



Arts and  
Humanities  
Research Council

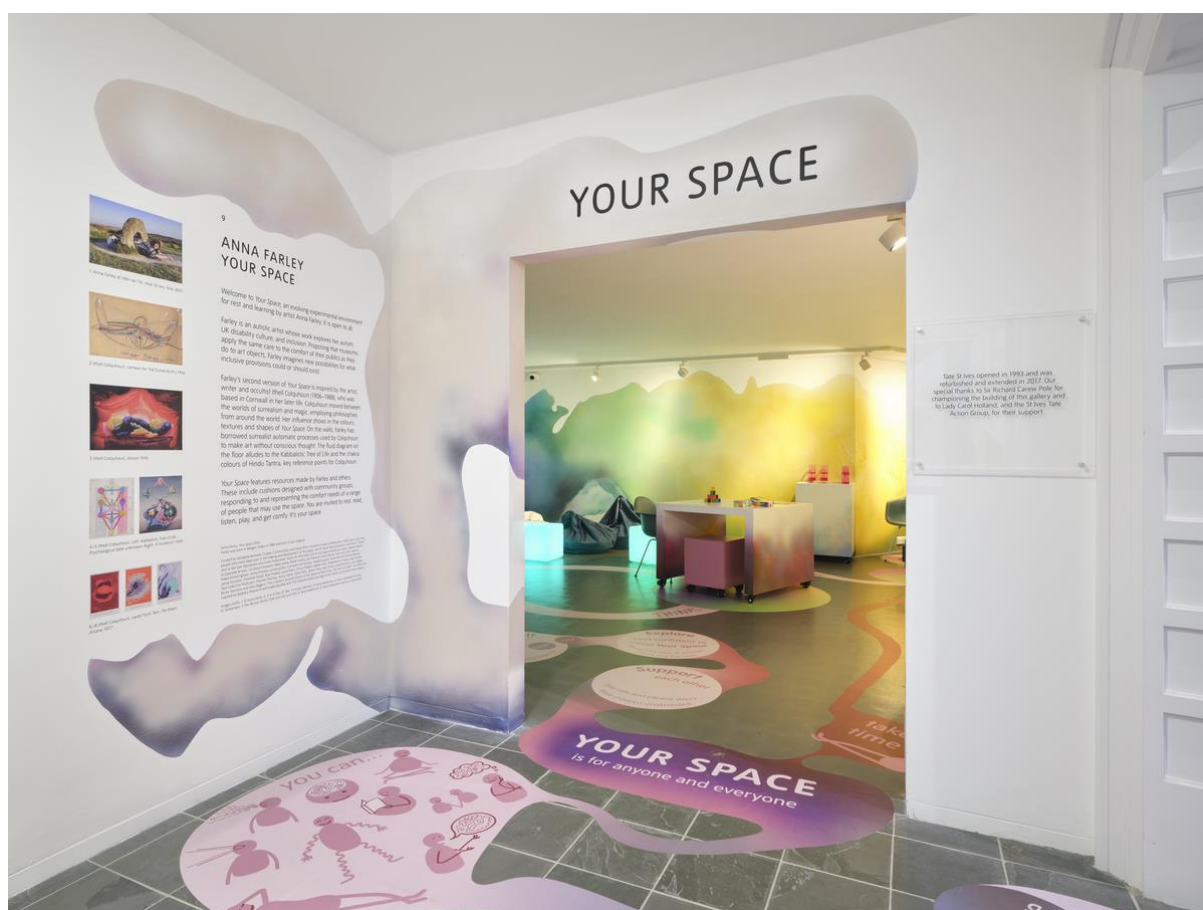
## Application Pack: AHRC Collaborative Doctoral Partnership (CDP) studentship with Tate St Ives and the University of the West of England (UWE):

Investigating the Impacts of Socially Engaged Art on Cultural Organisations and Contemporary Art Practice

Start date: 1st October 2026

Application Deadline: 10 May 2026

Interviews will take place on 10 & 11 June 2026



Your Space by Anna Farley at Tate St Ives 2026 (c) Tate, Photo Adj Brown

Tate St Ives and the University West of England are pleased to announce the availability of a fully funded Collaborative Doctoral Studentship from October 2026 under the AHRC's Collaborative Doctoral Partnerships (CDP) scheme and [Tate's Studentships](#).

This practice-based research project aims to deepen knowledge of contemporary socially engaged art (SEA) practices that are place based, human centred and generative, specifically in the context of museums and galleries.

This project will be jointly supervised by Georgina Kennedy (Curator, Communities) and Cassie Penn (Assistant Curator, Communities), Tate St Ives, and Dr Steven Paige and Dr Sarah Bodman, UWE Bristol. The student will be expected to spend time at both UWE and Tate St Ives, joining rich research communities and benefiting from the doctoral training programmes at both institutions as well as becoming part of the wider CDP cohort across the UK. The scope/nature of the practice-based element of the research will be developed and negotiated by the student over the course of the project.

The studentship can be studied either full or part-time.

We encourage applications from a diverse range of people, from different backgrounds and career stages. Students should have a master's degree in a relevant subject or can demonstrate equivalent experience of more than five years in applicable SEA practices. The studentship is open to both home and international applicants.



Knit and Stitch circle at Tate St Ives Winter Festival 2025, part of Come As You Really Are by Hetain Patel with ArtAngel (c) Tate, photo Ian Kingsnorth

## Project Overview

The PhD studentship will align with the launch of the new Palais de Danse in St Ives, Cornwall, a distinct offer with a unique relationship to its locale. The research will investigate SEA practices situated in a range of settings to locate regional and national experiences within a global practice context, that cultivate local people's creative participation in the life of museums and cultural organisations. The research will seek to expand the language of ownership associated with creative collaborative practices that involve artists, communities and organisations.

The project operates within a collaborative partnership between Tate and University West of England to enable practice-based research in a real-world context. Operating within the platforms of the community programmes at Tate St Ives and the Palais de Danse, whilst ensuring academic rigour.

The Palais de Danse, used by artist Barbara Hepworth as a workshop for her larger sculptures, has also been a dance hall and cinema used by the wider St Ives community. When it opens to the public, the Palais will create new ways to engage communities as well as visiting audiences in this significant cultural heritage, whilst creating real change in who engages with Tate.

The Palais is one of a range of case studies to be investigated. There is scope within the platforms of the Communities Programme at TSI to contribute and explore ideas through practice-based methodologies. This could take the form of:

- establishing communities of practice such as reading groups or practice sharing circles
- engaging communities in co-created and collaborative creative enquiry with SEA artists
- co-convening / contributing to regular SEA events, such as community festivals
- co-convening / contributing to a seminar around SEA in heritage contexts, due to take place in 2029.

The nature of activity will be identified collaboratively with the student to ensure it aligns with their practice and the opportunities available. You will be supported by the Communities Curator and Assistant Curator to achieve these real-world outcomes.

### **Benefits and Opportunities**

The student will situate this practice-based research activity within wider explorations of SEA practice, to interrogate their approach and draw in multiple perspectives. The projects can be transformative in the ways the Palais engages and provides for local people, and in how TSI work across teams to create real change in who engages across differing socio-economic groups, whilst being environmentally and artistically adventurous. It will be vital for you to innovate approaches to engaging adult and intergenerational communities in museums through SEA, working collectively with colleagues and community members to question processes and explore new models of production and programming that are collaborative and place based.

This research will contribute to Tate's understanding of how a national institution approaches and defines community through its work, further expanding the institutional knowledge of current socially engaged practices taking place, including contextualising them in both local and global arts ecology.

The partnership spans the geography of the Southwest of England, the largest English region by area, known for its extensive coastline, rural landscapes, rich history, and distinct regional culture - providing diverse insights into the challenges and opportunities for SEA and communities living here. Although rooted in this region, the collective experience of the co-supervisors acknowledges wider national and international networks and practices, and an interest in supporting global viewpoints to be drawn into the research and contributing to global discussions on SEA.

**Potential research questions could include:**

- What impacts do socially engaged art projects and programmes have on wider contemporary art practices and our understanding of art, artists and civic society today?
- How do socially engaged art practices expand, shift and dissolve the threshold of a cultural institution to generate shared spaces and civic experiences where people feel a sense of belonging?
- How do cultural organisations present, interpret, situate and archive commissioned socially engaged art to create visibility to broader audiences and progress understanding of contemporary art practice today, and what are the impacts for local communities?
- How do cultural institutions create contextual and place-based pedagogies for artists to develop their socially engaged practices and what are the impacts of collaboration, and exchange of intangible and tangible cultural heritages, between visiting artists and local people?
- What are the social, economic, political and cultural impacts of involving artists and communities in the life of the museum through socially engaged arts practices today?

### **Research with UWE**

This research studentship is allocated to UWE by the AHRC, following nomination from Tate. You will be expected to spend time carrying out research and gaining relevant experience with both the university and Tate St Ives as part of the studentship, across the two locations of Bristol and St Ives when appropriate. You will be encouraged and supported by formal supervision and training, joining a thriving community of postgraduate researchers and staff in the School of Arts, based in the College of Art, Technology and Environment, UWE.

### **Details of Award**

CDP doctoral training grants fund full-time studentships for 4 years or part-time equivalent up to a maximum of 8 years.

The award pays tuition fees up to the value of the full-time home fee. Research Councils UK Indicative Fee Level is £5,238. Students with an 'overseas' fee status are welcome to apply but will need to cover the difference between the UK and overseas fees rate (currently £17,130 FT / £8,560 PT) and will be required to reside in the UK until completion of the PhD.

The award pays an annual stipend for all students, both home and international students. This stipend is tax free, and is the equivalent of an annual salary, enabling the student to pay living costs. The UKRI Minimum Doctoral Stipend is £21,805. There is also a CDP maintenance payment of £600 per year.

Further details can be found on the [UKRI website](#).

The candidate is eligible to receive an expenses allowance of £1300 per year for research-related expenses, courtesy of Tate.

The successful candidate will be encouraged and enabled to participate in professional development events and activities organised for all Collaborative Doctoral Partnership students who are registered with different universities and studying with cultural and heritage organisations across the UK. These activities are organised by a coordination team based at the V&A, London, and are designed to

provide CDP researchers with the knowledge, networks and skills to thrive in their future careers. The latest revision of the AHRC Training Grant Funding Guide is available [here](#).

## Eligibility

- Apply via the UWE Studentship Portal by 10<sup>th</sup> May 2026 deadline.
- This studentship is open to both Home and International applicants. To be classed as a home student, candidates must meet the following criteria:
  - Be a UK or Irish National (meeting residency requirements), or
  - Have settled status, or
  - Have pre-settled status (meeting residency requirements), or
  - Have indefinite leave to remain or enter
- International students are eligible to receive the full award for maintenance as are home students. They will need to pay themselves the difference between what the AHRC provide to the university for tuition and the charge made by the university for tuition fees for international students studying for a doctoral degree in The School of Arts UWE Bristol.
- We want to encourage the widest range of potential students to study for a CDP studentship and are committed to welcoming students from different backgrounds to apply. We particularly welcome applications from people of global majority and lower socio-economic backgrounds, as they are currently underrepresented at this level in this area.
- Applicants should ideally have or expect to receive a relevant Masters-level qualification in Visual Arts or relevant subject or be able to demonstrate equivalent experience in a professional setting such as museum or gallery contexts, and working with creative collaborative practices with artists, communities and organisations.
- Applicants must be able to demonstrate an understanding of socially engaged arts practice, with interest in developing skills more widely in related areas, including museum and gallery contexts.

NB. All applicants must meet UKRI terms and conditions for funding. See:

<https://www.ukri.org/funding/information-for-award-holders/grant-terms-and-conditions/>

## How to apply

To apply, please provide an expression of interest stating:

- Your motivation for applying.
- Your interest in the topic.
- How you would apply your experience, skills and knowledge to the studentship.
- Documentation/evidence of your socially engaged art practice.
- What you would ideally use this PhD for once completed.

**Expressions of interest should be a maximum of two A4 pages (with font size no smaller than 10pt). Alternative formats to the equivalent limitation are also accepted, such as audio or video.**

You will also need to provide:

- A separate sample of recent written work.
- CV (no more than 4 pages, font size no smaller than 10 pt)
- BA & MA award certificates (or evidence of equivalent professional experience)
- BA & MA transcripts (where applicable)
- For international applicants, English language certificate (IELTS minimum overall 7.0, no component below 6.5) or accepted equivalent

**The deadline for applications is Midnight on Sunday 10 May 2026.**

**Shortlisted candidates will be invited to a virtual interview on Weds 10 or 11 June 2026.**

For more information and how to apply see <https://www.uwe.ac.uk/research/postgraduate-research-study/how-to-apply/studentship-opportunities>

We ask all applicants to complete a voluntary EDI monitoring form [here](#). All responses are anonymous.

For an informal discussion regarding the studentship please contact Dr Steven Paige at [steven.paige@uwe.ac.uk](mailto:steven.paige@uwe.ac.uk).

### **CDP Consortium**

All CDP projects are part of a nationwide programme called the Collaborative Doctoral Partnership consortium.

**The CDP consortium will host an online webinar for prospective applicants on 13 April 2026 at 11:00.**

These webinars will provide an overview of the CDP funding scheme. To sign up for a webinar, please email [cdp@vam.ac.uk](mailto:cdp@vam.ac.uk) with the subject line "Prospective Applicant Webinar" from the email address you would like to join the online meeting from. Sign up will close on 10 April 2026 at 17:00. Please note, the webinars will not focus on individual projects.

### **Reasonable adjustments and support for applicants**

Should you require any reasonable adjustments or support throughout the application process, please contact [studentships@tate.org.uk](mailto:studentships@tate.org.uk).

Support or adjustments may include (but are not limited to): opportunities to speak with supervisors or relevant contacts regarding the project and process, institutional support systems and spaces, and the interview process.