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**Joint statement from the V&A and Smithsonian Institution on partnership as part of East Bank:**

Due to evolving strategic priorities, and in the context of the effects of COVID-19, the V&A and Smithsonian Institution have agreed not to continue with their curatorial partnership at V&A East. However, we are excited to re-focus our work together on expanding the successful STEP internship programme, as part of the wider East Bank partnership with support from the Foundation for Future London. STEP is an ambitious leadership programme for young people from diverse backgrounds from both east London and Washington D.C. which will grow the next generation of cultural and museum leaders. We know that the creative workforce in the UK and the US does not reflect our societies and this programme is needed now more than ever.

ENDS

**Notes to editors:**

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