



### **Webinar on job applications - writing CVs and cover letters, May 2024.**

Responding to a request from the Doctoral and Early Career Research Committee, three HEC members, Stephanie O-Rourke, Jack Hartnell and Melissa Percival, spoke at a 90-minute online session on applying for academic jobs, sharing their experiences, advice and sample materials. The emphasis was on the paperwork aspects of job hunting, namely compiling CVs and cover letters. The session was well attended, with around 40 participants who had plenty of questions.

Chief topics of discussion and takeaways were as follows:

- Tailoring your application to the job being advertised. Types of academic job typically fall into 3 categories: teaching only, research and teaching, research only; these can be either short or longer term. Employers will have different needs in mind (eg. a long-term research trajectory vs. a more immediate ability to slot into an existing teaching programme). It's possible to respond to these different priorities by thinking about order, volume and respective emphases of your CV and cover letter.
- Latest trends in the job market, with increasingly hybrid roles, combining administration, knowledge transfer etc. as well as crossovers with museums and galleries. More than ever this means an individual (and not standardized) application is required for each job.
- Doing your 'homework': thoroughly researching the institution, department and people. Beyond department strengths, are there research centres, networks, special collections or other local or regional initiatives that you could contribute to?
- Cover letter should be about why you are a good 'fit' for the particular job, hence showing you've done the abovementioned 'homework' (it's not just about the brilliance of your research).
- Keep your CV regularly updated so as to have a 'bank' of achievements, but be prepared to adapt materials to each job.