



Design Researchers in Residence: Artificial

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FUTURE
OBSERVATORY

OPEN CALL FOR ENTRIES 2024/25

Design Researchers in Residence is Future Observatory's programme for design research into the climate crisis hosted at the Design Museum. This funded residency supports thinkers at the start of their careers to develop new research on environmental concerns centred around a particular theme.

This year's theme is Artificial. For the residency programme Future Observatory are interested in design research projects exploring the limits of human-centrism in a more-than-human world.

The residency has two main aims: to provide design researchers in the early stages of their careers time and space away from their regular environment to develop and produce new work, and to offer museum visitors an opportunity to engage with live design research projects.

Each year the residency accommodates four researchers, working in different design disciplines to develop a piece of independent research in response to the theme and brief. Towards the end of the residency, the work of the four residents is presented in a free display at the Design Museum and in an accompanying print catalogue.

Each resident is provided with a commissioning budget of £6,000 and a bursary of £11,400, as well as studio space at the museum and a programme of mentorship, training and seminars from experts both in and outside the Design Museum.

To apply carefully read this Call for Entries document before downloading and filling out the Application Form. All applications must be sent to artificial@designmuseum.org before 9am (UK time) on Monday 23 September 2024.

Design Researchers in Residence: Artificial will run from October 2024 – June 2025. The accompanying residency display will run from June 2025 – September 2025.

WHAT IS THE DESIGN RESEARCHERS IN RESIDENCE PROGRAMME?

Design Researchers in Residence is Future Observatory's programme for design researchers hosted at the Design Museum. The residency supports thinkers at the start of their careers to spend a year developing a new research project in response to a theme. Design Researchers in Residence builds on the museum's flagship Designers in Residence programme, which ran from 2007-2020. Since 2021 programme has been delivered as part of the Future Observatory research programme at the Design Museum, delivered in partnership with the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), part of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI).

The residency has two main aims: to provide design researchers in the early stages of their careers, time and space away from their regular environment to develop and produce new work, and to offer museum visitors an opportunity to engage with live design research projects.

Each year the residency accommodates four researchers, working in different disciplines, to further develop their individual responses to a theme and brief. Although they will be working independently, they are encouraged to come together and share skills and ideas.

The programme is relatively flexible, taking the needs of individuals and project specifics into account. Typically, however, residents would begin by refining their initial responses to the brief before a period of detailed research, development and testing. Residents are required to commit at least two days per week to the programme during the residency period (November-June).

This programme culminates with a showcase in the Residency Studio (June-September) exhibiting different outcomes of the residents' process and research. This showcase is accompanied by a catalogue, which promotes the work of each designer, and raises their profile within the design community and the wider public. .

Each resident is provided with a commissioning budget of £6,000, which goes directly towards producing the work that will be presented at the end of the residency. A bursary of £11,400 is also offered to support the

development of their career and to fund their practice. This will be issued in agreed stages on appointment. The Design Museum manages the production costs associated with the showcase and the presentation of the work to the public.

As well as financial support, the programme provides residents with a dedicated studio space for them to work at the Design Museum. Residents are also set up with mentors throughout the course of their residency and they can also benefit from the Design Museum's network. The residency is a unique opportunity to exhibit work at a nationally renowned cultural institution, to publish their research in the residency publication and to share their work through public programming.

The museum, Future Observatory and AHRC will provide an internal programme of skill sharing sessions, mentors and crits, which built upon their own networks with external organisations, experts and established designers or researchers who may have knowledge and expertise relevant to each project. These conversations aim to promote critical dialogue, clarify intent and to resolve issues. Alongside these exchanges, they consult with the Design Museum's learning, exhibitions, facilities and curatorial teams in order to gain a greater understanding of how their work fits within the museum's wider context.

To gain one of the places on the programme, applicants must respond to an open submission and brief, set by Future Observatory. Previous briefs have covered site-specific interaction, collecting, community, thrift, the pursuit of imperfection, identity, disruption, migration and support. To be eligible, residents must live and work in the UK, have graduated within the last five years, and must have demonstrable experience in carrying out independent research.

DESIGN RESEARCHERS IN RESIDENCE 2024/25 BRIEF: ARTIFICIAL



For Design Researchers in Residence 2024/25, Future Observatory invites design researchers to respond to the theme Artificial.

What are the limits of human-centric design in a more-than-human world?

The history of design is often read through the lens of anthropocentrism, where objects are imagined and manufactured to support human flourishing without concern for other species. Yet today we know well that this approach is part of a broader set of planetary crises which find their root in the artificial separation of the ‘human’ from the ‘natural’.

With this in mind, for the next cohort of Design Researchers in Residence we are seeking proposals which confront, blur, contest and dismantle these boundaries.

We are interested in design research that questions assumptions around what is natural and what is unnatural; that designs collaboratively with the behaviour of plant species; that entangles itself with the architecture of animal habitats; that dresses itself in biosynthetic textiles; that models natural systems as computational ones; and which centres different forms of non-human agency in the past, present and future of design.

As always, Design Researchers in Residence is open to designers and researchers from disciplines including but not limited to: architecture, fashion, digital culture, critical theory, product design, graphic design, interaction design, system design, material studies and design history.

APPLICATION PROCESS

The residency is open to designers and researchers from a range of disciplines including, but not limited to: architecture, fashion, digital culture, critical theory, graphics, products, materials and systems.

The residency is open to those who have graduated from a Master's degree, or have equivalent research experience outside of academic institutions, within the last five years (in the academic year 2018/19 or more recently). Applicants should have a demonstrable interest in carrying out independent research and some understanding of design research ethics and methodologies. The residency is particularly suited to those considering, or currently undertaking, a PhD.

Deadline for all applications is 9am Monday 23 September 2024. Entries received after this deadline will not be accepted.

Designers must provide:

- a) A completed application form
- b) Accompanying visual material

The application form can be found here:

<https://futureobservatory.org/research/apply-for-funding/apply-for-funding-artificial>

The completed application form should be sent to:

artificial@designmuseum.org

A shortlist of applicants will be invited for an interview in London or via video call in the week commencing Monday 30th September to discuss their proposals with a panel of experts before the final group of four residents is selected.



ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

- The Design Museum and Future Observatory are not able to sponsor visas or provide accommodation for visiting researchers. As a result, the residency programme is only open to researchers who live in the UK.
- Owing to curatorial capacity and museum logistics, the residency programme is not open to research groups.
- Design Researchers in Residence is open to those who have graduated from a Master's degree, or have equivalent research experience outside of academic institutions, within the last five years (in the academic year 2019/20 or more recently).
- We positively encourage applications from underrepresented groups and consider candidates who are suitably qualified and eligible regardless of sex, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief, marital status, or pregnancy and maternity.
- Only one application will be accepted per researcher.
- Applications must be in response to the brief and feature new work or the development of an existing project. If an application is based on existing work the development of the work in response to the brief should be clear.
- Only applications submitted via email will be considered.
- Selected researchers will be expected to commit at least two days per week to the residency during the residency period (November-June).
- The selected researchers will be asked to participate in events which engage with the Design Museum and Future Observatory's audiences via networking, press interviews, events, online resources and the public and learning programme. Details of these events are tbc but may include attendance and participation in events in the lead up to, and during, the showcase. These will be discussed in more detail on appointment.
- Design Researchers in Residence may be asked to record their residency by supplying information and visual content on the development of the commission for press, marketing and online content. As part of this they must be prepared to share their process and design thinking as part of the display of their work.

**TIMELINE AND KEY DATES**

WEDNESDAY 24 AUGUST 2024	CALL FOR APPLICATIONS OPENS
9AM, MONDAY 23 SEPTEMBER	DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS
W/C 30 SEPTEMBER	SHORTLISTED APPLICANTS NOTIFIED FOR INTERVIEWS
W/C 7 OCTOBER	SELECTED RESEARCHERS NOTIFIED
W/C 30 OCTOBER	DESIGN RESEARCHERS IN RESIDENCE: ARTIFICIAL BEGINS
NOVEMBER 2024–JUNE 2025	RESIDENCY PERIOD (INCLUDES CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT, FIELDWORK AND PRODUCTION PHASES)
	RESEARCHERS ARE EXPECTED TO COMMIT <u>AT LEAST TWO DAYS/</u> WEEK DURING THIS PERIOD.
JUNE 2025–SEPTEMBER 2025	ARTIFICIAL DISPLAY OPENS TO THE PUBLIC.

DESIGN RESEARCHERS IN RESIDENCE 2023/24



Photo: Justine Trickett

The theme for 2023 was ‘Solar’ and the featured residents are April Barrett, Eliza Collin, Jamie Gatty Irving and Freya Spencer-Wood. You can learn more about the exhibition and their work [on this link](#).

The current display of work from this year’s cohort of Design Researchers in Residence opened on 21 June 2024 and runs until 22 September 2024.

ABOUT THE DESIGN MUSEUM, FUTURE OBSERVATORY AND ARTS AND HUMANITIES RESEARCH COUNCIL (AHRC)

The Design Researchers in Residence programme is part of Future Observatory at the Design Museum, delivered in partnership with the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), part of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI).

THE DESIGN MUSEUM

The Design Museum is the world's leading museum devoted to contemporary architecture and design. Its work encompasses all elements of design, including fashion, product and graphic design. Since it opened its doors in 1989 the museum has displayed everything from an AK-47 to high heels designed by Christian Louboutin. It has staged over 100 exhibitions, welcomed over seven million visitors and showcased the work of some of the world's most celebrated designers and architects including Paul Smith, Zaha Hadid, Jonathan Ive, Frank Gehry, Eileen Gray and Dieter Rams. On 24 November 2016, The Design Museum relocated to Kensington, west London. John Pawson has converted the interior of a 1960s modernist building to create a new home for the Design Museum giving it three times more space in which to show a wider range of exhibitions and significantly extend its learning programme.

In April 2021, the Design Museum was awarded £5 million through the Government's Culture Recovery Fund: Repayable Finance programme.

In October 2020, the Design Museum was awarded £2,968,634 by Arts Council England from the Culture Recovery Fund announced by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport.

In July 2020, the Design Museum was awarded nearly £1 million National Lottery funding through the Arts Council's Emergency Response Fund.

designmuseum.org
@designmuseum

FUTURE OBSERVATORY

Future Observatory is a new national programme for design research supporting the UK's response to the climate crisis. The programme is coordinated by and based at the Design Museum in partnership with the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), as part of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI). Future Observatory aims to accelerate how we find solutions to the most pressing issues. It brings design researchers together with the networks that can help them have an impact on achieving the UK's environmental goals.

futureobservatory.org

[#futureobservatory](https://twitter.com/futureobservatory)

ARTS AND HUMANITIES RESEARCH COUNCIL

The Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), part of UK Research and Innovation, funds internationally outstanding independent researchers across the whole range of the arts and humanities: history, archaeology, digital content, philosophy, languages and literature, design, heritage, area studies, the creative and performing arts, and much more. The quality and range of research supported by AHRC works for the good of UK society and culture and contributes both to UK economic success and to the culture and welfare of societies across the globe.

ahrc.ukri.org

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