

Design Researchers in Residence

Open call for entries 2022/23

Design Researchers in Residence is an annual programme that promotes new and emerging design and research talent. Each year four design researchers are given a unique opportunity to develop a new body of work, which at the end of the residency, is exhibited to the public in a free showcase. The residents are encouraged to draw on the varied resources of the Design Museum, including the use of a designated studio located in the centre of the museum.

The Design Researchers in Residence programme is 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 following document provides further information about the programme and application process for 2022/23

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1. 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 this period (November-June).

This programme culminates with a showcase in the Residency Studio, 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. Residents are required to commit one day per week to the programme during the showcase period (July-September).

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.

2. Design Researchers in Residence 2022/23 brief: Islands



[Image: Rising Sea Levels by Susan Wright]

For Design Researchers in Residence 2022/23, Future Observatory invites design researchers to respond to the theme Islands.

Islands are defined by the connections formed at their edges: to seas and oceans, and the ecosystems that inhabit them; as well as to other islands, both nearby and further afield.

Rather than isolated units implied by an 'island mentality', they are better imagined as interdependent nodes in networks. This September, the first Islands Forum will bring representatives of island communities around the UK to Orkney, north-eastern Scotland, to discuss their common challenges in the age of the climate crisis. With over 6,000 separate islands making up the 'British Isles', the UK itself is better understood as a vast and diverse archipelago than any kind of singular nation.

Indeed, in an era of hyperconnectivity – when submarine cables run from Canada to Southport and from Japan to Cornwall, broadcasting messages and images from the entire planet – the idea of any insular landmass seems misplaced. Arguably it always has. The wealth of this ‘Small Island’ is inseparable from its former colonies; its historic investment in material extraction and fossil capital directly leading to the environmental catastrophes affecting island communities around the world today.

For the next cohort of Design Researchers in Residence, we are seeking proposals that engage with the continuum of isolation and interconnectedness that is implied in the island, as an environmental, geographical and social construct.

We invite applications from designers and researchers whose research touches on themes including (but not limited to) marine ecosystems; rising sea levels and coastal communities; infrastructure for climate refugees; food sovereignty; importation and supply chains; islander identities and cultural connections.

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

3. 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 2017/18 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 Monday 19 September 2022. 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/open-call-islands

The completed application form should be sent to:
residency2022@designmuseum.org

A shortlist of applicants will be invited for an interview in London or via video call w/c Monday 19 September 2022 to discuss their proposals with a panel of experts before the final group of four residents is selected.

4. Entry Requirements

- Design Researchers in Residence is only open to designers who live and are eligible to work in the UK.
- 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 2017/18 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.
- If you are unable to attend the interview day, the museum may be unable to progress your application unless exceptional circumstances.
- Selected researchers will be expected to commit at least two days per week to the residency during the first eight months, and at least one day per week for the final three months of the programme.
- 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.
- Designers 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.

5. Timeline and key dates

Tuesday 5 July 2022	Call for proposals opens
9am, Monday 19 September 2022	Deadline for applications
w/c Monday 19 September 2022	Shortlisted applicants notified
w/c Monday 26 September 2022	Interviews
Friday 30 September	Selected researchers notified
w/c 31 October	Design Researchers in Residence: Islands begins
November 2022–June 2023	Project development phase (includes initial research, seminars, development and production of exhibition and publication work) Researchers are expected to commit at least two days/week during this period.
July 2023–September 2023	Islands display open to the public.

6. Design Researchers in Residence 2021/22

The theme for 2017 was 'Restore' and the featured residents are Thomas Aquilina, Delfina Fantini van Ditmar, Samuel Iliffe and Sanne Visser. You can learn more about the exhibition and their commissions here: <https://designmuseum.org/learning-and-research/design-museum-rd/future-observatory/design-researchers-in-residence-restore>

The current display of work from this year's cohort of Design Researchers in Residence opened on 24 June 2022 and runs until 25 September 2022.



7. 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
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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.

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