

VENICE ARCHITECTURE BIENNALE 2016: STEWARD-STUDY FELLOWSHIPS

OPEN CALL FOR APPLICATIONS



1. INTRODUCTION

The British Council is inviting applications for Steward-Study Scholarships to take place during the Venice Architecture Biennale 2016.

Successful candidates will spend a maximum of 31 days in Venice. They will invigilate the British Pavilion four days per week with the remaining time used for study and research around the theme, *Reporting from the Front*. Fellows will receive a grant of £1,600 to cover travel, accommodation and living costs.

2. BACKGROUND

The 15th Venice Architecture Biennale will run from 28 May - 27 November 2016, with a preview taking place 25 - 27 May. Paralleling its expansion to a six-month event in 2014, the Architecture Biennale has evolved into a global research project offering an important opportunity to review and rethink important aspects of architecture.

The director for 2016 is Alejandro Aravena who has set the theme: *Reporting from the Front*. The biennale is focussed on the resourcefulness and “vitality” in which architecture responds to the demands of civil society.

In the British Pavilion, the exhibition *Home Economics* will explore urgent questions about the role of housing and domestic space in the material reality of familiar life. Can the house ever escape its economic status as an asset? Should our homes still be considered private spaces? How do new types of families produce new spatial needs? What are the models of ownership, finance and work that make these conditions possible?

3. VENICE STEWARD-STUDY FELLOWSHIPS

In 2014 the British Council began the Venice Fellowships programme in partnership with architecture schools and arts institutions from around the UK, creating a joint steward-study opportunity for students from partner institutions. For the Venice Architecture Biennale 2016 this opportunity is accompanied by an open call for Steward-Study Fellows, extending the career development opportunity to recent graduates and apprentices.

Individuals meeting the eligibility criteria below will be entitled to apply for one of 30 Steward-Study Fellowships.

Successful candidates will spend up to 31 days in Venice as part of a group of eight individuals responsible for invigilating the British Pavilion each month 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 Steward 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 contributions to a research programme devised to tie in with the biennale theme of *Reporting from the Front* with core themes shaped by the approach of *Home Economics* itself; and will ask the fellows to look at how architecture changes through time in Venice. Fellows will devise a research proposal in advance of their travel to Venice, to receive feedback from the British Council and the curators of *Home Economics*.

The research is intended to be cumulative and will be made publicly available at the end of the programme as an important contribution to the global research project represented by the Architecture Biennale and the British Council's Venice archive.

TIMING & LOGISTICS

The Biennale opens with pre-preview on 25 May with the Vernissage on 26 and 27 May. The exhibition is open to the general public from 28 May until 27 November 2016.

Successful applicants will be responsible for making their own travel, accommodation and insurance arrangements. They will be given a grant of £1,600 per month towards these and other expenses while in Venice.

INDUCTION

All selected candidates will attend an induction course in London on 22 April 2016 where practical training will be provided on invigilation duties.

In addition, talks and discussions will provide background to the exhibition *Home Economics* and help prepare for the study aspects of the fellowship.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

Invigilation responsibilities

- Circulating inside and invigilating the Pavilion paying special attention to delicate or interactive exhibits
- Ability to discuss the exhibition with press and professional visitors
- Maintaining a front desk; selling exhibition catalogues, bags and other exhibition related materials
- Book keeping; banking and stock control
- Condition reporting of exhibits
- Weekly reports back to London and to the British Pavilion Manager
- Light cleaning and general upkeep of the Pavilion
- Liaison with Venice Biennale staff, caretaker and cleaners
- Monitoring visitor numbers
- Opening and locking up the Pavilion
- Any other duties as required

Study Programme responsibilities

- Attend London induction school on 22 April 2016
- At least one month prior to your departure for Venice, submit a one page brief 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)
- In Venice, undertake a short piece of site-specific or archival research that contributes to the *Reporting From the Front* 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 2500 words) written and illustrated essay detailing your fellowship research, findings and conclusions. Other formats of research presentation 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

5. APPLICATION CRITERIA

This opportunity will suit confident, reliable and trust-worthy candidates. Working as part of a self-sufficient team is essential; stewards are responsible for the care of the exhibition on a daily basis and must be confident in this task. Applications should demonstrate that candidates have high levels of initiative and problem solving.

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Candidates should have an interest in architecture, art 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 work long 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 *Reporting From the Front*.

6. ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for a Steward-Study Fellowship you must meet **all of the following criteria**:

- UK-based
- Aged over 18
- Available for at least one full calendar month for either June, July, August, September, October or November 2016 to travel to Venice, Italy
- Hold a valid passport to travel to Italy, and visa if necessary
- Hold a UK bank account for the grant to be paid in to
- Available for interview between 11-14 April 2016
- Available to attend Fellowship induction day in London on 22 April 2016.

You must also meet **one of the following criteria**:

- A current undergraduate or postgraduate student studying an art, design or architecture degree or an art history, design history or architecture history degree.
- A graduate of one of the above areas within the last 3 years.
- Completed an apprenticeship in one of the above areas within the last 3 years.

Please read the eligibility criteria carefully before applying. Applications from individuals who do not meet the eligibility criteria will not be considered.

7. SELECTION PROCESS

The British Council will shortlist suitable candidates for interview from the Open Call applications. The interviews will take place in London between 11-14 April 2016 (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 on 15 April 2016 and must be available for the London-based induction on 22 April 2016.

8. HOW TO APPLY

To apply for a position please send a [completed application form](#) and a [one-page CV](#) to debbie.lean@britishcouncil.org

Closing date for applications is **5pm (GMT) on Friday 1st April 2016**. Interviews of shortlisted candidates will be held at the British Council and take place between **11-14 April**. **Candidates who must travel more than 2 hours to reach central London on the requested date can be interviewed over the phone or on Skype.**

If you have any questions relating to the fellowship programme or application process, please email Debbie Leane, Fellowships Coordinator, British Council:
debbie.lean@britishcouncil.org

Key Documents

Alejandro Aravena Statement

British Council Press Notice 'Winning proposal for British Pavilion' - <http://bit.ly/21nBlyN>

Venice Fellowships Brochure 2014

Venice Fellowships Application Form

Useful Websites

www.britishcouncil.org/design

www.britishcouncil.org/arts

www.britishcouncil.org/venicebiennale

www.labiennale.org/en/Home.html