



A fully funded postgraduate research studentship



A History of Audience Thinking at the Science Museum, 1950-2016

AHRC Funded Collaborative Doctoral Award, between UCL Department of Science and Technology Studies, and the Science Museum's Audience Research and Research and Public History departments.

How have audiences been understood in the past 70 years at the Science Museum? How has this understanding changed? How have these changing understandings successively informed the construction of displays at the Science Museum?

This project is concerned with researching the history of how audiences have been successively conceived of at the Science Museum, from ca.1950 to ca.2016. It is aimed at uncovering the relationship between changing conceptions of audiences over this period and the evolution of understandings, within the Museum, of its mission as a public institution participating in the production of the public cultures of sciences in Britain. The Science Museum, since the 1990s, has had a dedicated department to research how audiences engage with the displays installed in the galleries. But this built on much older concerns over audiences' engagements with collections, and reflections on how to take such engagements into account when constructing displays.

The research is intended to demonstrate both the enduring nature of audience thinking at the Science Museum in the post-war period, and the fluidity of conceptions of visitors over the same stretch of time. The research will test the hypothesis that conceptions of audiences are instrumental for the Science Museum to define and perform its identity, and that changes in the methods deployed for researching audiences within the Museum participate in producing this identity inside as much as outside the institution.

The funding is for 42 months, with a start on 1 October 2018 (ending 30 September 2022). It covers UK/EU tuition fees and includes a maintenance grant. The student will be based at UCL with periods of work at the Science Museum.

The award is available on either a full-time or a part-time basis.

For further information about the project contact the project supervisors: **Jean-Baptiste Gouyon** (UCL) j.gouyon@ucl.ac.uk or **Jane Rayner** (Science Museum) jane.rayner@sciencemuseum.ac.uk.

The supervisory team also includes **Tim Boon** (Science Museum) tim.boon@sciencemuseum.ac.uk and **Jon Agar** (UCL) jonathan.agar@ucl.ac.uk

Applicants should hold a 2.1 undergraduate degree as well as have, or expect to obtain, a Masters degree in a relevant discipline. They should also meet AHRC eligibility criteria for this type of funding:

<http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/skills/phdstudents/fundingandtraining/training-grants-and-training-grant-funding-guides/>

Applications should include: a curriculum vitae (no more than 2 sides of A4); a sample of writing (3,000 words max); and a covering letter including a 500-word statement on how the candidate would approach the above project.

Please send completed applications to j.gouyon@ucl.ac.uk by Monday April 30th, 5pm.

