Application FAQs

What do I need to know to APPLY?

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS
- MA in Art History or a related discipline with an A average in the primary courses.
- Additional requirements
  - Curriculum vitae
  - Writing sample
  - Statement of research interest

If English is not a native language, prospective students must meet the English language proficiency requirements in writing, speaking, reading, and listening. The School of Graduate Studies requires the following minimum scores: TOEFL (paper-based): 550, (2) TOEFL iBT: Writing (22/30), Speaking (22/30), Reading (22/30), Listening (20/30), for a total of 88/120 (applicants must have the minimum score in each test as well as the minimum overall score), or (3) IELTS: 7.0 (academic module overall band score), or (4) PTE: Academic: 65.

KEY DATES & DEADLINES
- Application due: January 10th.
- Notification of acceptance: mid-March.

Before you start your application, please review the Graduate studies application process.

What about FUNDING?

The minimum funding guarantee for Art History PhD students is $18,000 per year, throughout years 1-4. In recent years, doctoral students who do not hold a major external grant have received $20,000-$24,000/year for 4 years. The funding package may be comprised of Queen’s Graduate Awards, Teaching Assistantships, and named internal Fellowships. Many doctoral students in their 3rd year are eligible for a Bader Fellowship, worth up to $10,000.

We encourage all students to apply for external funding from OGS, SSHRC and other sources. Queen’s will automatically issue a $10,000 award to incoming PhD students who have won federal government tri-council awards. For more information, see the School of Graduate Studies information on awards and scholarships.

Why GRADUATE STUDIES in ART HISTORY?

The Queen’s Art History program is strongly committed to mentoring and to the training of graduate students in a variety of interdisciplinary approaches, methodologies, and issues, including the technical examination of art, gender studies, critical theory, cultural representation, curatorial studies, and the relationships among art, literature, and science.

The program offers a wide range of courses that delve into case studies relating to broader issues. All Art History courses emphasize visual literacy and the contextual relevance of the discipline within culture and history.

Why QUEEN’S?

The Art History program at Queen’s maintains close ties with the Agnes Etherington Art Centre on campus, which features innovative exhibitions, programs, and high-quality collections encompassing European paintings of the Baroque era, smaller concentrations of the art of Indigenous peoples of North America, decorative arts, costume and heritage quilts of the region. In addition, the gallery holds a fine collection of the art of West and Central Africa.

“Choosing Art History at Queen’s was one of the best decisions I have ever made. Attending Queen’s was a positive and nurturing experience, made possible because of an advisor and faculty members who were active scholars, thoughtful pedagogues and caring mentors.”

— John Potvin, PhD

The Queen’s Art History program shares a department with Canada’s only Master’s in Art of West and Central Africa. In addition, the gallery holds a fine collection of the art of West and Central Africa.

RESEARCH Areas
- Medieval art and architecture, neo-Medievalism
- 14th to 18th-century Southern and Central European arts
- 17th-century Dutch and Flemish art
- 19th to 20th-century European and Scandinavian art
- History of photography
- Modernism
- Global contemporary art
- Indigenous cultures
- Art and Visual Cultures of Africa and its diaspora
- Canadian visual culture
- Global cultural contact
- Technical art history
- History of conservation and cultural heritage preservation
- History of collecting and museums
- Curatorial studies
- Art and medicine

We encourage you to identify an area of research interest and contact a potential supervisor before applying.

Visit the Art History Department website to read faculty profiles and learn more about faculty members’ research areas. When you find a faculty member with similar research interests, contact him/her and tell them about your interest in graduate work, area of research interest and related experience. The email correspondence is also an opportunity for you to find out if the faculty member is accepting new graduate students to supervise.
WHO WILL I LEARN?
A graduate degree in Art History can equip you with:

- Knowledge and technical skills
- Effective communication skills in multiple forms for diverse audiences
- Information management: prioritize, organize and synthesize large amounts of information
- Time management: meet deadlines and manage responsibilities despite competing demands
- Project management: develop ideas, gather information, analyze, critically appraise findings, draw and act on conclusions
- Creativity and innovation
- Perseverance
- Independence and experience as a collaborator
- Awareness and understanding of sound ethical practices, social responsibility, responsible research and cultural sensitivity
- Professionalism in all aspects of work, research, and interactions
- Leadership: initiative and vision leading people and discussion

WHERE CAN I GO?
A PhD degree in Art History can take your career in many directions. Our PHD students are equipped with a strong foundation for careers in:

- Academia and teaching
- Museum, curatorial and cultural policy positions
- Writing and publishing
- Commercial galleries
- Auction houses
- Archives
- Taking time to explore career options, build experience, and network can help you have a smooth transition to the world of work after graduation.

WHAT WILL I LEARN?

ART HISTORY PhD MAP 

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (PHD)

YEAR I

ACHIEVE YOUR Academic Goals

- Key priorities include your relationship with your supervisor, forming your committee, coursework, field exams, and language exams.
- Meet early with your supervisor to set expectations and discuss roles, responsibilities, program requirements, resources, research/occupational goals, timelines, and any required accommodation plans.
- Attend and participate in graduate seminars such as Work in Progress. Look to Student Academic Success Services for a variety of supports.

MAXIMIZE RESEARCH IMPACT

- Think about audiences for your research.
- Complete ROMEO online module on research ethics if doing research with living people or sensitive topics.
- Apply to SSHRC, OGS, and other funding.
- Attend conferences in your field.

BUILD SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

- Serve on departmental, faculty or university committees. Talk to the Graduate Visual Culture Association for tips on getting involved.
- Consider positions in student services, the SOGS, or media outlets like the Queen’s Journal, CFCR, and the SGS Blog. Look in the AMS Club Directory.
- Use a Teaching Assistant or Research Assistant position to develop your skills and experience.

ENGAGE WITH YOUR COMMUNITY

- Consider volunteering with community organizations, museums, or cultural studies groups, such as the Amaes Etharrington Art Centre.
- Join the Department’s Fundraising or Social Committee, or participate in organizing Context and Meaning.
- Participate in your graduate and professional community through activities such as graduate student outreach programs, organizing conferences, and research groups.

LAUNCH YOUR CAREER

- Finding career fit starts with knowing yourself. Take a Career Services workshop or meet with a career counsellor for help. Check out books like So What Are You Going to do With That? or The Academic Job Search from the Career Resource Area for advice on various career options.
- Start reading publications like University Affairs and the Chronicle of Higher Education. Browse non-academic labour market websites.
- Stay on the lookout for special events like School of Graduate Studies Career Week to explore your career pathways.

YEAR II

ACHIEVE YOUR Academic Goals

- Priorities include completing your comprehensive examination and pursuing substantive research.
- Set up regular meetings with your supervisor to discuss progress and obstacles to timely completion.
- Find your way through the academic process with the help of Expanding Horizons and the SGS Habitat.
- Seek experiential/professional development opportunities. Attend or present at a graduate conference such as Context and Meaning.

MAXIMIZE RESEARCH IMPACT

- Present your work at graduate conferences, through professional associations, or topic conferences.
- Expand your research audience through social media such as Twitter or a blog.
- Apply for the Graduate Dean’s Travel Grant for Doctoral Field Research.

BUILD SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

- Hone skills for non-academic employment by continuing involvement on committees.
- For help with teaching, get support from the Centre for Teaching and Learning. Enroll in SGS909 or the PUTL certificate for more professional development in teaching and learning.
- Attend workshops put on by the Department, such as the Professional and Academic Development Program (PADP).

ENGAGE WITH YOUR COMMUNITY

- Do some targeted networking with people working in careers of interest, through QueeensConnects on LinkedIn, the Queen’s Alumni Association: professional associations, and at conferences.
- Get help from a Career Services workshop.

LAUNCH YOUR CAREER

- Start building your teaching portfolio including student evaluations, and seeking mentorship.
- Explore different career interests by reading alumni profiles on the SGS website, and using QueensConnects on LinkedIn to connect with Queen’s alumni, or find alumni in various careers through “Ask an Alum”. For more information check out Career Cruising.
- Investigate requirements for professional or other opportunities related to careers of interest.

YEAR III

ACHIEVE YOUR Academic Goals

- Priorities include maintaining your comprehensive examination, reviewing substantive research, and writing your dissertation.
- Set up regular meetings with your supervisor to discuss progress and obstacles to timely completion.
- Find your way through the academic process with the help of Expanding Horizons and the SGS Habitat.
- Seek experiential/professional development opportunities. Attend or present at a graduate conference such as Context and Meaning.

MAXIMIZE RESEARCH IMPACT

- Continue to present at conferences.
- Consider participating in the 3 Minute Thesis (3MT) competition.
- Contact the Queen’s Media Centre for guidance on speaking to news outlets about your work.
- List yourself on the Arts and Science University.

BUILD SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

- Begin teaching as a departmental Teaching Fellow.
- Find opportunities for extra training through CTL, Expanding Horizons, Mitacs, or other sources to boost your skills. Investigate internships from Mitacs and other sources.
- Prepare for work or studies in a multi-cultural environment by taking the Intercultural Awareness Training Certificate, hosted by QUIC and FODIS.

ENGAGE WITH YOUR COMMUNITY

- Consider volunteering with community organizations, museums, or cultural studies groups, such as the Amaes Etharrington Art Centre.
- Join the Department’s Fundraising or Social Committee, or participate in organizing Context and Meaning.
- Participate in your graduate and professional community through activities such as graduate student outreach programs, organizing conferences, and research groups.

LAUNCH YOUR CAREER

- Find opportunities to develop your research and writing and publishing skills.
- Continue public outreach through social media and the Queen’s Media Centre.
- Set up a meeting with the School of Graduate Studies for a Grad Chat to discuss your research interests.

YEAR IV & TRANSITIONING

ACHIEVE YOUR Academic Goals

- Plan date of thesis submission for examination.
- Present your research to graduate students and faculty or at conferences and work with supervisor to prepare for defence.
- Review submission and examination guidelines.
- Secure necessary oral defence accommodations.
- Discuss career pathways, references letters, and timelines, and any required accommodation plans.

MAXIMIZE RESEARCH IMPACT

- Continue to attend conferences and connect with scholars in your field and with community partners.
- Continue public outreach through social media and the Queen’s Media Centre.
- Set up a meeting with the School of Graduate Studies for a Grad Chat to discuss your research interests.

BUILD SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

- Practice articulating the skills you have been developing in settings outside the university, such as casual conversation, networking, and interviews.
- Get help from a Career Services workshop.

ENGAGE WITH YOUR COMMUNITY

- Do some targeted networking with people working in careers of interest, through QueeensConnects on LinkedIn, the Queen’s Alumni Association: professional associations, and at conferences.
- Get help from a Career Services workshop.

LAUNCH YOUR CAREER

- Consider joining professional associations like the Universities Art Association of Canada or College Art Association.
- Continue targeted networking with people working in careers of interest. Join groups on LinkedIn reflecting specific careers or topics of interest in Art History.
- Build connections with faculty outside of your department. Pursue interviews for faculty positions and apply for post-doc fellowships and positions.
- Apply to jobs or make plans for other adventures. Get help from Career Services with job searching, resumes, or interviews.
- If considering jobs abroad, research possible immigration regulations. If you are an international student interested in staying in Canada, consider speaking with an International Student Advisor.