



Royal Commission for the Exhibition of 1851

2024 Fellowship in Design: Biodiversity by Design

Applications are now open for the 2024 Fellowship in Design. Apply by **10 September 2024** for this 2-year Fellowship funded at £50,000 per year.

This year's topic: **Biodiversity by Design**

“Putting biodiversity on a path to recovery is a defining challenge of this decade”
the Kunming Declaration.

Current estimates suggest that the world's biodiversity intactness is at 75% overall, far below the 90% threshold that scientists consider to be safe. The UK is one of the most nature-depleted countries on earth – a far cry perhaps from a 'green and pleasant land'. Humankind's behaviours impact the planet's species at all scales, from macro impacts on the oceans that occupy the majority of the earth's surfaces including bleaching of coral reefs, down to the smallest of insects and microbes blighted by microplastics and chemical pollution. There is almost no natural environment untouched by humankind. Much as with climate change, the design sector has a significant impact through how we manufacture, make, and use outputs, together with the implied impacts on the 'natural' landscape. We have crossed a threshold where anthropogenic mass now exceeds natural biomass on this planet and is ever increasing still.

As humans, it is not ever possible for us to be separate from nature ourselves. We depend on the air plants make breathable, on the water from rivers and streams, and the foodstuffs originating and facilitated by nature – even if these relationships are ever more tenuous there are many questions to be addressed by design some examples might be: How can designers foster a reawakening of our ecological conscience towards this sentiment and towards repair? What solutions can be utilised in the near future to stimulate a paradigm shift towards greater stewardship and nurturing for all species on earth?

How does the material supply chain affect ecological systems and how could this be bettered? What would need to change in the way we design, make and build things today to better support nature tomorrow? What would a wilder made world look like, and do we want it?

Outcomes

The Fellowship will result in a detailed report with serious, well-researched and practical proposals that address the question and challenge designers to take the outcomes into account. The means of dissemination should be carefully considered to provide maximum impact and genuinely make a difference.

Who Should Apply

Applications are welcomed from post-graduates, researchers, practitioners or professionals on a career break. Entries will be accepted not only from individuals but also from formal or informal partnerships. Candidates should be UK based aiming to carry out research over a 2 year period culminating in a milestone output of significance. In all cases candidates should identify a mentor who can contribute objectively to the project and widen the reach of outputs to help make a difference.

Applications are made via our online application portal, where we ask applicants to upload an outline of the proposed project of no more than two pages of A4 and a CV.

Please visit www.royalcommission1851.org.uk for full details of how to apply.