

Documentation Assistant**Temporary Employment Service Worker Assignment**

The assignment will be conducted through the University of Cambridge Temporary Employment Service and will be based and managed within the Fitzwilliam Museum.

RATE OF PAY: £14.22 PER HOUR

DURATION OF ASSIGNMENT: 29 weeks (full time)

CLOSING DATE: Friday 8 October 2021 at 9am

ONLINE INTERVIEW DATE: Friday 15 October 2021. Applicants are asked to be available on this day.

METHOD OF APPLICATION: Please email hr@fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk by 9am on Friday 8 October 2021 with (1) a letter of interest in support of your application, (2) a brief CV including relevant IT skills and collections database experience, and (3) the name of two referees (including email address and phone number).

Representations of Black People in European Sculpture, 1450–1950.***Part 1: Mapping Objects in UK collections*****Background:**

The Fitzwilliam Museum is working with partners in the University of Cambridge Museums (UCM) consortium on a shared line of inquiry exploring the legacies of empire and enslavement. 2022/23 will mark the first major public milestone in the project, through public programming exploring the legacies of empire and enslavement: <https://www.museums.cam.ac.uk/blog/2020/07/22/exploring-the-legacies-of-empire-and-enslavement/>. This will include a major Fitzwilliam Museum exhibition, *Enslavement and Empire* (opening Summer 2023). Dr Victoria Avery, Keeper of the Applied Arts Department, is instigating a programme of research that will feed into this exhibition, but also underpin a series of scholarly publications.

Dr Avery's research will explore the sculpted images of Black people between c. 1450 and c. 1950. To support that research, the Fitzwilliam Museum is looking for a Documentation Assistant to map sculpted images (primarily busts, statues, reliefs, funerary monuments and public sculpture) of Black people, made in Britain and Europe between c. 1450 and c. 1950. This pilot phase of the project focusses on examples currently located in the UK, both in public venues (museums, churches, civic buildings, historic houses, etc.) and private collections as well as on the art market. Utilising online databases, other digital resources and printed catalogues, and information sought directly from current UK-based owners, the assignment-holder will systematically compile a comprehensive database. This database will focus on the people (person portrayed, sculptor, patron and subsequent owners) and the places (where sculpted, where originally displayed, and subsequent ownership locations) as well as the circumstances of commission, acquisition, display, and interpretation. This database will allow patterns to be discerned, and continuities and changes over time to be mapped and interrogated.

The Assignment:

This assignment is ideally suited to candidates with a background in art history and/or history; an interest in and understanding of museum collections, particularly from Europe; and experience of working with various museum collections management systems and databases. The assignment-holder will need to be able to work independently and with big data sets, be proficient in a range of IT databases, be fast and accurate when entering data, and have enthusiasm for problem-solving, lateral thinking and following up leads in historic correspondence and museum documentation. The assignment-holder will work within agreed frameworks, standards and methodologies to ensure consistency of database terms, etc. The software used will be the Omeka platform, and in-house training will be provided. Potentially disturbing/racist imagery will likely be encountered in the project and the Museum has recognised the potential emotional burden this could place upon the assignment-holder. Supportive needs will therefore be discussed at the start of the project and regularly reviewed.

While the position will be based at the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge, with regular meetings with Dr Avery, the assignment-holder may undertake most of their work remotely within the UK. There is a possibility of travel within the UK to access relevant archives/collections that are not yet digitized, and a small travel budget will be available to cover reasonable expenses.

Further information about the Fitzwilliam Museum and its collections can be found at <https://www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/>

This assignment is advertised as full time, but part-time applications may be considered.

Informal enquiries are welcomed: please email Dr Victoria Avery on vja1002@cam.ac.uk. (NB Dr Avery is on leave from 10-27 September, but will reply to enquiries as soon as possible after her return).

The University of Cambridge is committed in its pursuit of academic excellence to equality of opportunity and to a proactive and inclusive approach to equality, which supports and encourages all under-represented groups, promotes an inclusive culture, and values diversity. We believe that diversity strengthens and enriches us, and are committed to helping to make the arts and cultural sector a more diverse and equal place. To this end we are actively seeking to diversify our staff and would particularly welcome applications from women and those from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic background, and people with disabilities. If you wish to self-identify, please do so in your personal statement.

The University has a responsibility to ensure that all employees are eligible to live and work in the UK. Once an offer of employment has been accepted, the successful candidate will be required to undergo a basic disclosure (criminal records) check and a Security check.

Offers of work will be conditional upon the satisfactory outcome of a Security check. Whether an outcome is satisfactory will be determined by the University.

The assignment-holder will start the assignment as soon as the above checks have been carried out.