

Venice Art Biennale 2018: Steward-Research Fellowships

The British Council is inviting applications for Steward-Research Fellowships to take place during the Venice Architecture Biennale 2018.

Successful candidates will spend a maximum of 32 days in Venice (with the exception of the first group who attend for a few days more over preview). They will participate four days per week as an invigilator in the British Pavilion with the remaining time used for study and research around the theme, *Freespace*.

BACKGROUND

The 16th International Architecture Exhibition will run from **26 May to 25 November 2018** (23 to 25 May for the preview, with the first group of Fellows arriving for induction on Monday 21 May).

Established in 1895, the Biennale Foundation is one of the most prestigious cultural institutions in the world and attracts an attendance today of over 300,000 visitors to its annual events. The Biennale takes place in two official sites in Venice: the Arsenale, which hosts the international exhibition, and the Giardini di Castello in the east of the city, which houses the national pavilions including the British Pavilion.

The 2018 Venice Biennale curators Yvonne Farrell and Shelley McNamara of Grafton Architects have set the theme of *Freespace*, which describes a generosity of spirit and a sense of humanity at the core of architecture's agenda, focusing on the quality of space itself.

Caruso St John Architects and artist Marcus Taylor have been selected as the curatorial team for the British Pavilion at the Venice Architecture Biennale 2018.

VENICE STEWARD-RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS

For the Venice Architecture Biennale 2018 the British Council, in partnership with art and architecture schools and institutions from around the UK, is organising the fourth Venice Fellowships programme. (Full details can be found in the pdf brochure [Venice Fellowships](#) from 2017 Art Biennale).

Students, graduates and researchers of programme partners will be entitled to apply for one of 60-66 Steward-Research Fellowships provided they meet specific eligibility conditions laid out by the Venice Fellowships partner schools and institutions (see below).

Successful candidates will spend approximately 32 days (including an on-site induction day / handover with Fellows), in Venice as part of a group of up to eleven individuals responsible for invigilating the British Pavilion and taking part in a dedicated study/research programme.

STEWARD-INVIGILATION

The British Council owns the British Pavilion in Venice, commissions the exhibitions for the art and architecture biennales, and has responsibility for maintaining the building and safeguarding exhibitions.

For the duration of the biennale we entrust safeguarding the exhibition to the care of the stewards, supervised at long distance by the British Council in London, by staff in the British Council Rome office, and by the British Pavilion Manager and British Pavilion Head and Deputy Stewards based in Venice.

For four days of the week, fellows will work on a rota system to steward the pavilion, with the remaining days dedicated to research and study.

STUDY-RESEARCH

At a biennale placing increased emphasis on learning and research, successful candidates will spend three days per week undertaking study and research.

We anticipate research responses devised to tie in with the biennale theme of *Freespace* with core themes shaped by the British Pavilion curatorial team's *Island* installation and associated programme. Fellows will devise a research

proposal in advance of their travel to Venice, to be presented and discussed with the British Council and peers at the induction school in March 2018.

In consultation with their academic institution, some candidates may wish to use this study opportunity to contribute to academic work, such as an existing project or a dissertation – although there is no obligation to do so.

The research is intended to be cumulative and a selection of research will be made publicly available at the end of the programme as an important contribution to the British Council's Venice project.

TIMING & LOGISTICS

The Biennale opens with pre-preview on 22 May with the Vernissage on 23, 24 and 25 May. The exhibition is open to the general public from 26 May until 25 November 2018.

Successful applicants will be responsible for making their own travel, accommodation and insurance arrangements. Fellows will receive a grant of £1,600 to cover travel, accommodation and living costs while in Venice. This grant is funded by their institution and the British Council.

The group dates are as follows:

<u>Group 1</u> May/June	21 May – 23 June
<u>Group 2</u> June/July	23 June – 24 July
<u>Group 3</u> July/August	24 July – 24 August
<u>Group 4</u> August/September	24 August – 24 September
<u>Group 5</u> September/October	24 September – 25 October
<u>Group 6</u> October/November	25 October – 25 November

**Please note the dates may shift a day or two either side once we confirm teams and arrangements. Exact dates will be confirmed when successful candidates are appointed and agreements issued.*

INDUCTION

All selected candidates will attend an induction course in London on **27 and 28 March 2018** where practical training will be provided on invigilation duties.

A programme of talks and discussions will provide background to *Freespace* and *Island* and help prepare for the study aspects of the fellowship.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The following list is a draft, but gives an indication of the role and responsibilities.

Invigilation

- Invigilating the Pavilion – internal and external spaces
- Welcoming visitors and handing out guides and information
- Ability to discuss the exhibition with public and professional visitors
- Condition reporting of exhibits and installations
- Daily reports to the British Pavilion Head and Deputy Stewards, and weekly back to London
- Light cleaning and general upkeep of the Pavilion
- Liaison with Venice Biennale staff, caretaker and cleaners
- Capturing audience feedback
- Monitoring visitor numbers
- Facilitating access via chairlift and audio descriptive guide
- Opening and locking up the Pavilion
- Any other duties as required

Study Programme

- Attend both days of London induction school in March 2018 and share your initial research ideas
- A month prior to your departure for Venice, submit a summary setting out what you would like to research and how you will achieve your objectives within the 12 days available for study. (Please note, this brief should not be written as part of this application). An updated brief should be sent midway through your time in Venice - this will be shared with your institution
- In Venice, undertake a short piece of site-specific or archival research that may contribute to the *Freespace* research programme

- Exercise due care and attention when using archives, libraries, or any other facilities made available to you under the fellowship programme
- Where the invigilation rota allows, attend any lectures and talks arranged under this programme
- Within one month of your return, submit a short (maximum 2000 words) written and illustrated essay detailing your fellowship research, findings and conclusions. Other formats of research presentation are encouraged and will be considered in addition or in place of a written piece, but should be discussed and agreed in advance with the British Council team
- Disseminate the results of your Fellowship widely, ensuring you and your institution achieve the maximum benefit of the fellowship

APPLICATION CRITERIA

This opportunity will suit reliable and organised candidates who are good communicators. Your role will be as part of a self-sufficient team. Stewards are responsible for the care of the pavilion and the installation on a daily basis and must be confident in this task. Applications should demonstrate that candidates have high levels of initiative and problem solving, as well as an active interest in research.

Candidates should have an interest in art, architecture and culture and an interest in gaining experience of exhibition work and public programming or project work. Some knowledge of Italian is desirable but not essential.

Candidates must be ready to participate in invigilation hours (10.00 – 18.00 daily), four days a week. The Biennale (Giardini and Arsenale) is closed on Mondays.

Applicants should indicate which months they are available to travel to Venice, also stating, where appropriate, their order of preference. The final decision on timing rests with the British Council.

Candidates should convincingly demonstrate their suitability with reference to the responsibilities and criteria outlined above, and also demonstrate their interest in and some knowledge of the biennale theme of *Freespace* and a reaction to *Island*.

Successful candidates will act in the capacity as Steward Research Fellows (SRF), ambassadors of their respective institutions in collaboration with the British Council.

WHO CAN APPLY?

Fellowships are open to students that are currently studying at one of the Venice Fellowships 2018 partner institutions. Some institutions may open the opportunity to recent graduates and linked researchers.

No application can be accepted by the British Council without prior approval by a valid partner institution.

SELECTION PROCESS

The partner institution will in the first instance check all applications received for eligibility and forward nominations to the British Council.

The British Council will interview shortlisted candidates. The interviews will take place in London between 19 February to 2 March 2018 (on-site at the British Council for residents within 2 hours from London and over Skype outside of London 2 hour radius). Should you be selected for interview you will receive at least one week advance notification.

The decision of the British Council is final. Successful applicants will be notified by 5pm on 5 March 2018.

HOW TO APPLY

To apply for a position please send to your institution partnering with the British Council on this programme, a completed application form and a one-page CV (standard text format not image-led).

Closing date for applications to your institution is 12 noon on **Friday 12 January 2018**.

If you have any questions relating to the fellowship programme or application process, please either speak directly with your school contact in the first instance, or email:

Laura Broderick, Venice Fellowship Programme Manager at the British Council
E: laura.broderick@britishcouncil.org

Key Documents

Venice Fellowships Brochure 2017

Venice Fellowships Application Form 2018

Statement by Farrell and McNamara

British Council Press Release announcing Caruso St John and Marcus Taylor for the British Pavilion

Useful Websites

<https://design.britishcouncil.org>

www.britishcouncil.org/arts

www.britishcouncil.org/venicebiennale

<http://www.labiennale.org/en>