

Keynote speakers



Helen Chatterjee is a Professor of Biology in UCL Biosciences; her research interests include the value of cultural encounters in health and wellbeing, and the role of touch and object handling in health, wellbeing and education. Helen co-founded and chairs the National Alliance for Museums, Health and Wellbeing, is an advisor to the All Party Parliamentary Group on Arts and Health, sits on the Royal Society for Public Health's SIG in Arts and Health, the AHRC's Science in Culture Advisory Committee and has numerous collaborations with a range of museums, cultural, third sector, health and social care organisations.

She edited 'Touch in Museums: Policy and Practice in Object Handling' (Berg Publications) in 2008, wrote 'Museums, Health and Well-being' (Routledge) in 2013 and edited 'Engaging the Senses: Object-Based Learning in Higher Education' (Routledge; 2015). She is currently Principal Investigator on three Research Council UK grants: 'Museums on Prescription' which is exploring the role of museums and galleries in social prescribing, 'Not So Grim up North' a research project with Manchester Museums and Tyne and Wear Museums and Archives, and the Arts and forced migration with the Helen Bamber Foundation, Petra University and Talbieh Refugee Camp in Jordan. In 2015, Helen was awarded an MBE in Queen's Birthday Honours list for services to Higher Education and Culture.

Helen Chatterjee will deliver her keynote on day one of the conference, Thursday 29 November 2018 at 10.45 hour. See program.



Nick Merriman was appointed Chief Executive of the Horniman Museum on 1 May 2018. He was Director of Manchester Museum from March 2006 to April 2018. Between June 2017 and February 2018 he was acting as Interim Director of the Whitworth. In May 2017 he was made Honorary Professor of Museum Studies in the University of Manchester.

While at Manchester Museum he has focused its mission on promoting understanding between cultures and working towards a sustainable world and has overseen the refurbishment of most of the Museum's permanent galleries. This, together with a major programme of public engagement, has led to a doubling of the Museum's visitor numbers to 450,000 a year.

Prior to moving to Manchester, Nick Merriman was Director of Museums & Collections, and Reader in Museum Studies, at University College London, for 8 years. During this time, he developed new courses in museum and heritage studies, and created a new university-wide museum service. From 2004-6 he was a part time Fellow on the Clore Leadership Programme, undertaking a bespoke scheme of training and development in cultural leadership.

Nick began his career at the Museum of London in 1986, as Curator of Prehistory and subsequently Head of the Department of Early London History and Collections. While there, he led a pioneering project called 'The Peopling of London' which told the story of the capital's cultural diversity from ancient times to the present. He studied archaeology at Cambridge University, and his PhD, on widening participation in museums, was published as 'Beyond The Glass Case'.

He has published widely on museum studies topics, was Chair of the International Council of Museums (UK) from 2001-2004, President of the Council for British Archaeology from 2005-2008, Chair of the University Museums Group from 2009-2013, Convenor of the Museums Association's Ethics Committee 2008-2014 and Chair of the Collections Trust 2013-2016, Chair of Inspiring Science Fund Wellcome Trust June 2017.

Nick Merriman will deliver his keynote on day two of the conference, Friday 30 November 2018 at 14.00 hour. See program.