



Costume
THE
Society

Museum Work Experience Grant Guidelines for 2026 Applicants

The purpose of the Museum Work Experience Grant (MWEG) is to fund a student working on a dress-related project in a public museum collection in the United Kingdom. It is intended to support students seeking museum work experience with a dress collection and to help UK museums accomplish projects essential to the care, knowledge and interpretation of collections.

The museum project/work experience should include at least one of the following activities: documentation, numbering objects, preparing mannequins, mounting garments for display or photography, improving storage, research in support of collections, or developing educational or interpretive programmes. Other appropriate, object-related museum activities may be considered.

The placement must be for a minimum of two months, either full or part-time. In each year, a grant of £1500 will be offered to a student volunteer applying jointly with an appropriate museum. The museum will receive £500 towards the administration/management of the grant.

Eligibility Criteria:

1. Applications should be made by the curator/administrator of a publicly accessible UK museum who will supervise the work. Applicant museums must be accredited (or working towards accreditation) with the Arts Council England or equivalent for Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland.
2. The MWEG volunteer should be a student (minimum 2nd year) or recent graduate (up to two years since graduation) of an appropriate UK university course, such as dress/fashion history, museum studies, fashion design, theatre costume design, history, social history, art history.
3. The curator/administrator shall submit the name of the student and the student's CV with a proposal (up to 500 words) detailing the work they will be engaged in, its benefits to the museum and to the student.
4. The Costume Society's Museum Work Experience Grant co-ordinator will receive applications and convene an MWEG sub-committee consisting of up to three members of the Costume Society Executive Committee, who shall not be currently employed by any applicant museums. The MWEG sub-committee will review the applications and recommend a grant recipient. The Co-ordinator will

communicate with applicant museums, and the Society's Awards and Grants Officer will arrange payments and receive progress and final reports from the grant recipient volunteer and supervisor.

5. The MWEG grant will be paid to the student in two instalments. The first payment will be midway through the project, upon notification from the supervisor that the work is progressing as planned. The second payment will be made at the end of the project, upon receipt of a report, one from the curator/administrator and one from the student grantee (minimum 250-500 words, to be included in the Society's publications where appropriate).
6. The application deadline is 31 May 2026; the project can be carried out at any time of the year, so long as the grant is used within 12 months of being awarded. Notification of the grant awardee will be on 30th June or before.

For an informal discussion or further information please contact Emma Banks, Co-ordinator of the Museum Work Experience Grant at grantsawards@costumesociety.org.uk.

The Costume Society Museum Work Experience Grant
2025 Application Form

Name of museum or collection (must be accredited):

Address:

Name of supervising curator or administrator:

Telephone number:

E-mail:

Name of volunteer:

Address:

Telephone number:

Student E-mail:

Personal E-mail (so we can keep in contact in the future):

Volunteer is/was a student at:

Degree course including start and end dates:

Department:

Address:

Project will start:

Project will finish:

Project is full-time / part-time (delete as necessary)

Please submit this form with a project proposal (up to 250 words) by the supervising curator/administrator covering:

7. the work the volunteer will be engaged in
8. the benefits to the museum

Please submit this form with a statement (up to 250 words) from the volunteer covering briefly:

9. why they want to work with dress collections in museums
10. how they will benefit particularly from this placement

The volunteer's CV.

NB Applications will only be accepted from curators sending proposals on behalf of the volunteer. The award will be paid directly to the successful applicant. E-mail your application to grantsawards@costumesociety.org.uk. **Deadline for applications: 31 May 2026.**

Notification of the winner will be on or before 30th June 2026.