

V&A Academy

UNPACKING EXHIBITION DESIGN



Introduction

The V&A's world-class exhibitions have drawn millions of visitors over the past decade, explore what makes them so impactful. The course will focus on the design principles that have shaped our iconic exhibitions. Each week we will unpack how *ideas* are tested and put into practice.

This course is primarily intended for people at early to mid-career stages, working in the museum and heritage sector, or for people interested in designing exhibitions.

Information

Tuesdays, 13 January – 3 February 2026, 13.00 – 16.00. Online.

Watch session recordings on demand, available at the end of each day.

Your course leaders

Dr Matilda Pye is a curator and educator, who has worked with the V&A since 2008 in multiple roles, she was recently a Paul Mellon Public Engagement Fellow for the V&A Research Institute focused on V&A East and Storehouse. She has over 20 Years experience working with museums and galleries in the UK and internationally, including Tate, the National Portrait Gallery, Royal Museums Greenwich and the British Council. Her recently completed PhD was focused on the history of the Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art in Gateshead. Pye has a long history of working creatively with artists, designers and performers.

Evonne Mackenzie is Head of Design at the V&A and responsible for all areas of design output for the family of museums from exhibitions and permanent galleries to brand and campaigns. She leads on both the in-house design studio and external commissioning, working with colleagues across the museum to bring in designers from a wide range of disciplines (architecture, furniture, graphics, lighting, sound, audio-visual, illustration and photography). Mackenzie is especially interested in making space for multiple design voices and to create commission opportunities for designers who haven't previously worked with the museum sector.

Note: V&A Academy programmes are subject to change without notice.

Week 1 – 13th January 2026

Welcome and Introduction to Designing Exhibitions

- 13.00 Introduction to Designing Exhibitions
- 14.00 What is in Scope for Consideration?
- 15.00 Designing a Brief
- 15.45 Feedback Session

Week 2 – 20th January 2026

Design and Approaches to Exhibition Making

- 13.00 Designing Exhibitions Sustainably
- 14.15 Designing with Dis Ordinary
- 15.00 Staging Spaces

Week 3 – 27th January 2026

Transformations from Scenography to Multi-sensory Experience

- 13.00 Scenography: Painting and lighting the scene
- 14.00 The Mannequin: Embodiment, Conservation, Attitude
- 15.00 Film and AV: Scale, Spectacle, Perspective

Week 4 – 3rd February 2026

Play, Listen, Learn, Through Design

13.00 Transforming Museum Spaces – Design and Play

14.00 Sonic Experience: Multi-Dimensional Design

15.00 Design Surgery

16.00 Wrap Up