii and Nabhan Taghlib Al Barwani, Head of Collections at Oman Across Ages Museum.

It was my first year hosting the ITP Fellows and I wasn't sure what to expect. I was immediately put at ease by the friendliness, enthusiasm, and curiosity of my visiting group. I knew the next few days would be both a wonderful experience and rewarding two-way exchange for me and my colleagues. Sharing our collections, spaces and museum practice lies at the heart of NMS and is underpinned by our status as a Teaching Museum. Within our programme I wanted to introduce the fellows to a wide range of experiences, taking in the variety of heritage sites and museums we have within Norfolk Museums Service, but also showing them the best of the county of Norfolk. We are a geographically large county with cathedral cities, market towns, tourist hot-spots, and stunning coastal and inland landscapes.

As well as receiving a fascinating behind-the-scenes tour of Norwich Castle Keep from Project Manager Hannah Jackson just days before opening, we explored the Natural History and Costume & Textiles collections on display in the museum galleries and housed in our stores. We also visited Gressenhall Farm & Workhouse, Time and Tide Museum of Great Yarmouth, Cromer Museum, Strangers' Hall, the Museum of Norwich at the Bridewell, and the Sainsbury Centre at the University of East Anglia. We met curators, collections teams, conservators, educators and community group facilitators – each with their own expertise and delivery specialisms. Our sector-leading access and engagement practice, born of our strong sense of identity and place across all our museums, shone through and provided many talking points across the programme.

All photos: ITP 2025 Fellows at sites across Norfolk Museums Service.



ITP 2025 Fellows with Louisa Wickham at Time and Tide Museum.

Our fellows got hands-on with collections care – assisting with the deep cleaning of items at our main stores and hand-carving plastazote mounts for shells. We also made portraits of each-other at a workshop designed for those experiencing memory loss and tried letterpress printing at an artist-led workshop for families.

I felt it was important to experience the communities in which our museums are located, and we took every advantage of exploring Norfolk in the height of summer! We saw the museum environs from above, going on the observation wheel at Great Yarmouth and seeing the waterways which criss-cross the vast and flat landscape of Norfolk glistening in the summer sun. We were buffeted and blown about by coastal winds on the pier at Cromer and ate ice-creams on the clifftop.

Guiding the ITP Fellows around Norfolk Museums Service gave me a sense of pride in our service but also privilege to be involved with ITP. Sharing our common experiences and challenges gave me and my colleagues at NMS unique insights; new ideas and ongoing conversations were started.

Thank you ITP, and my wonderful (first) cohort of fellows.

Louisa Wickham
Teaching Museum Manager
Norfolk Museums Service

'It was a perfect day. One that reminded us that museums don't stand alone. Whether through fossils or photographs, rescue boats or crabs, people find ways to tell their stories and connect their past to the present. Cromer [and its museum], with its wind, waves and wonderfulness, offered all of that and more.'

Nachanok Wongkhaluang,
Thailand, ITP 2025 Fellow

Newcastle

North East Museums (Formerly Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums) were particularly pleased to host Fernando, Hanan, Komal and Perihan, and to be joined by Chantal for the first part of the visit in her role as Senior Fellow.

The first day involved an overview of the organisation and its governance. Working across five local authorities (Northumberland County Council having just joined) and a University this took a little time! A tour of Discovery Museum then followed (Science and Social History) prior to a meet with our Director, and then a visit to the Library of the Literary and Philosophical Society of Newcastle, and to admire the views of the River Tyne from the High Level Bridge!

Wednesday saw the group spend a day meeting the team at the Great North Museum (archaeology, Natural Sciences and World Cultures). This included meeting colleagues from the University of Newcastle and seeing items from the Gertrude Bell archives (from north east England, Bell was a significant figure in the creation of the modern state of Iraq and the founding of its national Museum).

Fernando, Perihan, Komal and Hanan
at the Roman Bath-house at Chesters
on Hadrian's Wall.



*Although I still have a few
more days before I bid farewell
to Newcastle, I already know I am
carrying back enriching experiences
and meaningful learnings that
I could have hoped for from this city
that was entirely new to me a week
ago. Next time, I'll return as
a new friend of Newcastle.'*
**Komal Pande,
India, ITP 2025 Fellow**

Thursday saw visits to the Roman forts at Segedunum (Wallsend) and Arbeia (South Shields). Given the group's interests in archaeological management and built heritage this day engendered some really enriching discussions, as well as a trip on the Shields ferry – which crosses between North and South Shields at the mouth of the River Tyne. As if that was not enough fish and chips were enjoyed at Marshalls in Tynemouth (where Jimi Hendrix once ate).

Friday morning was spent exploring the Tyne & Wear Archives and considering how museums and public archives can work together to engage the public. The afternoon was divided between the history team and the learning team at the venue.

Saturday saw a free day, while Sunday was the, now traditional, ITP day out to visit Hadrian's Wall. In this case Brunton Turret, Chesters Roman fort, the Mithraic temple at Carrawburgh and Cawfields Milecastle before taking in the classic view of the frontier at Steel Rigg. A day of fresh air and companionship thoroughly enjoyed by all, and not without more discussion about the methods and challenges of preserving and presenting a World Heritage Site and its collections.

Monday morning was taken up meeting one of TWAM's conservation team, while the afternoon involved the leads for our communities and communications teams.

Tuesday involved visits to the Hatton and Laing Art Galleries, but the final evening saw a departure from the norm. Previous ITP fellows visiting Newcastle will recall the tradition for the final meal at Ottomans. Sadly that institution shut its doors in June, although we did manage a most convivial meal in a different establishment.

Colleagues across NEM were pleased and inspired by our ITP cohort this year, and we hope opportunities will be found to work with them again in the future.

Bill Griffiths
Head of Programmes and Collections
North East Museums



Our programme partners

Key to the success of the International Training Programme is the inclusion of a wide range of voices that share their knowledge and experiences with each year's cohort.

At the British Museum, programme partners provided a variety of sessions. Sara Kayser, Museum Consultant from KulturIT, led an open discussion looking at collection documentation. Sara has previously delivered sessions on documentation for the ITP annual programme and for legacy projects, and we were delighted to welcome her back to share her expertise with the 2025 cohort. We were also pleased to welcome back Ronan Brindley, who delivered a subject specialist session on learning and engagement. Ronan has previously worked at Manchester Art Gallery and served as a UK partner museum representative for the ITP for many years. We are pleased to be able to still work with Ronan as part of the wider ITP global network.

Programme partner institutions invite fellows to visit other museums, to meet staff, explore collections, or give them an introduction to an area of the cultural sector with current relevance. Working with institutions outside of the British Museum provides a change of dynamic to the programme, allowing fellows to explore as much of the cultural sector in the UK as possible and to enhance their global network.

We were delighted to be able to work with colleagues at the V&A for another year. In a day organised by Benjamin Hinson, International Programmes Manager, and Catherine Bryant, International Programmes Assistant, fellows were able to visit three V&A sites in London. The morning was spent visiting the newly opened V&A Storehouse, where fellows had the opportunity to see the open storage facility and learn about how the V&A's collection has been opened to the public. In the afternoon, we were excited to revisit Young V&A, the 2024 Art Fund Museum of the Year. A networking lunch with the Young V&A team was followed by an introduction to the museum, its vision and overview of how the galleries have been redisplayed. We were also given a tour of the museum's latest temporary exhibition, *Making Egypt*. Our day with the V&A finished with an evening visit to the South Kensington site, where fellows had the opportunity to experience a 'V&A late' event and visit the current exhibitions.

ITP Fellows 2025 at
V&A East Storehouse.

At V&A East Storehouse... the multivocality evoked by the labels – written not only by curators but also by conservators, technicians, researchers, user collectives and local community members – along with the themes of the mini curated displays, enhance this ground-breaking effort to democratise exhibition displays.'
Demetra Ignatiou,
Cyprus, ITP 2025 Fellow

Smaller groups of fellows visited other museums in London as part of their Subject Specialist time. Fellows visited the Wellcome where they had a tour of their current exhibition, *Thirst: In Search of Freshwater*. Discussions followed on inclusive exhibition design, visitor experience, public programmes, and partnerships. A group of fellows visited Horniman Museum and Gardens, where the curatorial team discussed their approaches to the display of their World Gallery. The curatorial team also explained their approaches to co-curation with their new display, *All Eyes on Her*.

A continuing dialogue

Further engagement projects are essential to the core objectives of the ITP. Finding ways to give our fellows the widest possible opportunities for training and development is fundamental. Legacy projects inspire a lifelong commitment to our network from ITP partners and fellows, supported by the British Museum.

ITP Research and Conference Grants 2025

In response to ITP Fellows seeking support to attend conferences and carry out research, the ITP offers financial assistance for fellows to attend and participate in conferences and to conduct research which will help develop professional skills and networks in the museum and heritage sector. Successful applicants demonstrate the relevance of attending a conference or carrying out research, to their professional needs and development and how they can draw on experiences from the ITP annual programme and legacy work.

In 2025 the ITP awarded nine conference grants, supporting fellows to attend conferences on diverse themes including *Regenerative Museums for Sustainable Futures; Archaeology of the Bone Objects in the Eastern Mediterranean, Near East, the Black Sea area and the Balkans during the Hellenistic, Roman and Early Byzantine periods* and the *World Archaeological Congress*. We were also able to support fellows to take part in the ICOM General Conference 2025, Dubai on *The Future of Museums in Rapidly Changing Communities*.

We are also supporting four fellows working on research projects looking at How the social and moral issues along with vibrant climate of India transformed significantly the British palette of Turner, Blake and Stubbs during the 18th & 19th centuries and Establishing the Effects of Climate Change on National Museums of Kenya. Tangible Heritage for Sustainability, Adaption and Resilience; Integrating Climate Action Strategies.

ITP Fellows and the International Working Group at the British Museum.



‘As advisory committee members, we all are committed to supporting the core ITP team in planning and developing regular programs for the network.’

**Roshan Mishra, Nepal,
ITP Advisory Board member**

The ITP and Museums Association Conference 2025

In 2025 we invited six ITP Fellows to join us between 4-12 October at the Museums Association (MA) conference and exhibition, Cardiff. The conference took place on 7-9 October at Sain Ffagan Amgueddfa Werin Cymru – St Fagans National Museum of History, Cardiff and focused on *Perthyn - Belonging*, focusing on how museums and their collections and stories belong to everyone, and all communities have the right to representation, participation and agency. Sessions and workshops explored how, at a time of global political, economic, social upheaval and polarisation, community, solidarity and friendship can bring people together in museums to make them such special and engaging places.

There was also the opportunity for participants to spend time at museums, galleries, and heritage sites in and around Cardiff with additional programming focused on our participants’ specific areas of interest.

This year we were joined by fellows from Egypt, Ghana, Iraq, Lebanon, and Ukraine.

ITP Newsletter 2025

The ITP Newsletter takes you on a global journey through different institutions, collections, staff, and audiences. It focuses on how culture and heritage can provide a platform for new thinking, inviting challenging conversations and addressing current issues – both local and global. It tells our fellows’ stories and is guided by the projects and programmes being delivered by our global network.

For the newsletter 2025, our 12th issue, the ITP team and our Senior Fellow 2024, Yanoa Pomalima Carrasco, Museums and Heritage Consultant (Peru, ITP 2022), asked our global network to focus on the important issue of accessibility and inclusion in their museums.

ITP Advisory Board

The ITP Advisory Board use their skills, knowledge and lived experience of culture and heritage sectors around the world to help shape the programme and support the planning and development of current projects.

The ITP Advisory Board usually meets monthly, online, but in 2025 we had the opportunity for an in-person meeting. At the British Museum the board met to share introductions and updates, discuss ITP future plans including updates on the boards current projects and enjoyed a session facilitated by Bilwa Kulkarni-Poddar, Independent Museum and Educational Consultant, India, (ITP 2015 & Senior Fellow 2021) to discuss the future of the global culture and heritage sector and the potential impact on the ITP.



Shambwaditya Ghosh at ICOM UK Conference 2025.

Ancient India co-creation project

2025 saw the culmination of 15 months’ work by Siddhant Shah, Founder of Access For ALL (India, ITP Fellow 2021) and colleagues in the Departments of Asia and Learning & National Programmes to conceptualize and develop a Sensory Trail for *the Ancient India; living traditions* exhibition.

Siddhant worked to co-create the Sensory Trail and a supporting resource kit through extensive community engagement and this project was focussed on accessibility, creativity, and inclusivity, ensuring that the final design would resonate with neurodiverse audiences.

In Autumn 2023, I visited Mumbai as part of a trip exploring the possibility of borrowing devotional works of art from CSMVS (Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya) for my exhibition Ancient India: living traditions. I was also keen to meet up again with ITP Fellow Siddhant Shah of Access for ALL, who is also based in Mumbai, because his work ensuring everyone can access arts and culture is so important and I wanted to bring this approach to the forthcoming exhibition. Over lunch, we chatted about opportunities for collaboration that would bring together community and accessibility.

The outcome was a sensory trail developed in partnership with the Asian People’s Disability Alliance located in Brent, north London. Over several sessions, Siddhant joined APDA members alongside British Museum colleagues including Jaime Prada, Jessica Starns and Kajal Meghani. Together, they shaped a five-stop sensory trail which enables and encourages people to engage with sacred images on display in Ancient India: living traditions through sensory activities. Siddhant facilitated this trail in English and Gujarati as part of a Relaxed Opening on August 18 and it was well received by participants!

Sushma Jansari
Curator: South Asia
Department of Asia

The ITP and ICOM UK Conference 2025

In 2025 we invited eight ITP Fellows to join us on 30 April & 1 May at the ICOM UK Conference which focussed on *Regenerative Museums for Sustainable Futures*. The conference looked at how museums can address climate and social emergencies. Museum colleagues from around the world shared practical examples of regenerative development in museums emphasising moving beyond sustainability and net-zero goals toward restoring ecosystems, rebalancing value systems, and using cultural heritage to foster climate action.

We were joined by fellows from Egypt, Guatemala, India, Kenya, Nepal, Peru and Romania who were able to share knowledge and network with ICOM colleagues and during meet and greets at institutions across Liverpool.

‘Liverpool and the ICOM UK conference provided a roadmap for the development of museums in Peru. By adopting these strategies, Peruvian museums can evolve into regenerative institutions that safeguard heritage and empower communities.’
Yanoa Pomalima Carrasco, Peru, ITP Advisory Board member

Roshan Mishra and
Nguyen Hai Ninh in Nepal.



Looking ahead to 2026

Generous philanthropic support – combined with an active analysis of the International Training Programme alumni – has enabled the British Museum to plan ahead with added confidence, as we develop and deliver new and engaging opportunities for the programme’s growing network of culture and heritage professionals.

2026 will mark a major milestone for the International Training Programme. As well as celebrating our 20th programme and our 20th anniversary, the Museum is delighted that the ITP has attracted renewed major funding for a further five years, taking it up to 2030, with generous support from an anonymous donor.

The Annual Programme 2026

For 2026 the Museum is planning a six-week summer programme, welcoming participants to the UK from Saturday 4 July to Sunday 16 August 2026. The ‘core skills’ group sessions will remain an essential part of the annual programme while workshops will be shaped and created by current issues in the culture and heritage sector and the areas of interest highlighted by our 2026 cohort.

New developments trialled in the 2025 programme – and feedback from our cohort – will see the creation of more personalised programmes and a greater range of programme partners to ensure that each participant can gain maximum benefits of taking part in the annual programme.

ITP Research and Conference Grants 2026

Our research and conference grants have proved a popular source of financial support for fellows to attend conferences and carry out their professional research. Reports on the completed grants are shared on the ITP website to provide resources and information to our wider network.

These will continue through 2026 with particular focus on support for fellows working with and across the ITP global community.

ITP and MA Conference 2026

In previous years, ITP Fellows have joined us at the Museums Association (MA) conferences in Glasgow (2016), Manchester (2017), Belfast (2018), Brighton (2019), online in 2020 and 2021, Edinburgh (2022), Gateshead (2023), Leeds (2024) and Cardiff (2025). Feedback amongst the alumni to these opportunities has been overwhelmingly positive.

For 2026, the ITP will again invite up to five ITP Fellows to join us in the UK for a week-long programme of visits, tours, and networking with our UK and programme partners which will sit alongside the MA conference. The fellows will be selected through an open application process based on the theme of the conference.

ITP Newsletter 2026

The Annual Programme Senior Fellow 2025 Chantal Umuhoza, will take on the role of guest editor of the ITP Newsletter 2026, helping develop the theme and content.

To mark 20 years of ITP, our 13th network newsletter, will focus on collaboration and we will be sharing fellows’ stories of work across the network that look at the impact of being part of an international community of culture and heritage professionals.



ITP Fellows at the MA Conference, Cardiff, 2025.

The ITP Advisory Board in Liverpool Museum.

ITP Advisory Board

The ITP Advisory Board will continue to bring their considerable skills and experience to the ITP projects and programme through 2026. Chantal Umuhoza, Curator, Rwanda Cultural Heritage Academy (Rwanda, ITP Fellow 2018) will join the board as Senior Fellow 2025 bringing a new country and new perspective to the boards remit.

In 2026, the Advisory Board will focus on three main projects. They will continue to support the networks post-programme learning through four online subject specialist sessions and look to celebrate the 20th year of the ITP through a *Global object in focus* project and a new ITP publication.

ITP and ICOM UK Conference 2026

The 2026 ICOM UK Conference will take place in the UK with a theme focussing on international collaborations and partnerships. The ITP team are looking forward to once again having the opportunity to share this conference experience with ITP network members who will be able to connect with colleagues at ICOM UK and from museums around the country.

Digital engagement and social media

As the ITP global network continues to expand both in numbers and geographical spread, digital engagement and the ITP social media platforms remain key to keeping our fellows connected with the British Museum, our UK and programme partners, and each other.

Through 2026, we will continue to develop the ITP website with new information and resources for our global network and to share and celebrate their work. All with the aim of ensuring our website becomes a knowledge hub of shared skills, resources, and experiences.

Our Facebook group continues to flourish with fellows’ news and views and in 2025 we started pages on LinkedIn and Instagram which are increasingly popular platforms with our global network but bring in an important UK element with many of our UK and programme partners interacting in those spaces.

The Course Resources page – an area of the ITP website that is password protected and available only to our fellows – will continue to be updated with useful documents, links and resources.

We have a new Fellows’ Publication page on the website where the ITP can share fellows’ publications. Currently we are hosting publications on *Egypt’s Rich Musical Heritage; Heritage Management in Egypt; Suggestion Plan of launch and operating for first Children’s Museum in Samarkand ‘Centre of Creation and Invention; Cultural Rights and Social Inclusion’* and *Distance Learning through the Grand Egyptian Museum*.

And new reports will be added to our dedicated page for the ITP Research and Conference Grants through 2026.

‘One of the most enduring impacts of the ITP is its emphasis on creating a legacy network. This network is not merely symbolic; it is a practical, functioning platform that facilitates ongoing collaboration, knowledge sharing, and career development.’
Andrea Terrón, Guatemala, ITP Advisory Board member

Support

Each year, the International Training Programme’s annual programme brings together museum and heritage professionals from around the world to undertake placements at the British Museum and at partner organisations across the UK. The full scope of the programme is privately funded and without the generosity of individuals, companies, trusts, and foundations the ITP would not be possible. The generous support of ITP donors enables the Museum to fully cover costs of travel, visas, accommodation and subsistence, resources for the participants’ research and a programme of legacy activity that further builds the ITP network and its capabilities.

Our Supporters

The British Museum wishes to thank the following supporters for making the International Training Programme 2025 possible:

- Al Tajir Trust
- American Friends of the British Museum
- The Barakat Trust
- British Institute for the Study of Iraq
- British Museum Trust
- British Museum Friends
- British Museum Patrons
- British Omani Society
- Charles Wallace India Trust
- Edith Murphy Foundation
- Inlaks Shivdasani Foundation
- The John S Cohen Foundation
- The de Laszlo Foundation
- Marie-Louise von Motesiczky Charitable Trust
- Simon Digby Memorial Charity
- Sino-British Fellowship Trust

And all supporters who wish to remain anonymous.

Safoura Kalantari , Daniel Lira and Li Yingchong looking at accessibility at the British Museum.



Acknowledgments

UK Partner Institutions

Glasgow Museums

UK Partner representative: Edward Johnson
Laura Bauld; Martin Bellamy; Eilidh Combe; Nelson Cummins;
Caroline Currie; Grainne Fellows; Jane Flint; Helen Hughes;
Jennifer Keenan; Fiona MacLeod; Emily Malcolm;
Angela Massafra; John Messner; Lauren Rhodes; David Scott;
Julie Taylor; Katie Webbe.

Lincoln Museum

UK Partner representatives: Dawn Heywood and Andrea Martin
Simone Baddeley; Chrissy Bird; Ian George; Jenny Gleadell;
Sarah Grundy; Michelle Johns; Alex Milner; Lisa Mitchell;
Samantha Parker; Johanne Porter; Richard Watts.

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UK Partner representative: Janet Boston
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Melissa Hawker; Rosalind Hewett; Bethan Holdridge;
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Carl Warren; Dayna Woolbright.

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Sheryl McGregor; Andrew Parkin; Helen Vasey.

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UK Partner representative: Steven Roper
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Amy George; Imogen Holmes Roe; Sook-Kyung Lee;
Darren Pih; Sarah Potter; Malgorzata Mirga-Tas; Ed Watts;
Santiago Yahuarcani.

University of Nottingham Museum

UK Partner representative: Clare Pickersgill
Chloe Highton; Ann Inscker; Susanna Sherwin; Erin Snyder;
Paul Tennent.



Perihan Dönertaş in the stores at the British Museum.

Special thanks to the following institutions and individuals for their invaluable contributions to the annual programme

External colleagues

Ronan Brindley (Independent)
Joanne Carney (UK Visas and Immigration)
Daniel Greenfield (Daniel Greenfield Studio)
Sara Kayser (Kultur IT)
Zeina Klink-Hoppe (Independent)
Saul Peckham (Independent)
Nina Powell (UK Visas and Immigration)

British Library

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Ruth Hansford; Robert Laub; Lucy Rowland; Polly Russell;
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Sarah Foskett; Andy Mills; Karen Thompson.

Horniman Museum & Gardens

Heba Abd el-Gawad; Korantema Anyimadu; Peronel Craddock;
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Petrie Museum of Egyptian and Sudanese Archaeology

Anna Garnett.

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University of Cambridge

Jimena Lobo Guerrero Arenas.

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V&A

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Wellcome Collection

Sean Curran; Colum Gaskell; Janice Li; Georgia Monk;
Julia Nurse; Annie Rollington; Adam Rose; Rachel Sturgis;
Emily Wiles; Eris William-Reed.

‘Being a part of this prestigious programme is a great source of pride for me. Collaborating with professionals from diverse cultures is both inspiring and intellectually enriching.’
Perihan Dönertaş,
Türkiye, ITP 2025 Fellow



Shimaa Gomaa in the stores at the British Museum.

Thank you to colleagues at the British Museum for their vital support

Departmental representatives

Noorah Al-Gailani; Georgia Barker; Polly Bence; Louisa Burden; Alice Christophe; Louise De Mello; Alexandra Green; Thomas Kiely; Allison Kidd; Shiva Mihan; Rose Taylor; Danny Zborover.

Other British Museum colleagues

Kelly Accetta Crowe; Julie Adams; David Agar; Adrienn Almasy-Martin; Ashley Almeida; Helen Anderson; Julie Anderson; Anne-Marie Andoh; Daniel Antoine; Caroline Barton; Rachel Berridge; Karen Birkhoelzer; Ben Burt; Melissa Chatton; Paul Collins; Thomas Costello; Froya Crabtree Booker; Oliver Croker; Nicola Crompton; Nicholas Cullinan; Genevieve Fisher; Anais Da Fonseca; Stephen Dodd; Victoria Donnellan; Maria Duarte; Alana Edgeworth; Igna Edwardson; Celeste Farge; Jeordy Raines Farnell; Zoe Favrin; Joanna Fernandes; Irving Finkel; Genevieve Fisher; Mathew Fitzgerald; Taryn Foss; Benjamin Fox; Alice Fraser; Max Freeman; Katie-Ellen Freeland; Stuart Frost; Paula Granados Garcia; Christina Geisen; Ikram Ghabriel; Kathryn Godwin; Alfred Haft; James Hamill; Thomas Harrison; Jessica Harrison-Hall; Vikki Hawkins; Thomas Heal; Francesca Hillier; Jennifer Hills; Katharine Hoare; Enrica Inversi; Sushma Jansari; Imran Javed; Stephanie Jong; Sarah Kavanaugh; Bridin Kelly; Ioanna Korfiati; Sing Kwan; Imogen Laing; Edward Lawless; Sophie Lerner; Laura Lewis; Denise Ling; Yu-ping Luk; Claude Macnaughton; Marcel Maree; Aurelia Masson-Berghoff; Xerxes Mazda; Kajal Meghani; Maria-Gabriella Micale; Charis Millett; Timothy Moller; Abby Moore; Aude Mongiatti; Eleanor Morris; Jennifer Morris; Kate Morton; Isolde Nicolaysen; Alice Ochocka; David Packer; Martin Payne; Rebecca Penrose; Emma Phillips; Pippa Pearce; Simon Prentice; Monique Pullan; Nadja Race; Frederik Rademakers; Sebastien Rey; Kate Riggs; Nicole Rode; Jessica Routleff-Jones; Clara Ruiz Alvarez; Ava Salzer; Dianne Shepherd; Minju Song; Sophie Sorrondegui; Ian Taylor; Lisa Taylor; Mette Thuesen; Bradley Timms; Robert Todesco; Mathilde Touillon-Ricci; Alex Truscott; Patricia Usick; Santiago Valencia Parra; Victoria Ward; Anne Watson; Scarlet Watts; Katherine Whitehead; Rebecca Whiting; Anna Willi; Chloe Wilson; Keeley Wilson; Gregor Wittrick; Wenyuan Xin; Mei Xin Wang; Akiko Yano; Evan York; Olga Zagaorodnia; Claudia Zhert.

'I made it a priority to transfer the practical knowledge I gained during the collection management workshop to my colleagues – particularly the techniques and considerations involved in object handling, packing and display. I held an internal session to walk them through the key points and best practices I had learned'. Shimaa Gomaa, Egypt, ITP 2025 Fellow

Appendices

Throughout the six weeks of the ITP, fellows undertake projects and programmes that enable them to work and spend time together. Enduring professional and personal relationships are forged while experiences and skills are shared that we hope will support our fellows into the future.

Appendix 1 International Training Programme fellows and sponsors
Brazil Daniel Oliveria Lira Specialist in Indigenous Policies, Museu do Índio / FUNAI (National Foundation for Indigenous Peoples) <i>Supported by the John S Cohen Foundation</i>
China Li Yingchong Section Chief of Educational Research & Development, The Palace Museum, Beijing <i>Supported by the Sino-British Fellowship Trust</i>
Colombia Julián Roa Triana Museums Consultant <i>Supported by the de Laszlo Foundation</i>
Cyprus Demetra Ignatiou Independent Curator - Museologist <i>Supported by the Marie-Louise von Motesiczky Charitable Trust</i>
Ecuador Fernando Astudillo Associate Professor of Anthropology Universidad San Francisco de Quito <i>Supported by the John S Cohen Foundation</i>
Egypt Gehad Shawky Ali Community Engagement and Outreach Program Coordinator, The Archaeological Awareness Administration of Luxor <i>Supported through general sponsorship</i>
Shimaa Gomaa Dodon Deputy Director of Technical Affairs - Museums Sector, Egypt’s Capital Museum <i>Supported by an anonymous donor</i>
India Komal Pande Deputy Curator, National Museum, New Delhi <i>Supported by the Charles Wallace India Trust & Inlaks Shivdasani Foundation</i>
Vineet Kajrolkar Exhibition Manager, Museum of Art & Photography (MAP) <i>Supported by the Simon Digby Memorial Charity</i>
Iran Safoura Kalantari Cultural Heritage Expert, Ministry in Sistan and Baluchestan Province, Southeast Regional Museum of Iran <i>Supported by the Barakat Trust</i>



Iraq
Hanan Abd Alhamza
Manager, Cuneiform Department, Iraq Museum
Supported by the British Institute for the Study of Iraq

New Zealand
Kataraina Poi
Rongowhakaata, Ngāti Porou, Assistant Guardian of Taonga
Māori, Tairāwhiti Museum
Supported by the Edith Murphy Foundation

Oman
Nabhan Al Barwani
Head of Collection, Oman Across Ages Museum
Supported by the British Omani Society

Sri Lanka
Deemanka Jayakodi
Curator, Colombo National Museum
Supported by the Marie-Louise von Motesiczky Charitable Trust

Syria
Leila Al-Sammak
Curator, National Museum of Damascus, General Directorate for Antiquities and Museums
Supported by the Al Tajir Trust

Thailand
Nachanok ‘Paint’ Wongkhaluang
Museum Curator, Queen Sirikit Museum of Textiles
Supported by the Marie-Louise von Motesiczky Charitable Trust

Türkiye
Perihan Dönertaş
Archaeologist, Ministry of Culture and Tourism, General Directorate of Cultural Heritage and Museums
Supported through general sponsorship

Ukraine
Olena Shevchenko
Head, Archaeological Collections Management & Research Department, Odesa Archaeological Museum
Supported by the Marie-Louise von Motesiczky Charitable Trust

USA
La’akea Ai
Digital Humanities Specialist, Bishop Museum, Hawaii
Supported by the Edith Murphy Foundation

Vietnam
Thuy Pham Thi Mai
Head of Department of Education and Community, Vietnam National Museum of History
Supported by the Marie-Louise von Motesiczky Charitable Trust

‘Collection management, we learned, is the invisible backbone of museums. It’s a team sport with different kinds of experts all working in harmony. Collections Manager Evan York said ‘we do everything that touches the collection’ and that phrase struck me: everything that touches the collection. It felt like a promise, and a huge responsibility.’
Li Yingchong,
China, ITP 2025 Fellow

Komal Pande (opposite) and Li Yingchong giving their presentations.



Appendix 2
Museum Project Day: visiting London museums

Museum Project Day asks the fellows to visit another London museum or gallery and apply their learning from the ITP so far, as well as their knowledge as heritage professionals, to consider its visitor offering. Museums and galleries serve as vital platforms for reflection and connection, embracing themes that shape our collective experience. This year’s Museum Project Day focussed on intersecting challenges faced by the global museum and heritage sector. These themes were later reflected on during 2025 Senior Fellow Chantal Umuhoza’s Future of Museums session.

- This year’s themes were:
- Accessibility and inclusion
 - Women’s rights and equality
 - Climate emergency, social justice, sustainability
 - Migration, intergenerational legacy, cultural identity

Divided into five small groups, the fellows were assigned an exhibition to visit and given a list of prompts to consider. They were then tasked to write a collaborative blog post detailing their experience and findings. Below is a list of the exhibitions visited, and a brief overview of the fellow’s feedback.

London Transport Museum
London Transport’s Caribbean Workforce
Given the focus of migration, intergenerational legacy and cultural identity, this group explored the experiences of the Windrush generation and their vital role in shaping modern London. The display revealed how migration, once advertised as opportunity, often led to hardship, yet Caribbean resilience became an integral part of British culture. Through recorded testimonies, objects, and videos, the group saw how Caribbean labour sustains London, influencing its food, music, and festivals. The group described mixed emotions: sadness and anger at the discrimination faced, but also hope and pride in the community’s achievements. The display highlighted that success grows through struggle, partnerships, and perseverance, while also prompting reflections on present-day migration crises. However, the group noted shortcomings in signage and broken interactive elements, and object labelling risked weakening its impact, particularly for family audiences. Still, its co-curated approach and authentic voice underlined the importance of letting communities tell their own stories. The group left reminded that even modest exhibitions can connect deeply when they offer honesty, accessibility, and emotional resonance.

Kataraina Poi and Daniel Lira in the Conservation Studios at the British Museum.



Tate Modern Gathering Ground

Thinking through the lens of climate emergency, social justice and sustainability, this group explored connections between land, community, and identity. The fellows noted powerful works including Abbas Akhavan’s Study for a Monument, bronze casts of endangered plants laid like war casualties, and Bruce Conner’s Crossroads film of nuclear bomb tests, evoking both ecological loss and collective grief. Installations by Abbas Zahedi and Edgar Calel linked recycled materials, sound, and natural offerings to renewal, gratitude, and cyclical balance. The group praised Tate Modern’s sustainable practices – renewable energy, rainwater harvesting, recyclable labels, and QR codes for deeper engagement. While they suggested clearer text to suit all audiences and improved crowd management, they admired the exhibition’s organisation, mixed-media approach, and emotional resonance. Gathering Ground ultimately demonstrated how museums can act as catalysts for care, dialogue, and collective action toward a sustainable future.

The Design Museum More than Human

Also exploring climate emergency, social justice and sustainability, this exhibition challenged the group to reconsider human-centred design and to see the world through non-human perspectives. The fellows reflected on works that encouraged empathy with nature, such as hearing a river’s voice, designing for insects, or consulting “The Council of Kelp” for solutions to today’s crises. Their highlights included DnA_Design’s Into the Island, which prioritises ecosystems over new construction, and sustainable projects like Faber Futures’ NPOL Original and Jessie French’s Sands of Time/ Red Flag. Thomas Thwaites’ playful GoatMan performance exposed the difficulty of escaping human experience, while Ursula Biemann’s Forest Mind invited spiritual reconnection with the natural world. The fellows debated the positioning of indigenous knowledge – arguing it should be central to the story of design and critiqued the linear exhibition layout, suggesting a more circular flow would better reflect holistic thinking. Despite these points, they found the exhibition inspiring and thought-provoking, offering a powerful reminder of the need for humility, sustainability, and collaboration between humans, nature, and design.

At Tate Modern... my favourite exhibit of the day was The Genesis Exhibition: Do Ho Suh: Walk the House. I was drawn in by the short, vibrant, social media highlight reels of the display, but had no context. The introduction quickly conveyed the artist’s feeling of home – memories of a home, memories within a home, and the homes that have housed us and shaped us. It was a small yet deeply impactful visual reminder that although I am physically 7,241 miles away from my house, I carry my home with me everywhere I go.’

La’akea Ai, Hawai’i, US, ITP 2025 Fellow

The Horniman Museum and Gardens

كل العيون عليها! / All Eyes on Her!

Considering the theme of women’s rights and equality, this group appreciated how the exhibition reframed the representation of Egyptian women by centring their lived experiences and challenging long-standing European narratives by offering more authentic, rooted perspectives. The fellows noted the eclectic mix of objects from antiquity and contemporary collections, including cultural dress, amulets, and contemporary art highlighting empowerment and resistance. Everyday items like bras, eyeliner, and hijabs become symbols of agency, protection, and solidarity. While inspiring and innovative, some of the group felt the small display space and dense arrangement limited each piece’s impact, and some questioned whether the bright pink background unintentionally reinforced stereotypes. For most, the exhibition stood apart from more traditional, top-down displays, instead presenting Egyptian women as narrators of their own histories. The fellows left feeling challenged, inspired, and hopeful for a future of greater representation and equality - underscoring the power of museums to amplify marginalised voices.

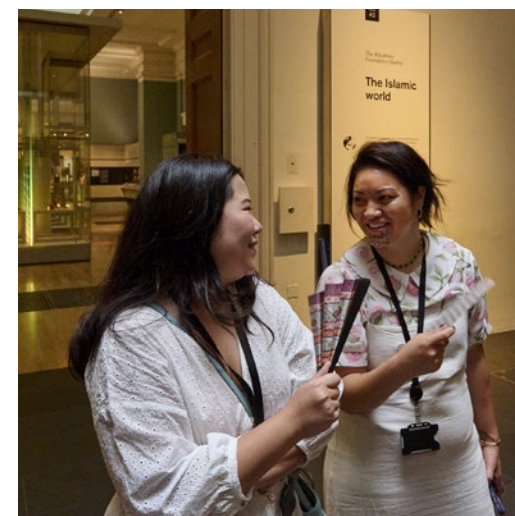
V&A

Design and Disability

Exploring the themes of accessibility and inclusion, this group learned how design can address inequalities faced by disabled people, highlighting accessibility, inclusion, and activism. Organised into three sections – Visibility, Tools, and Independent Living – the exhibition amplified the voices of disabled, Deaf, and neurodivergent communities, showcasing objects and concepts created both for and by them. Powerful messages included challenging pity, promoting solidarity and participation, inspiring all audiences, and celebrating technological innovation as a tool for empowerment. Accessibility was a priority within the exhibition itself, with tactile and sensory maps, BSL videos, Plain English and large-print guides, and QR-coded audio descriptions. The Visibility section examined protest movements and design activism, while Tools challenged stereotypes by presenting disabled individuals as co-creators. Independent Living emphasised the right of disabled people to full inclusion in urban and social life. The fellows were impressed by the use of interactive technologies and tactile exhibits to enhance engagement, though some found the number of objects and labels overwhelming and wished for more hands-on experiences. Despite these issues, the group agreed that the exhibition succeeded in questioning ableism and inspiring a rethinking of disability both inside and beyond the gallery.

La’akea Ai in the British Museum stores.

Nachanok Wongkhaluang and Kataraina Poi at the British Museum.



Appendix 3 Object in focus

As an ongoing project throughout the six-week programme, fellows were asked to use their existing skills and experience, and the knowledge gained throughout the annual programme, to create, develop, and propose a new interpretation for an object currently on display in the British Museum. Working in their departmental groups, with an object chosen by their departmental mentors, the fellows created a label and text panel, and other supporting material to help their object ‘speak’. The proposals were presented in an evening with British Museum staff, supporters, and members of the global ITP network. For the first time in this format, the supporters’ reception was held in the Museum’s Wellcome Trust Gallery.

Egypt and Sudan

Egypt

Gehad Ali, Shima Gamaa

Wooden folding-stool, EA2677

This display looks at an Egyptian folding stool through the lenses of identity, social status, fashion, and religious symbolism. It also explored the connections between ancient Egypt and the modern day, reaffirming the enduring vitality of Egyptian craftsmanship and its relevance to Egyptian society today.

Julián Roa Triana & Fernando Astudillo
preparing their *Object in focus* project.



Leila Al-Sammak in a session
at the British Museum.



Greece and Rome

Ukraine, Cyprus, Türkiye, Ukraine,

Demetra Igantiou, Perihan Donertas, Olena Shevchenko

Mosaic floor, the Hinton St Mary Mosaic 1965,0409.1

This group’s display explored themes of power, religion and continuity through the Hinton St Mary mosaic. They highlighted the fusion of identities and religious symbolism in Roman Britain, as the mosaic displays Roman, pagan, and Christian motifs.

Middle East

Iran, Iraq, Oman, Syria

Safoura Kalantari, Hanan Abd Alhamza, Nabhan Al Barwani, Leila Al-Sammak

Stucco wall panel, 2007,6001.15219

The display explored the Persian Gulf port of Siraf, and how it connected the Persian world to places such as Africa, India, and east Asia. Trade brought wealth and goods, but also cultural influences that shaped daily life, architecture, and identities. The wall panel reveals the enduring power of global connections in driving cultural exchange.

Africa, Oceania and the Americas (Oceania section)

New Zealand, USA

Kataraina Poi, La’akea Ai

Yap stone currency, Oc1980,Q.928

This group’s aim was to challenge mainstream understandings of currency and value by centring the cultural, historical, and social significance of Yapese stone money, called Rai. The display touched upon the people and culture of Yap, incorporating their voices and narratives.

‘The people at the British Museum, who have so generously opened their doors to us for these weeks, managed to show us the hundreds of daily actions their team undertakes to keep a vast body of knowledge alive and at everyone’s service.’

Julián Roa Triana,
Colombia, ITP 2025 Fellow



Nabhan Al Barwani in the Conservation Studios at the British Museum.

Nachanok Wongkhaluang in a textiles session at the British Museum.

Africa, Oceania and the Americas (Americas section)

Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador

Daniel Oliveira Lira, Julian Roa Triana, Fernando Astudillo
Suriname apron, Am,SLMisc.133

This display explored the encounters between European colonial settlers and indigenous communities in Suriname. It highlights the imposition of European moral and social values upon the indigenous people of Suriname, particularly the wearing of clothing and ‘nakedness’ of the body. The display also explores the exchange of goods – the apron in focus is noted for being made of European glass beads.

Asia

India, Thailand, Vietnam

Vineet Kajrolkar, Nachanok ‘Paint’ Wongkhaluang, Thuy Pham Thi Mai

Fragment of a wooden lute, 1907,1111.90

This display explained how the Silk Road fostered cultural exchange, using the lute fragment to demonstrate the exchange of musical traditions between different regions. This group’s display also reflected on the entanglement of colonialism in this network of exchange and power.

Asia

China, India, Sri Lanka

Li Yingchong, Komal Pande, Deemanka Jayakodi
Seated Buddha figure, 1872,0701.1

The group proposed a display which would also serve as a space for reflection and introspection. The display explored the spread of the teaching of the Buddha – covering other examples of Buddha statues found in India, Sri Lanka, and China.

‘Our visit to Tyntesfield was a landmark moment. It was a wonderful and informative visit that gave us a better understanding of how Tyntesfield is cared for and shared with the public. Many thanks to the National Trust team for their warm welcome and valuable insights.’

Nabhan Al Barwani,
Oman, ITP 2025 Fellow



