

Icon Internship Programme Case Studies

Internship case studies

Martha Infray



Preventive Conservation, Norfolk Museums (HLF-funded) 2014-15

"My 12-month Icon internship in Preventive Conservation at Norfolk Museums Service (NMS) was invaluable in providing me with all the necessary tools for my next role. I started work as Project Conservator for the National Trust at Knole House in Kent in May 2015.

"This role is accountable for providing support and expertise in all aspects of preventive and remedial conservation of collections and historic interiors by applying appropriate technical and consultancy skills to enable Knole to achieve sustainable standards of conservation, access and presentation throughout the Inspired by Knole Project, a multi-million pound HLF-funded project committed to improving the conservation of the building and its contents while inspiring its visitors.

"Having covered all aspects of conservation (during my internship) meant that I was fully equipped to start work as either a preventive or remedial conservator and that I was confident in providing support and expertise in all aspects of conservation. Having attended lectures, conferences and workshops and visited many labs and studios during my internship meant that I was also able to network widely and acquire professional contacts which I am using at present in my current role.

"What I learnt and the support I received during my internship are the reasons why I was offered my current role as Project Conservator and for that, I will be eternally grateful to the staff at Icon and at NMS for organising and making my internship such a positive experience and for preparing me for professional life."

Abigail Tyler

Textile
Conservation Ltd

Textiles Conservation, Textile Conservation Ltd (HLF-funded) 2014-15

"In 2013 I graduated from the University of Lincoln with a BA in Conservation and Restoration. During my course I completed a six-week placement at the National Trust Textile Conservation Studio. After graduating I worked on a modern tapestry conservation project at Portcullis House, Palace of Westminster. I also volunteered at The Museum of Cambridge.

"It was a privilege to be offered this Icon internship with Textile Conservation Limited, Bristol. I am working alongside a small, friendly team of professional conservators who come from a range of backgrounds and specialisms. Our customers include historic houses, museums and private clients.

"So far, I have gained new practical skills and experience, such as costume mounting, tapestry conservation and project planning."

Sophie Barton

Furniture Conservation, Tankerdale Ltd (HLF-funded) 2014-15

TANKERDALE

"I studied History of Art at the University of York then Conservation at City & Guilds of London Art School (C&G). Studying at York, I had the chance to work at Castle Howard which gave me an insight into the day-to-day running of an important historic house. "While at C&G, I developed an interest in painted wood and decided to focus on the conservation of polychrome objects. Since graduating, I have gained experience working on polychrome sculpture at SRAL, Maastricht in Holland, at IRPA in Brussels and latterly at the CRRCOA in Vesoul, France.

"During my Icon internship I am focusing on the conservation of decorative surfaces on furniture, learning finishing techniques for wood surfaces and gaining experience working on a variety of decorative finishes. I have already taken part in a variety of conservation treatments from treating a woodworm-damaged dolphin to cleaning ormolu lilies in a bath."

Giorgia Genco

Book Collection Care, Caroline Bendix (HLF-funded) 2014-15

Bendix Library
Conservation

"After a bachelor degree in Conservation Science at the University of Tuscia in Viterbo, where I studied diagnostic for cultural heritage, I took an MA in Conservation of Book and Paper Materials at the University of Palermo. I also did an internship of one year in a laboratory of book and archive conservation that gave me the opportunity to improve my skills by working on individual items.

"I started my one-year Icon internship in book collection care with Caroline Bendix at the end of April 2014.

"I was given the opportunity to work in a wide variety of projects around the UK as my supervisor is freelance and an advisor for the National Trust and NADFAS. I have taken part in surveys, conservation in-situ treatments, preventive conservation, packing and moving, books and shelving assessment, handling and security projects with several institutes, national conservation bodies and private collections.

"I wanted to do the internship to improve my skills and knowledge in preventive conservation and in book collections care in order to become a fully-rounded book conservator. I would like to thank Icon and HLF for this great opportunity!"

**Marta Garcia
Celma**



Paper, Photographic and Preventive Conservation, RCAHMS (HLF-funded) 2014-15

"I studied Fine Arts at the University of Barcelona in Spain followed by a specialisation in Photographs at WDKA, Rotterdam. I then joined the two-year MA Conservation program at Camberwell College of Arts, where I specialised in Paper Conservation. At the same time, I took part in volunteer placements at the Museum of London, Victoria & Albert Museum and Wellcome Trust, and worked briefly for The National Archives. I also attended a broad number of conferences and workshops in conservation of photographic materials.

"My one-year Icon internship in photographic materials, paper and preventive conservation at the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland began in April 2014.

"For the duration of the placement, I have been involved in paper and photographic conservation for two days a week, preventive conservation for two days a week and professional development for the final day of the week. I have taken part in workshops in the conservation of photographs and pest management as well as visiting other institutions and studios.

"I took part in the internship because I hoped to open my network in conservation as well as gain experience in salvage plans, collaborate actively in the field and to gain the confidence needed to work without supervision. I would like to thank Icon and HLF for the opportunity, and my supervisors at RCAHMS for their incredible mentoring."

Sarah Walton



Costume Mounting, Manchester City Galleries (HLF-funded) 2014-15

"I studied for a degree in Embroidery at Manchester Metropolitan University and then volunteered to work on the costume collection at Touchstones Art and Heritage Centre. I then started a two-year internship with the Manchester City Galleries as a Costume Mounting Technician. Based at Queen's Park Conservation Studios, I am practising and developing methods, standards and techniques needed to display and care for fashion, textiles and historic dress within the collections.

"As well as developing a wider understanding required for the long-term care of these objects, I have gained a depth of knowledge and understanding of a wide range of period and contemporary dress. So far I have covered a range of techniques including selecting, mounting and covering a mannequin, producing suitable petticoats, crinolines and underpinnings and studying the appropriate stance, shape and style of a particular period. I have also covered issues of handling, packaging and transport and have been introduced to the practice of remedial textile conservation techniques."

Sarah has now taken a full-time post at Manchester City Galleries

Alice Young



Textile Conservation, Historic Royal Palaces (HLF-funded) 2014-15

"I previously studied for a Foundation Diploma in Fashion & Textile Design before undertaking a BA in History of Art and Museum Studies. In 2014 I graduated with an MPhil in Textile Conservation from the University of Glasgow. While studying, I took work experience placements at the V&A and National Trust.

"I began my one-year internship in textile conservation at Historic Royal Palaces in October 2014.

"Based within the Conservation and Collections Care department at Hampton Court Palace, I spent the first six months within the tapestry conservation studio before moving to the furnishings conservation team. These provided me with an invaluable opportunity to experience at first hand the specialised techniques employed to conserve HRP's collection of historically significant and unique royal tapestries and furnishing textiles.

"My principal independent projects are the stitched treatment of a late 19th-century Verdure tapestry and the conservation of an early 18th-century needlepoint chair cover. I also assisted with on-site condition audits of the objects on display as well as the installation and de-installation of tapestries in the Great Hall and Queen's Privy Chamber as part of the team."

Jorge Otero



the National Trust
for Scotland
a place for everyone

Preventive Conservation, Bute Memorial Fund/National Trust for Scotland (HLF-funded) 2014-15

"I completed a degree in the Conservation of Archaeological and Museum Objects and then a Masters Degree in the study of new technologies for the conservation of historic buildings. The University of Vigo then offered me an internship, which involved a programme of research about new non-destructive methods of removing salts from granite.

"After completing this experience, I then decided to expand my knowledge in preventive conservation. I began my internship with the National Trust for Scotland in the middle of October 2014.

"My duties include the monitoring and control of light, environmental conditions and the safe storage and display of collections, as well as communication and advocacy for the NTS' Collections Conservation department. I am learning about strategic planning and the conservation dimension of organisation objectives, gaining experience of the procedures for loans in and out of the organisation and about the issues arising from contemporary art installations and exhibitions."

**Maria Pardos
Mansilla**



Textile Conservation, Bowes Museum (HLF-funded) 2014-15

"I started a year's internship in textile conservation at the Bowes Museum in October 2014. During that time I have been involved in the conservation and assessment of several textile objects as well as in different projects regarding the improvement of storage and display spaces, pest and environmental control and collaboration with other museums.

"I have also been involved in the preparation, install and de-install of exhibitions such as Birds of Paradise: Plumes & Feathers in Fashion, Yves Saint Laurent: Style is Eternal and Common Grounds: Lace Drawn from the Everyday at Bowes, as well as Women Fashion Power at the Design Museum.

"I studied Textiles Conservation at ESCRBC Mariano Timon, the only textile conservation teaching centre in Spain. I also completed a Master's at Pablo de Olavide University in Seville.

"This internship means I can work with unique objects, expand my professional network as well as sharing knowledge with colleagues, learn new skills and improve the ones I have."

Mark Kearney



Modern Materials Conservation, Victoria & Albert Museum (HLF-funded) 2014-15

"I was an intern with the Victoria & Albert Museum, working in Modern Materials Conservation. I made the move to conservation after studying astro-physics at university.

"The highlight of my internship was getting to work with the collection and the opportunity to travel to conferences. I built up knowledge in an area not available on standard university courses, working in a large national museum, building up experience working with plastics."

The project is a long-term monitoring project of some Cellulose Acetate handbags using a Raspberry Pi computer (an inexpensive credit card-sized computer designed for teaching children computer science and coding) with an attached camera module. Using a camera module purchased with money from the tool allowance that is part of the internship, Mark noted that two plastic handbags (part of the teaching collection), had deteriorated very quickly and he wished to capture any remaining deterioration using time-lapse photography. The images have allowed Mark to show that the handbags are actively changing shape, although not as dramatically as before.

"I suppose the greatest difference is that it has given me the opportunity to enter a field that is very difficult to enter without real world experience. It has also allowed me to build up a network of professional contacts and friends which would not have been possible while in university or looking for a position."

Mel Houston



the National Trust
for Scotland

a place for everyone

Preventive Conservation, National Trust Scotland (2008-9)

“I was given a free hand to do what I thought would work best for the Trust. I wrote Integrated Pest Management (IPM) guidelines and then set up a pragmatic IPM programme, which I rolled out to nine properties during the internship.”

“There was so much crammed into the year! It allowed me to work for a year to gain experience needed to apply for jobs. The internship gives a degree of status and is recognised in the heritage sector as a well-run and carefully thought-through programme.”

Mel now works in preventive conservation at the National Trust for Scotland and is an Accredited conservator acting as a supervisor to other Icon interns