

The Courtauld Institute of Art

Submission for the Review of Exceptional Funding for Institutions (REFI)

The Courtauld has a pre-eminent national and international reputation as one of the leading teaching and research centres in the fields of history of art, architecture, conservation and museum studies. Thomas Campbell, Nigel Carrington, Gabriele Finaldi, Mark Jones, Neil MacGregor, Nicholas Penny, Nicholas Serota, Simon Thurley (of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, University of the Arts, the Prado, V&A, British Museum, National Gallery, Tate and English Heritage) are just a few the distinguished alumni who lead, have led or are about to lead major arts and cultural institutions both here and across the world. An equally powerful list of academic art historians, conservators and practitioners demonstrates its spread and impact on the Higher Education field in art history and the creative arts. Its professional and academic impact may be best known within the arts professions, but the woman in the street also knows and loves The Courtauld Gallery as one of the world's greatest small museums, with its remarkable and inspiring collection, its distinctive focused exhibitions and its stimulating public programmes.

I ADDITIONAL PUBLIC VALUE

A central aim of our Strategic Plan is to promote critical understanding of art in 'a society in which visual images are ubiquitous and perform crucial informative and persuasive roles.' This understanding is vital for our society, whether within more general education, within traditional cultural institutions such as museums and galleries, in the commercial sector, in all parts of the creative industries or in the realm of cultural tourism. In order to achieve its aim The Courtauld delivers research-led teaching from the undergraduate to the PhD degree, opens its gallery to the public, offers a range of public programmes, and continues to engage with its alumni. Although one of the smallest HE institutions in this country, it brings together the greatest number of high quality teaching specialists in these subjects to be found in either Europe or North America. Through its unique integration of people, resources and facilities, it provides both depth and range of teaching and an optimum environment for learning and skill development. It creates independent thinking and articulate, confident students with an aspiration for excellence who, wherever they go, deliver excellence in their chosen field.

The provision of exceptional funding is a critical part of that whole which allows the Courtauld to provide distinctive education and training at the highest level, to sustain its role as a leader and centre of excellence, and so to provide significant additional public value.

The Courtauld offers direct benefits to its students and to those who subsequently employ them, but *additional public value* deriving from the exceptional funding allocated by HEFCE is best presented under the following headings:

1) Its influence on the education and arts worlds, nationally and internationally

The Courtauld's greatest impact, and perhaps the most long-term synergistic effect of its integrated teaching and research culture can be seen in the extraordinary track record and influence of its alumni network through its collective contribution to education, the arts and the knowledge economy. Besides a concentration in this country and in the United States, our spread reaches from China to New Zealand, and from India to all parts of Europe. Of a total active alumni record of 4,200 some 35% are currently in significant leadership, curatorial and managerial roles in the public museum and gallery world, the heritage sector, the art trade, as academics and in the arts media as journalists and critics (in the US this proportion is 44%). Not surprisingly, in the area of professional education, of some 150 conservators who graduated in the last 20 years, fully 95% remain active in the profession, contributing materially to wide public benefit. Although the UK is the principal beneficiary (with graduates holding influential posts in virtually every major national cultural heritage body, including the Director of Historic Properties and the Head of Conservation at the National Trust), many UK and foreign graduates hold important positions internationally.

Starting in the 1960s, The Courtauld instigated the expansion of art history teaching in universities across the UK and its alumni led the establishment of new departments throughout the country. With well over 400 alumni currently in academic positions, our reach stretches into over 50 art history and related departments in the UK and many more overseas. Furthermore, alumni and Courtauld faculty continue to play transformative roles in the theoretical development of the disciplines of art history (TJ Clark, Griselda Pollock, David Solkin, Mignon Nixon) and in the rapidly changing arenas of policy and practice in the conservation, museum and gallery sectors. Equally significant are our artist alumni (Jeremy Deller, Jeff Wall) our distinguished list of influential journalists and critics (Brian Sewell, Anna Somers-Cocks, Andrew Graham-Dixon) and those at the cutting edge of the contemporary art trade (Tim Marlow, Lucy Mitchell-Innes, Helly Nehmad). Most importantly, this pattern continues with new graduates' appointments to universities, museums and galleries and the art trade: national student conservator of the year award winner to the National Gallery; art historians to The Getty Museum, Los Angeles, the Centre for the Study of the Visual Arts, and the universities of York, Bristol and Bilgi (Istanbul).

2) **Its role as a centre of excellence and exemplum of quality**

Staff: As a leading centre for postgraduate research training in the UK and internationally, the Courtauld is able to recruit and retain the best British and international faculty and so to provide its students with expert supervision of the highest calibre, a tradition on which our academic reputation substantially depends. Its 30-strong research active permanent faculty (which includes 6 conservation specialists) renews itself constantly through contact with the wider art-historical and conservation world nationally and internationally. Enhancing this faculty is the staff of the Gallery and the Libraries and, expanding and invigorating it, a community of post-doctoral fellows, Associate Scholars and Visiting Professors, Curators and Conservators. The Courtauld was the only institution in its field to be awarded a 5* in the most recent (2001) Research Assessment Exercise.

Students: We recruit and retain very high quality students, while doing all we can to attract non-traditional entrants. Entry requirements for the BA (AAB at A level) are deliberately generous and can be flexible as part of our widening participation programme, but the level of entry qualifications always significantly exceeds this. The ratio of applications to available places is high (e.g. 85 applicants from 17 countries for 12 places for the 2008-9 MA in Art Museum Curating). Our reputation ensures a strong international recruitment, with a substantial European contingent at BA level, a yet broader European and overseas intake to all our PG courses, and students from approximately 30 countries at any one time, creating a vibrant and varied student community. The Courtauld's excellence in conservation education is unparalleled nationally or internationally and its two three-year courses attract the very best applicants and educate them to the highest standards.

Range and depth: As a centre of excellence, and at a time when art history teaching worldwide is moving its focus to the contemporary at the expense of historical studies, The Courtauld is committed to maintaining a wide range of specialisations covering the full chronology of western art from classical antiquity to the present. The need for this coverage has been strongly endorsed by leading museum directors, in particular those who are responsible for modern and contemporary collections (MOMA, New York, Tate). In addition, we are expanding teaching and research in emergent areas of international significance and of increasing student interest and demand. Global contemporary art (Central and Eastern Europe in the post-Communist period and Chinese, Korean and Indian contemporary art) is one key emergent field in which The Courtauld has recently expanded postgraduate teaching and research which will lead to new teaching developments.

Research-led teaching methods: We have a fundamental commitment to develop individual potential, to encourage an ethos of intellectual collaboration, and to sustain a rigorous culture of supervision centred on close working relationships between students and faculty from undergraduate teaching onwards. Undergraduate student surveys consistently record high levels of satisfaction with teaching quality (96% in 2008). We work collaboratively to ensure that our students have access to the best possible training

initiatives and supplement in-house training and professional development through external provision and collaborative initiatives, with academic departments and non-HEI partners, including the major museums and heritage bodies. All students gain direct experience of object-based research through the Gallery and other London museums, have the opportunities to participate in exhibition projects and to learn public communication skills.

Professional education: The programmes in conservation and museum studies provide the cultural heritage industry with professionals who set the standards in their fields. Acquisition of both subject-specific and transferable skills is central to the conservation programmes. In this rapidly evolving discipline, with graduates taking on significant roles as managers, educators, and researchers, employability skills are fully integrated into the curriculum. All students work directly with a range of clients—museums, historic properties, cultural heritage agencies—on all aspects of the conservation process, for which communication, presentation, managerial and negotiating skills are required. International Advisory Boards provide an extremely wide range of industry stakeholders to advise on requisite skills. Their commitment to this educational process is not altruistic, but self-interested: their organisations benefit immediately from educational collaboration and in the long term from recruiting Courtauld graduates who shape the field. The MA in Curating the Art Museum incorporates a 6-month part-time internship at a prominent London museum or gallery and also encompasses a student-curated exhibition in the Courtauld Gallery. This emphasis on developing practical and professional skills builds on the Courtauld's resources and strengths, while also responding to the recommendations of professionals in the field that these skills are particularly desired by employers and underemphasised in training provision elsewhere.

Exceptional research and learning environment: The Courtauld's Research Forum, supported by the Mellon Foundation, was conceived as a catalyst for exchange, dialogue, and collaboration between staff and postgraduate students working in different areas, while also strengthening relationships between The Courtauld and colleagues throughout the academic, conservation and museum worlds. The Forum encompasses and administers a diverse array of activities, brings leading international scholars and experts to the Institute and introduces students to international, interdisciplinary and intergenerational collaboration. This environment is highly valued by The Courtauld's own faculty. It serves as a significant resource for the whole of the UK academic, student and professional communities.

Disciplinary integration and unique resources: The Courtauld has a unique combination of teaching and research in both art history and conservation, an outstanding art collection, book and image resources in the Witt, Conway and other image libraries which hold over 3 million images of works of art (the latter also open to the public). This combination ensures that students have an integrated experience, giving equal weight to the object itself, the archive and the theoretical approach. It also brings students together into a common community with a wide range of professionals and public to mutual benefit.

Overall: Significant public value derives from this educational excellence, and our success in providing highly transferable skills in a rapidly changing society.

3) Professional partnerships

The Courtauld's network of mutually collaborative and beneficial working partnerships is extensive, ranging from a close relationships with the State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg, through its ongoing partnership with the J. Paul Getty Trust and all its institutes, its multi-layered engagements with both national and regional UK museums, galleries, and cultural centres, universities, research institutes, charitable arts foundations and public and membership bodies.

Research-led conservation is collaborative and multidisciplinary, and the Courtauld draws on and contributes to the expertise and practice of national and international conservation bodies (public museums, research labs, cultural heritage agencies) and the private and commercial sectors. Both professional programmes incorporate significant teaching in the areas of scientific and preventive conservation and collections care. Implemented in

collaboration with partners such as the National Trust, Westminster Abbey, and English Heritage (with an ongoing contract for re-auditing wall paintings at some 60 of its sites) benefits to the UK cultural heritage are considerable. International partnerships extend the reach of the UK's excellence and influence, with current collaborations in China, Cyprus, India, Italy, Jordan, Malta and the USA.

4) The transfer of knowledge to the wider public through The Courtauld Gallery and partner institutions

The Courtauld Gallery provides a key context in which teaching and research findings are mediated and communicated to a wider public, through collaborations between curators, conservators, academic faculty and students, in the form of changing interpreted displays, temporary exhibitions, publications, events, talks and tours. The permanent collection is made available at a small charge to the adult public, with discounts for senior citizens, and free entry for all children, students, and members of the University of London. It is free to all members of the public on Mondays and during special events such as the annual summer Freetime. The Courtauld exhibition programme is innovative and distinctive – small focused scholarly exhibitions interpreting and providing intellectual context to works of art from within The Courtauld's collection, and drawing on significantly important loans which often would not be lent to other less rigorously conceived exhibitions. Some exhibitions are developed as parts of collaborative partnerships, e.g. with the J.Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, the Wordsworth Trust, Grasmere, and the Neue Pinakothek, Munich, and tour. The Gallery has recently initiated a programme of outreach exhibitions in support of smaller museums and galleries. Equally, it lends generously from its collections to exhibitions organised by other institutions nationally and internationally, supporting research and the public enjoyment and understanding of art at all levels. The Gallery receives high critical and public acclaim, is recognised as a model for emulation, and has seen an increase in visitor figures from 98,000 to 167,000 over the past four years.

In addition, many academic and Gallery staff regularly act as curators, consultants and advisors for major national and international touring exhibition projects (e.g. *Henri Rousseau: Jungles in Paris*, Tate Modern, 2005-6; *Self-Portrait: Renaissance to Contemporary*, National Portrait Gallery 2005-6; *Impressionism by the Sea*, Royal Academy, 2007; *Louise Bourgeois*, Tate Modern, 2008; *Baselitz*, Royal Academy 2008, *Turner*, Tate Britain, 2010).

5) Public programmes, student training and outreach

Through its Public Programmes and Education Department the Courtauld delivers exceptional public educational programmes and events, underpinned by intellectual rigour and cultural excellence but also embracing innovation in their vision and content. It promotes the understanding and enjoyment of art history amongst both schools and the wider community, researches and produces educational resources, builds partnerships with other key organisations and institutions, and contributes to professional development opportunities for Courtauld students and other young people.

Art history is rarely taught in state schools. The Courtauld is uniquely placed to bridge the gap between museums and higher education and raise awareness of art history as an important academic discipline, working with groups of young people who are currently excluded from the subject. Working relationships have been established with secondary schools across London: Teachers' Gallery events and a student ambassadors project have been developed for target areas; a Teacher's Advisory Forum and Courtauld Youth Council have been set up. Projects include collaborations with King's College and Birkbeck, which run PGCE courses in related subjects to promote art history as a subject amongst trainee teachers. With the Widening Participation Department at University of the Arts London, through the Animation Department of Central St Martin's, we encourage and support the understanding of art history, curatorship and interpretation through the use of virtual technology, and provide young people with experiences of HE and university life in central London.

Student training is a key development area. Approximately 100 students receive specialist training to prepare and present talks for the public in The Courtauld Gallery. This training, involving both curatorial and front of house staff, includes focused research, concise writing and delivery skills, voice coaching, and the ability to communicate informed and critical views in a concise and interesting way.

The Courtauld is committed to lifelong learning and public education. Its adult programmes, which are open to all, maintain a high standard of academic excellence. They offer Courtauld post-doctoral alumni additional teaching opportunities, but more importantly they give a wide range of participants from home and abroad an intensive and enjoyable learning experience. Importantly these courses often serve as an entry point for adults considering a career change.

6) **The provision of public facilities: lecture theatres and seminar rooms**

Our facilities are available for public hire, and over and above our own activities, regularly provide a venue for partner institutions' events, including: Royal Society of Literature; University of London Extra Mural History of Art Society; the Public Monument and Sculpture Association; the English Ceramic Circle; the Society of Architectural Historians of Great Britain; the Pro Patrimonio Foundation; Prestel Publishing; Association of Art Historians; Medieval Dress and Textiles Society; Courtauld History of Dress Association; Textile Conservation Centre/ICON; and the International Institute for Conservation.

II **ADDITIONAL COSTS**

According to our 2006-7 submitted TRAC figures, the cost of educating an average student in 2006-7 was ca. £13,000. These costs were met in the following ways: 9.3% from core HEFCE T funding; 27.9% from exceptional institutional funding; 5.8% from other HEFCE special allocations; 30.6% from tuition fees; 26.4% from other funding sources.

However, because of changes of governance and funding when The Courtauld became an independent HEI in 2002, we started the 'TRAC' process later than other HEIs. Consequently, TRAC at The Courtauld is still evolving, both in T and R. The first formal TRAC submission was in 2005/06. The submission for 2006/07 was informed by the need to resolve issues relating to the practical application of the outcomes of TRAC in that year. The TRAC submissions for 2007/08 will therefore be the first where the T and R elements are both fully in play.

Furthermore, work on REFI is demonstrating that our existing TRAC cannot easily reflect the interdependence of T and R, as TRAC requires costs to be analyzed as an absolute - T, R or other. REFI demonstrates narratively that there is an interdependence between these areas. These interdependencies cannot be reflected twice in TRAC and so cannot be 'TRAC-costed' in T, when the elements have already been submitted in R. Yet for The Courtauld a significant element of R has to be added to teaching costs when identifying exceptional costs.

We estimate that the total exceptional costs that we carry in relation to teaching are £2,092,266. We have calculated the allocation of these costs to the headings below, and the appendix giving percentages for the HEFCE exceptional allocation of £712,312 reflects the same proportions as allocated to the total sum.

1) **Teaching costs**

Small group teaching methods: Undoubtedly, the largest cost relating to the additional value we provide, results from our low staff student ratio, and the provision of specialist and small group teaching for all of our courses. This is put into practice in the undergraduate programme, where the initial foundation/chronological survey lecture course is taught by appropriate period, regional and technical specialists, supported by tutored group work. UG teaching is predominantly on an active learning model in small groups, enabling us to

conduct object-focused classes, featuring museum and gallery, and studio visits, drawing on our own collections and encountering and handling works of art, as well as integrating consideration of history, display, and technical issues. The same approach becomes yet more pronounced in the programmes at post-graduate level. Every postgraduate student works with one or two course tutors who direct his or her academic programme, and act as a personal tutor available to advise on the resolution of practical and personal difficulties. The student's work culminates in a significant body of independent research, which is individually supervised. Specialist group sizes in Art History never go beyond a maximum of 8, and in Art Museum Curating 12, in Wall Painting Conservation 8 (a single cohort for three years), and in Easel Painting Conservation 5.

Field trips: All Art History and Art Museum Curating MA programmes include as an essential item a week-long group field trip with tutor or tutors to the location most appropriate to their specialist study, providing an intensive experience of group learning, direct access to artists' studios, to private and public collections and to the actual or historical environment of their subject of study.

Practical conservation: Both easel and wall painting conservation combine formal teaching with closely supervised practical conservation with a ratio of about 40:60 (easels) and 50:50 (walls). Easel painting students conserve paintings from the Courtauld Gallery and other collections - an arrangement that provides opportunities for designing interventions appropriate to teaching and learning objectives. Wall painting conservation is closer to historic monument conservation, is undertaken in situ, and is always a team effort. The department therefore undertakes its own conservation projects (all direct costs externally funded), allowing interventions to be selected and designed to further the teaching and learning goals of the MA, while exposing students to real-world conservation issues with actual clients and stakeholders, including site management, long term conservation planning and visitor management. Both require high-quality professional supervision to ensure that graduates are skilled in practical conservation. Both leverage HEFCE T funding into collaborative projects with industry that maximise educational and public benefit.

Scientific equipment: Courtauld conservation training and research has a much stronger scientific emphasis than other professional programmes both in the UK and Europe. Scientific investigation is central, requiring provision of equipment for examination, recording, sampling and analysis of the objects they treat and research. Provision of essential basic equipment is very substantially supplemented by partnership collaboration.

Student exhibitions: The MA in Curating the Art Museum incorporates a 6-month part time internship at a prominent London museum or gallery and a student-curated public exhibition in the Courtauld Gallery. All students have the opportunity to participate in the biennial, student-curated East Wing collection, an exhibition of contemporary art which is supported in part by the Institute, in part by funds raised by the students themselves.

Other core training: The Courtauld supplements in-house provision with opportunities to take external courses, for example reading medieval and Renaissance Italian, while students have the opportunity to study modern languages at the LSE.

Recruitment and assessment: The Courtauld's recruitment and assessment processes for all subjects, but especially for the professional practice courses, involve a higher level of interview and oral examination, more intensive assessments and more use of external examiners than is typical.

Research environment: Access to the range of activities that are organised under the aegis of the Research Forum, itself part funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, is a major asset to postgraduate students on both professional and research MAs and post-graduate diplomas. It gives them access to leading international scholars and experts, introduces them to international, interdisciplinary and intergenerational collaboration, supports the students' own peer-reviewed postgraduate journal, and employs them as Research Associates to work on specific collection based-projects in the libraries, archives and Gallery.

2) **The Courtauld Gallery**

The Courtauld Gallery and collections, part supported by an AHRC Museum and Galleries Core Funding scheme award, are a unique asset for students. They present significant and exceptional estate, people and programmatic costs in relation to teaching. Students have direct access to the permanent exhibited collections, temporary exhibitions, reserve collections of paintings and decorative arts, and prints and works of art on paper in the prints and drawings study room. They have small group learning sessions in the galleries, working with academics, curators, conservators, and educators, leading to the development of a range of professional skills for analysis, interpretation, communication and advocacy. For professional practice students this engagement is yet more central and crucial to the quality of the teaching and learning experience.

3) **Resources: Book library**

A major international research collection of art-historical books, the library holdings of 180,000 volumes and unique collections of exhibition and sale catalogues are on open access to all students, in addition to a wide range of electronic resources.

4) **Resources: image libraries and services**

Students have full access to The Witt Library which contains in excess of 1.8m photographs and reproductions of paintings, drawings and engravings; the Conway Library which is a teaching and research collection of over 1m images in the areas of architecture, sculpture and manuscripts; and the slide library which contains more than 200,000 slides of art and architecture. A programme of digitisation is well advanced, giving students access to high quality digital images for study and research.

5) **Public programme**

A significant proportion of the total cost of this department is dedicated to student skill development and widening participation.

6) **Careers support as part of the development function:**

The Development Office, through the Alumni Relations Manager and the Courtauld Association, provides a service to assist students to obtain internships and other employment placements, career mentoring and career advice.

III **Alternative sources of funding**

Student fees: The Courtauld strives to recruit students from as diverse a background as possible, and a rise in undergraduate fees would act as a significant disincentive when recruiting from non-traditional backgrounds. Its post-graduate fees are charged differentially to reflect the greater costs of the professional training courses, but significant public benefit is provided by the large number of our successful and influential graduates who find work in the museum and conservation professions. These professions, typically in the public sector, are not highly paid. To raise fees on any of our courses would simply require us to increase our already stretched ability to provide bursaries and competitive merit scholarships.

Development: As a recognised flagship for the history and conservation of art, and a major international force in the field, the visible excellence of the Courtauld has enabled it to attract additional financial support and the Institute has invested significantly in its Development department. Its self-governing status has already brought benefits to the sector through the £16m raised in initial external endowment funding (2002), much of it from overseas, and from the investment policy that has already turned that into an endowment now valued at £26.2m. Our annual revenue and scholarships have also increased each year as a result of donor recognition of the importance and value of the work that we do. However, the Courtauld's financial needs will continue to rise if it is to maintain the value it offers. More importantly, The Courtauld's success in raising further funds, for endowment, for annual

revenue and for scholarships, is critically dependent on funders' recognition and understanding of the HEFCE's support of the Courtauld as an exceptional institution through its premium funding.

Commercial income generation: The Courtauld has a focused commercial strategy, running non-accredited courses; hiring out facilities; operating a Gallery-based commercial enterprise and charging entry fees to the Gallery. It continues to explore further small-scale income generation knowledge transfer initiatives using HEIF funds but its small scale restricts the extent of these developments.

Other public funders: We already depend on the goodwill and collaboration of many DCMS funded partner institutions in the arts and cultural sectors for support in our courses, whether through internships, or other training sessions.

Employer contributions: The Courtauld has excellent relationships with employers both public and private. The conservation departments offset some of their costs through contracted research projects (e.g. from English Heritage), but typically public institutions (see above: public funders) are more likely to make significant contributions in kind. The Courtauld effectively exploits all these opportunities already. Other employers are typically in the SME category. We believe that their most important contribution is to make available additional internship and employment opportunities for students and young alumni and to provide scholarship support (See Development).

Economic efficiencies through collaboration: The Courtauld has undertaken a number of rigorous exercises to explore administrative economies of scale through collaboration with HEIs, Somerset House Trust and other partners. Only a few minor areas of fruitful collaboration have emerged as beneficial and effective and have been implemented. Similar exercises will continue to be undertaken for all new initiatives.

Conclusions

The core teaching grant currently provided by HEFCE is less than 10% of our 2006-7 TRAC assessed teaching costs. Using these figures we are already raising annually additional funding at a similar level to the HEFCE exceptional funding grant. Our recent assessment indicates that our real teaching cost, and thus the funding gap, is yet higher.

The public benefit provided by The Courtauld is indisputable, its long term impact profound. The effect of any reduction in exceptional funding (and the current cash capping already represents a loss in real terms) would have a seriously deleterious effect. The Courtauld's distinctive, high-quality brand depends on the synergy of public/private funding. Since our foundation in 1932, as the first UK higher education institute in its field, this partnership of public higher education and private philanthropy, with its shared commitment to exceptional standards of teaching and research, has ensured the UK's global leadership in our field.

Activities and percentage of exceptional funding allocation

Teaching costs:	31%
Gallery:	31%
Book library:	10%
Image libraries:	13%
Public programmes:	14%
Development office:	1%

Deborah Swallow
19 September 2008