



Registered Charity No 1113163

THE WALLPAPER HISTORY SOCIETY

(founded 1986)

BURSARY POLICY

Introduction

The Wallpaper History Society's charitable purpose includes supporting research to advance the education, understanding and appreciation of the public in the history, development, manufacturing, design and conservation of wallcoverings in the UK and across the world since the 16th century to the present day. The support includes providing bursaries to appropriate research topics and applicants.

Objective and Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish the approach for assessing and awarding bursaries for research into the history, development, manufacturing, design and conservation of wallcoverings in the UK and across the world since the 16th century.

The policy aims to ensure a systematic and proactive approach to bursary management, protecting the Society and its beneficiaries.

Having a formal policy ensures the charity can fulfil its legal duty to provide public benefit. It helps the Charity to avoid discrimination claims under equality laws by relying on transparent, evidence-based criteria when making awards. It also provides the Trustees with a structured framework to manage the limited funds available.

The Merryl Huxtable Bursary

The Wallpaper History Society offers a bursary of up to £1,500 each year to support research into the history, development, manufacturing, design and conservation of wallcoverings in the UK and across the world since the 16th century. The bursary prize is offered in memory of Merryl Huxtable, a founder member of the WHS and pioneer in the field of wallpaper conservation.

Eligibility

Applications are welcomed from graduates involved in projects that explore the history, development, manufacturing, design or conservation of wallcoverings in the UK and across the world since the 16th century. Researchers who have a proven record of publishing work in this or a related field are also eligible. Funds may also be allocated to support new researchers who may not have evidence of previous published work, but who are able to demonstrate commitment to undertaking relevant research.

The WHS is committed to supporting research projects which contribute to knowledge in the field. For this reason, the bursary is awarded only for original research based largely on primary sources and/or practical conservation work.

Applicants do not have to be members of the Wallpaper History Society, but successful recipients are strongly encouraged to join.

Award Types & Values

The Committee will establish the annual budget for bursaries, currently up to the maximum £1500, having regard to the Society's level of reserves, previous awards not yet fully paid and the likely number of applications to be received.

The bursary is normally awarded to further research and the payments are expected to cover travel and accommodation expenses, book purchases, conservation equipment and other research materials.

Successful applicants will be invited to provide an interim report at the halfway point (usually after the first six months), and at the end of the project they will be invited to produce evidence of their work in a suitable format. This may be in the form of an illustrated essay of 3000-4,000 words to be published in the Society's journal, *The Wallpaper History Review*. Alternatively, the WHS may consider a record of the work provided in an openly accessible format, such as (but not exclusively) recorded interviews; a database of findings; films of conservation, online talks and presentations or demonstrations of research processes etc.

The WHS will hold and share such outcomes as a resource, including through the Society's website, and the award recipient will be invited to produce an accompanying short report (rather than a 3,000 - 4,000 word essay) outlining the outcomes of the project, to be published in the WHS Review.

The bursary values in previous years have typically been of the order of £500 or £1,000. The Committee can decide to vary and increase the value depending on the size of the agreed annual budget.

Responsibilities

The Trustees have overall responsibility for ensuring that there is an appropriate approach to assessing and awarding bursaries and disbursing the bursaries in a timely manner once awarded.

The applicants have responsibility for providing their bank details to the Treasurer via the Bursary Secretary for the purpose of receiving the bursary payment and to ensure these details are up to date where two or more payments are awarded.

Recipients are encouraged to credit the support of the Wallpaper History Society in any publications, presentations, websites etc in which they share the research that results from this Bursary award.

Applications Process

The Committee will agree the annual budget for bursaries and set out if there are any criteria that research topics or applicants must meet in order for a bursary to be successfully awarded.

The Bursary Secretary will invite applications for bursaries according to a timetable agreed by the WHS Committee

The Bursary Secretary will acknowledge receipt of all applications and will convene the Bursary Sub-Committee in order to consider those applications received by the published deadline.

The Bursary Sub-Committee is chaired by the Bursary Secretary and also includes the Review Editor and two further external assessors appointed by the Committee. The names of all members of the Bursary Sub-Committee will be published on the website.

The Sub-Committee will decide which applications are successful in meeting its award criteria. The Bursary may be awarded to a single applicant or to more than one applicant in any year, with the Award fund divided at the discretion of the Bursary Sub-Committee. The Sub-Committee has the right to request more detailed information should this be required.

If the Bursary Sub-Committee believes that an amount in excess of the annual £1,500 budget should be awarded, this must be agreed by the Wallpaper History Society Committee as a whole before proceeding.

Unsuccessful applicants will be given the opportunity to reapply for a bursary in the next annual award and may request feedback from the Sub-Committee on how their applications can be improved.

The Bursary Secretary will inform successful and unsuccessful applicants and work with the Treasurer to make the initial bursary payment of 50% of the total.

The Bursary Secretary will liaise with the Website Editor to ensure that the successful applicant(s) is/are featured on the website.

The Bursary Secretary will liaise with the recipient and the Review Editor to discuss the publication of an article in the WH Review.

The Bursary Secretary will keep track of this whole process for each recipient, and report to Committee meetings on the progress of each (bearing in mind that projects can be of varying length, and that there are sometimes several in progress at once).

The Bursary Secretary will liaise with the recipient, the Review Editor and the Treasurer to ensure that the final 50% is paid at an appropriate time once the project is complete.

The Award is not means tested. There is no requirement for applicants to submit receipts to justify their spend of the bursary.

Award Timetable

The Society aims to open applications for the annual bursary awards each November, with a deadline of the end of January. The Bursary Sub-Committee will meet to discuss all applications during February, with decisions announced in March. The first tranche of each bursary will be awarded in April.

Confidentiality

Applicants will be informed that a successful application will lead to their name and research topic being publicised on the Society's website and in the annual report and accounts.

Taxation

The Society understands that the Merryl Huxtable Bursary is not considered to be earnings by HMRC and as such the bursary is not subject to income tax, National Insurance or VAT as long as the bursaries are freely given with no expectations by the Society of any specific supplies in return to the Society. Applicants should be made aware that this is open to review by HMRC and could change; Applicants are responsible for their own tax affairs.

Last updated: Date of Committee meeting that approves

Agreed by WHS Committee 2.7.2026