

CAL Undergraduate Research Scholarships Scheme 2017
Project Proposal Form

Project Proposer/s:	Dr Kate Nichols
School/Dept:	Art History, Curating and Visual Studies, LCAHM
Project Title:	Midlands Art Papers
Project Summary	
<p><i>Midlands Art Papers</i> is a new online open access journal hosted by the University of Birmingham, under development as a possible impact case study for the Department of Art History, Curating, and Visual Studies. The project is underpinned by my own research into histories of collecting in the Midlands.</p> <p>The aims of the project are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To develop a collaborative research culture between the Department of Art History, Curating and Visual Studies, and museums and art galleries in Birmingham and the Midlands • To enable and initiate new, collaborative research into the objects in these collections • To foreground and broaden access to the outstanding collections of fine and decorative arts in public museums in Birmingham and the Midlands <p>As project leader, I've established partnerships with Barber Institute of Fine Arts, Dudley Museum and Art Gallery, Herbert Art Gallery and Museum, Coventry, Leamington Spa Art Gallery and Museum, The New Art Gallery, Walsall, New Walk Museum and Art Gallery, Leicester, The Potteries Museum and Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent, Research and Cultural Collections, University of Birmingham, Royal Birmingham Society of Artists, and Wolverhampton Art Gallery.</p> <p>The first issue of <i>Midlands Art Papers</i> is due in September 2017. The website will disseminate the new research undertaken, bring together the diverse collections in the Midlands on one site, and broaden access to them (especially internationally). It provides a focus for the incubation of a collaborative research culture between Art History, Curating and Visual Studies at University of Birmingham, and museums and galleries in the region. It is envisaged that the project will also enable dialogue and collaboration between curatorial staff in institutions in the region to facilitate, for example, exhibition research and organisation, funding applications, study days, knowledge transfer, internships and secondments.</p> <p><i>Midlands Art Papers</i> will consist of a combination of different kinds of output, published annually. They will range from scholarly essays and articles, discussions between researchers and curatorial staff, to shorter, more informal reports and notices about collections. It is envisaged that they will be available to read on screen, but also as downloadable pdf files accessed through the portal of the project (linked to websites of all collaborating institutions).</p>	
What the researcher will do	
<p>The researcher will have 4 interrelated roles. Taken together, these roles will offer invaluable insight into the connections between research and publishing which form a significant part of academic research:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In collaboration with a partner collection, identify and undertake archival research into an art object, to be written up as a contribution for the second (2018) edition. 2. They will act as an editorial assistant in the weeks leading up to the publication of the first (2017) edition. They will be responsible for proof-reading submissions, preparing manuscripts in house style, and corresponding with authors; acquiring image rights from museums; transcribing interviews. 3. They will help to plan the launch event; they will use blogging and using social media to promote the journal 4. They will assist Alberto Guglielmi, Web Editor for CAL, with editing and creating material for the website (using a wordpress platform). Alberto has agreed that he will train and support the UG researcher to undertake this task. 	
Skills required by the Scholarship holder	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to conduct independent research, academic writing, and visual analysis 	

- Attention to detail and precision
- Digital communication and use of social media
- An enthusiasm for art history, curating, and the history of collections

How will your Project benefit the Scholarship holder?

The project will provide the Scholarship holder with experience of archival research in a museum context, academic publishing on a digital platform, and editorial skills. It offers them the opportunity to network with curatorial staff in the Birmingham region, and to become familiar with collections in the Midlands; for history of art students in particular this may help with identifying possible dissertation topics. Writing a short focussed piece on an object of their choice will develop their research, visual analysis, and writing skills. The editorial aspects of the project will enhance their knowledge of academic referencing and copyright procedures, which should help the student in the presentation of their own written work. It will develop their digital communication skills. Overall, the project will offer the Scholarship holder the opportunity to see how academic publishing works from the perspectives of both researcher and editor.

How will the Scholarship benefit your Project?

The assistance of the undergraduate researcher will provide vital editorial and research support to *Midlands Art Papers*, ensuring that the first edition is delivered, promoted, and launched in a timely fashion; the timing of the summer Scholarship is particularly pertinent, given the intention to launch the first issue in September 2017. As this is a potential impact case study, the student's work will benefit both this specific project and the department more broadly. The new research undertaken by the researcher will respond to the research needs of a partner institution, forge new collaborative relationships between the University and art collections in the region, and contribute towards the second edition of the journal.