

Science and Museums

in the People's Republic of China and the UK since 1900:
Engaging people in physical science research



**1+3-yr FT ESRC CASE (collaborative) MA/PhD
Studentship, commencing September 2012**

Centre for Chinese Studies
University of Manchester

in collaboration with

Museum of Science and Industry, Manchester, and Centre for Museology,
University of Manchester

In a comparative study the project analyses and proposes how museums can engage people in the major breakthroughs in physical science and technology which shape the modern world. The focus of the project is on the historical trajectories that inform museum representations of physical science and technology in China and the UK since 1900.

China recognises physics and technology research as essential for the country to play an increasingly prominent role in the global community. Since 1900, physics is a subject in which Western countries, especially Britain, have long led the way with major developments. In China, museums representing physical science and technology are a relatively recent development: since 2000, there has been a programme to create about 200 science museums throughout China, with about 100 opening in the last decade. These largely contain interactive exhibits explaining the

principles and processes of science, rather than past scientific achievements and research taking place today. Historical research on Chinese museum culture is also in its infancy.

The project aims to critically reflect on current methodologies and representations of physical science in China and the UK, and propose new ways of engaging people in both China and the UK in current research taking place both locally and internationally. The study will focus in particular on the local science museums of Shanghai and Zhejiang (East China) province, amongst the leading economic areas of China that can look back at a history of more than a hundred years, and the Museum of Science and Industry (MOSI) in Manchester. Both will be researched within the broader context of recent developments in science popularisation.

The project has both historical and practical components. Through collaboration with MOSI, the research will feed directly into museum practice via MOSI and Chinese science museums/ science popularisation organisations in Shanghai and Zhejiang province in the first instance.

The studentship is open to UK/EU undergraduates who have at least a 2:1 Honours degree in Chinese studies, History or Social Studies of Science/Technology, Museum Studies or a related subject. Proficiency in Chinese and English required (Classical Chinese advantageous). For applications for +3 yr (PhD) route an MA degree with merit or higher must be completed by September 2012.

Students applying for the 1+3 year (MA+PhD) are required to undergo MA training depending on previous qualifications in the subject area. For details of MA programmes available to study in connection with this project please go to:

- Museology: <http://www.arts.manchester.ac.uk/museology/postgraduatestudy/taught/>
- History of Science: <http://www.chstm.manchester.ac.uk/postgraduate/taught/>
- Languages and Cultures (research route):
<http://www.llc.manchester.ac.uk/postgraduate/taught/a-z/course/?code=08810>

Applicants are requested to submit a letter of application (of no more than 500 words) stating an outline of their interests and relevant qualifications for the project along with a CV by **23 March 2012 to Miss Rachel Corbishley at pg.languages@manchester.ac.uk**. You also need to apply online for an appropriate programme (either PhD in Chinese Studies or one of the MA programmes listed above). To apply for a place on a programme please go to: <http://www.manchester.ac.uk/postgraduate/howtoapply/>

Please note: you are advised to submit your programme application to the University by **7 March 2012**, to ensure that you are in receipt of an offer of a place on a programme in advance of the **23 March 2012** studentship deadline.

Further information please contact: Professor Dagmar Schaefer, University of Manchester, Samuel Alexander Building, Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9PL, UK. Tel: +44 (0) 161 275 7052. Email: dagmar.schaefer@manchester.ac.uk