



Design Researchers in Residence: Solar

CONTENTS

What is the Design Researchers in Residence programme?

Design Researchers in Residence: Solar

Application process

Entry requirements

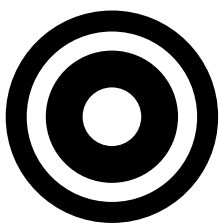
Timeline

Design Researchers in Residence 2022/23

About the Design Museum

About Future Observatory

About the Arts and Humanities Research Council



FUTURE
OBSERVATORY

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

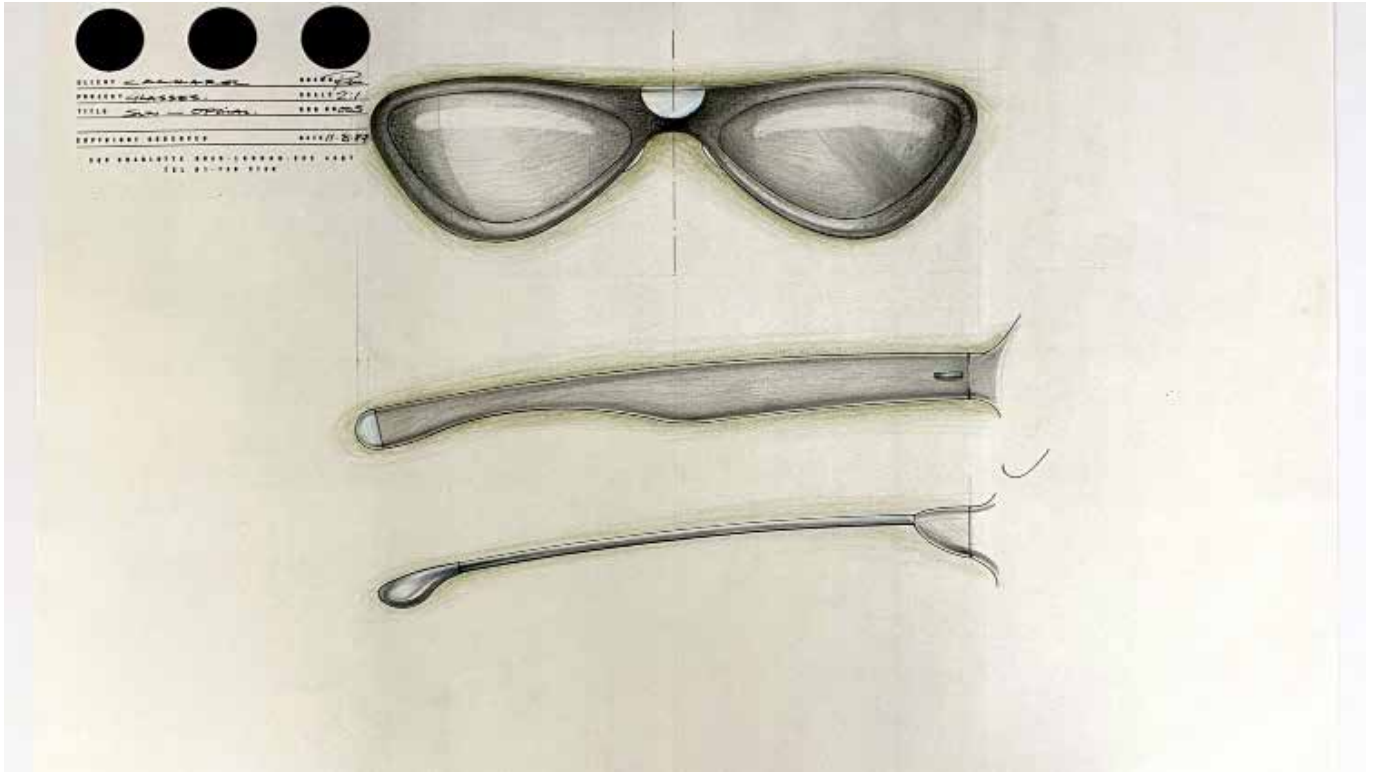
development of their career and to fund their practice. This will be issued in agreed stages on appointment. The Design Museum manages the production costs associated with the showcase and the presentation of the work to the public.

The Residency Studio provides a place for the residents to work as well as a space to exhibit their finished projects.

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: SOLAR



Sunglasses drawing by Ross Lovegrove, courtesy the Design Museum collection

From sundials to solar panels, baseball caps to brise-soleil, the design of our lives has long been shaped by the sun.

At times we design in collaboration with the sun: large windows are oriented towards its daily trajectory to passively heat homes. Other times we design to keep it out: awnings, sleeves and tinted lenses all create barriers to cool and protect from solar rays. Clothing, buildings and other objects are often designed to create climates of comfort for the human body, in response to the heat and light emanating from the sun.

Yet, as our climates change, so must our relationships to the sun. Earlier this summer, the Met Office announced that the UK had the hottest June since records began. This July has seen a brutal heatwave take lives in southern Europe, China has reported its hottest ever day and Canada is fighting its worst ever season of wildfires. In cities such as Los Angeles and London, public provision of shade and cool spaces is becoming a civic concern. Extreme heat is becoming commonplace and designers must respond accordingly.

This rise in global temperatures has coincided with an exponential rise in energy produced with photovoltaic cells: solar power from sunlight, the most abundant source of energy on the planet. This welcome development, which is being applied at the scale of the phone charger, the vehicle and the municipal energy grid, is not without its complications. Struggles over land co-opted for solar farms are erupting from California, USA, to Karnataka, India, making manifest the negotiations required to navigate both green transitions and climate justice. Biodiversity is also impacted by changing conditions of heat and light. Warming oceans cause coral bleaching and the loss of breeding grounds for marine species, while excessive artificial light, interrupting millennia of evolution to solar patterns, damages biodiversity via light pollution.

For the next cohort of Design Researchers in Residence, we are seeking research proposals that consider design for and against heat and light in the context of the climate emergency.

We invite applications from designers and researchers whose research touches on themes including (but not limited to) solar farms, urban heat islands, shade, light pollution, cool spaces, drying river beds, air conditioning, clothing for extreme weather, alternative solar technologies, building insulation, solarpunk graphics, heatwave infrastructure and forest fires.

We encourage applicants to interpret the brief as openly as possible.

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.

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 11 September 2023. 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:

www.futureobservatory.org/apply-for-funding-solar

The completed application form should be sent to:

solar@designmuseum.org

A shortlist of applicants will be invited for an interview in London or via video call w/c Monday 18 September 2023 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 only open to individual applicants, rather than 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 2018/19 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.

Design Museum employees are not eligible to apply.

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.



TIMELINE

APPLICATION

MONDAY 24 JULY 2023	Call for applications opens
MONDAY 11 SEPTEMBER	(9am) Deadline for applications
W/C 18 SEPTEMBER	Shortlisted applicants notified
W/C 25 SEPTEMBER	Interviews
FRIDAY 29 SEPTEMBER	Selected researchers notified
W/C 30 OCTOBER	Design Researchers in Residence: Solar begins

RESIDENCY

NOVEMBER– DECEMBER	Concept development
JANUARY– MARCH	Fieldwork
APRIL–JUNE	Production

DISPLAY

JUNE 2024	Design Researchers in Residence: Solar display opens to the public
SEPTEMBER 2024	Display closes

DESIGN RESEARCHERS IN RESIDENCE 2022/23

The theme for the 2022/23 residency was Islands. The Design Researchers in Residence were Rhiarna Dhaliwal, Marianna Janowicz, Isabel Lea, James Peplow Powell.

You can learn more about the exhibition and their work [here](#).

The current display of work from this year's cohort of Design Researchers in Residence opened on 23 June 2023 and runs until 24 September 2023.



Photo: Anselm Ebulue

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](https://twitter.com/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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