



Manchester Art Gallery

We are Recruiting: Cultural Producer for 'Rethinking the Grand Tour'

The Manchester Art Gallery was initiated in 1823 by artists as an educational institution to ensure that the city and all its people could grow with creativity, imagination, health and productivity. Today, the Gallery aims to be a 'Civic Think Tank'; a meeting space for voices across the city, providing creative education for all.

An essential part of this vision is to nurture diversity and to value nuance and complexity, with artistic and social programmes offering an antidote to polarised debates, promoting intergenerational and intercultural working, embedding democratisation across the institution, and piloting new ways to renew the public value of the institution. Central to this activity is a critical and experimental approach to exhibitions and collections practices.

Currently the Manchester Art Gallery is undergoing a rethink of its permanent exhibitions and Gallery spaces, and is also seeking to innovate its policies, processes and ways of working. This includes a Gallery space entitled 'The Grand Tour'. This space has remained largely the same for two decades, with paintings and works originally purchased in order to demonstrate Manchester's status as 'international' or 'connoisseurial'. Today the privileges of travel, cultural appropriation, and collecting central to the Grand Tour are increasingly understood from the perspective of the long shadows cast by histories of colonialism and hierarchies of race, class and gender.

Working with local creative practitioners, the Manchester Art Gallery is looking to reshape the Grand Tour space focusing on the theme of forced migration and displacement. It seeks an excellent convener of public events, and facilitator of artistic collaboration, to work as a Cultural Producer developing the tone and strategy for future development of the permanent exhibition space.

The Brief

The Cultural Producer will be an integral member of a team of creative practitioners (multi-arts) from backgrounds of forced displacement and migration, a group of curators from Manchester Art Gallery, and a team of academic researchers from the University of Manchester.

The Producer will act as the collaborative lead on the project at the Manchester Art Gallery, which seeks to investigate and reshape a space in the Gallery currently dedicated to the history of the 'Grand Tour'.

The Producer will oversee the initiation of the process of change and set the tone for future curation of this Gallery space. This 're-activation' will focus on the way the Grand Tour space and the MAG collection relates to histories and contemporary experiences of migration and forced displacement. It involves two central components: the rehangng of a designated exhibition space, and the development of a public programme with the 4-5 creative practitioners.

Focusing on a designated exhibition space (considered a Grand Tour 'research lab'), the rehangng process will mark the beginning of a change to the permanent Gallery. This process will involve collaborating with each creative practitioner to identify 1 or 2 artworks or objects from the resident collection that could be placed in the Grand Tour space (following conversation checks). The Producer and the creative practitioners will also be assisted by a team of university researchers, who will be commissioned to research, and identify key information about the work. This rehangng process will involve collaboration (through team meetings) and consultation with Gallery curatorial and education teams as well as the academics leading the AHRC project. The Producer's schedule will need to be flexible around the conservation and technical teams availability, and the demands of the Museum's capital development programme.

The Cultural Producer will develop a public programme consisting of a suite of public activities developed with creative practitioners drawing on their expertise, backgrounds, and experiences. The producer will be responsible for briefing creative practitioners, fostering discussion of what each will be delivering, ensuring there is coherence across the production period and no duplication of activities.

The objectives of the Cultural Producer are:

1. To amplify the expertise of creative practitioners in Manchester with backgrounds of displacement.
2. To enable a collective capacity to build the project together, that everyone feels volition (for example by giving every collaborator the chance to have a voice and an impact)
3. To assist the creative artists to develop their public programme
4. Promoting community engagement, and amplifying the current innovations in programming and education at the Gallery
5. To assist the gallery in signaling a larger change in tandem with Manchester Art Gallery's current 3-year transformation of collections storage and management
6. To facilitate gallery objectives of a) decolonising the collection b) to create an inclusive space that reflects the diversity of Manchester's communities

Budget: The Cultural Producer will be paid a fee of £5,500.

Timeline:

The DAP / Grand Tour project will take place between 1 July 2022 and 30 November 2022 (with post evaluation meetings in December 2022) and will involve 6 phases:

- Phase 1 - Identifying and defining the aims and working processes of the project in collaboration with creative practitioners, MAG team, and University researchers.
- Phase 2 - Cultural Producer to work with recruited group of creative practitioners to identify works (approx 1 day a week over 3 weeks) with university team acting as research assistants
- Phase 3 - Collaboration with MAG team / MAG conservation checks /
- Phase 4 - Public programme (both before and after installation of works)
- Phase 5 - Installation of works
- Phase 6 - Participate in evaluation activities / debriefs

Person Specification

- Experience working as a cultural producer, curator, or similar (eg. social practice artist)
- Have personal insight into forced displacement and forced migration, as one of the aims of the DAP project is to provide an industry opportunity for a producer from this background.
- An excellent facilitator, convenor of conversation, and artistic collaboration.
- Experience working with a range of stakeholders, such as museums, universities and linguistically-diverse communities.
- Ability to generate innovative/creative ideas and effective solutions.
- An interest in curatorial strategies focused on decolonisation, public collections, and institutional critique.
- Excellent communication and motivational skills
- Strong organisational and planning skills

Expressing your interest:

Employment period: Applicants must be available 1 July - 30 November 2022. Applicants must be available two days a week September to early November 2022. Additional meeting and planning times in July and August 2022.

Application Process: All applicants must submit a max two-page expression of interest responding to the person specification, and a CV to Prof Ana Carden-Coyne a.cc@manchester.ac.uk 5pm, 20 June. Interviews will be held on Tuesday 28 June.

Any enquiries about the role or application process, please contact [Prof Ana Carden-Coyne](#)

The Understanding Displacement Aesthetics (DAP) project

The Cultural Producer role is funded by AHRC project [Understanding Displacement Aesthetics and Making Change in the Art Gallery with Refugees, Migrants and Host Communities](#). The Understanding Displacement Aesthetics project (DAP) analyses the impact of artistic responses to forced displacement and refugeedom, focusing on three areas: history, contemporary art, and museum practice.