

HOW PARTICIPANT DATA WILL BE USED AND CONSENT

Inclusive Tactile Heritage - Training Workshops on 3D Digitisation and Accessibility

Participant Information Sheet

You are invited to take part in this research study. Before you decide, it is important that you understand why the research is being carried out and what it will involve. This document explains the purpose of the study, what you will be asked to do if you choose to take part, and how your information will be used.

Taking part is entirely your choice. Read this sheet carefully, discuss it with colleagues, friends, or family, and ask any questions you may have before making your decision. If you decide to take part, your contribution will help improve accessibility in museums and cultural spaces.

If you decide not to, that is fine, and it will not affect you in any way.

What is the Purpose of the Study?

The aim of this study is to explore how museum and gallery professionals can be supported to develop practical skills in 3D digitisation, digital modelling, and fabrication, with a focus on improving accessibility in exhibitions.

As part of the project, a structured training programme has been developed consisting one in-person workshop and four online sessions. These sessions introduce participants to scanning, modelling, and creating tactile objects, while also embedding inclusive design principles.

The study will gather feedback from participants on the training programme, including their learning experience, the usefulness of the skills taught, and how they might apply these skills in their own institutions. Feedback will help refine the training, identify barriers or challenges, and ensure that the programme is as inclusive and effective as possible. The wider aim is to develop an open and reusable framework that museums and galleries can adopt to make their collections more accessible particularly for audiences who may be excluded from traditional exhibition formats, such as blind and visually impaired visitors. This study is being conducted as part of PhD research at Northumbria University.

Why have I been invited?

You have been invited to take part in this study because you are a museum or gallery professional, educator, designer, or researcher with an interest in accessibility, digitisation, or inclusive exhibition practices.

The study is open to adults (aged 18 or over) who work in, or alongside, cultural or heritage institutions.

Participants are being recruited because their professional experience and perspectives are essential to shaping training that is both practical and relevant to real-world museum and gallery contexts. Your insights will help ensure that the training programme reflects the needs of those working in the sector and can be realistically applied within institutions of different sizes and resources.

This study is not open to children or to individuals who are not engaged in professional or educational work related to museums, galleries, or cultural heritage, as the training content and research questions are designed specifically for sector professionals.

Do I have to take part?

No. Taking part in this study is entirely your choice. You are being given this information sheet to help you decide.

If you choose to participate, you are free to withdraw at any point without giving a reason. You can also decide to take part in some elements of the training without taking part in the research element if you prefer. Choosing not to take part, or deciding to withdraw after starting, will not affect your professional role, your relationship with your institution, or your ability to access the training sessions.

What will happen if I take part?

If you decide to take part, you will be involved in a training programme consisting of one in-person workshop and four online sessions.

- **In-person workshop:** This will be a full-day session (approximately 7 hours, including breaks) held at Hunt Museum. The day will focus on hands-on activities, including scanning and preparing objects for tactile reproduction.
- **Online workshops:** These will take place fortnightly via a video conferencing platform. Each session will last around 3 hours and include a combination of short presentations, demonstrations, and group discussions. You can choose to attend individual sessions or complete the full programme.

During the training, you will:

- Learn about 3D scanning, modelling, and fabrication.
- Explore inclusive design strategies for tactile interpretation.
- Work with sample objects to practice the techniques.
- Share your reflections and feedback through short discussions and optional surveys.

All sessions will be conducted in groups with other museum and cultural professionals. Group sizes will be kept small to ensure accessibility and meaningful interaction. Your involvement will last for the duration of the training programme, approximately 10–12 weeks in total. After the programme, you may be invited to provide additional feedback about your experience. This will help evaluate the training and improve it for future participants.

There are no special requirements for participation, and you are free to decide how much or how little you wish to engage.

What are the possible disadvantages of taking part?

Taking part in this study is not expected to cause you any harm. However, there are a few possible inconveniences to consider:

- **Time commitment:** The training involves one in-person day (7 hours including breaks) and four online workshops (approx. 3 hours each). It is recognised this is a

commitment alongside your regular workload. You are free to attend as many or as few sessions as you wish.

- **Technical requirements:** The online sessions require access to a computer with an internet connection and, ideally, a webcam and microphone. You will be provided with clear instructions and technical support to minimise difficulties.
- **Group participation:** Sessions will take place in small groups. Some participants may feel uncomfortable speaking in group discussions. Please note that active participation is voluntary you are welcome to listen without contributing if that feels more comfortable.
- **Mild learning challenges:** As the training involves learning new digital tools, you may occasionally feel challenged or frustrated. The programme has been designed to be accessible to beginners, with step-by-step guidance, and support will be available throughout.

Every effort will be made to reduce these inconveniences. Your feedback will always be confidential, and any comments you provide will be anonymised in reports. You may also stop participating at any time without giving a reason.

There are no sensitive or personal topics involved in this project, and no automated decisions will be made about you or your data. If you have any concerns during or after the training, you can contact the lead researcher Tadhg Charles at any point I have included my details at the bottom.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

By taking part in this study, you will have the opportunity to:

- **Develop new professional skills:** You will gain practical experience in 3D scanning, digital modelling, and inclusive exhibition design, which can be directly applied within your institution.
- **Enhance accessibility in your organisation:** The training will equip you with knowledge and resources to create tactile models and inclusive displays, supporting greater access for visitors with visual impairments and other access needs.
- **Access free training and resources:** All workshops, guides, and templates are provided at no cost, giving you valuable tools for ongoing use and future projects.
- **Collaborate with peers and experts:** You will connect with other museum professionals, designers, and educators, sharing knowledge and strategies across institutions.
- **Shape future practice:** Your feedback during and after the training will directly inform the development of an open-source framework to help museums and galleries adopt tactile accessibility more widely.

While individual outcomes cannot be guaranteed, it is hoped that participation will build confidence with digital tools, strengthen your institution's inclusive practice, and support positive, lasting changes in how collections are shared with diverse audiences.

Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential and anonymous?

Yes. Your participation in and identification with this study is at your own discretion and will be kept strictly confidential in accordance with your wishes.

- **Anonymity of data:** Your name will not appear on any data we collect unless you explicitly state otherwise. If so, you will be assigned an ID number. Any notes, surveys, or feedback will be stored under this ID, not your name.
- **Interviews and discussions:** If you take part in a feedback session, your name will not be attached to the audio recordings or written transcripts unless otherwise stated. Any quotes used in reports or presentations will be anonymised except for in cases where you explicitly request accreditation.
- **Consent forms:** The consent form you sign will be stored securely and separately from your data, so your identity cannot be linked back to your responses.
- **Confidentiality:** All information you provide will be kept confidential and used only for research purposes. Data will be stored securely on password-protected systems and only accessed by the researcher.
- **Limits to confidentiality:** The only circumstance in which confidentiality may be broken is if the researcher believes that you or someone else may be at risk of harm.

In all reports, publications, or presentations resulting from this study, your identity will remain anonymous unless you have stated a desire to be identified. If at any future point you no longer wish to be identified this can be altered and anonymised at your discretion. Remember you have the right to ask for a record or deletion of any information that you provide over the course of the study.

How will my data be stored, and how long will it be stored for?

All data collected during this study will be stored securely and in line with Northumbria University's data protection policies and the Data Protection Act (2018).

- **Paper data** (such as consent forms or handwritten notes) will be stored in locked storage and accessible only to the researcher.
- **Electronic data** (such as surveys, feedback forms, or interview recordings) will be stored on Northumbria University's secure, password-protected OneDrive system.
- **Personally identifiable data** (such as consent forms with your name) will be stored separately from your anonymised research data so that your identity cannot be linked to your responses.

Retention period:

Personally identifiable data will be stored for 12 months after the completion of the study and then securely destroyed.

Anonymised research data (such as transcripts, surveys, and feedback with no names attached) may be retained for up to 5 years in line with university policy, to allow for analysis, publication, and sharing with the wider research community.

At no stage will your personal details be shared outside the research unless you explicitly give consent, and any publications or presentations will use anonymised data only.

What categories of personal data will be collected and processed in this study?

As part of this study, the following categories of personal data will be collected and processed:

- **Contact details:** such as your name, email address, and institutional affiliation, to register you for the training sessions and to share relevant information about the study.
- **Professional information:** such as your job role, area of work, and institutional context, to understand

What is the legal basis for processing personal data?

The legal basis for processing your personal data in this study is:

Article 6(1)(e) of the GDPR: *processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest.* As a university-led research project, the collection and analysis of data are undertaken to advance knowledge in accessibility, digitisation, and inclusive heritage practices.

If any *special categories of personal data* (for example, information relating to disability or access needs) are collected as part of this study, the additional legal basis for processing will be:

Article 9(2)(j) of the GDPR: *processing is necessary for scientific and historical research purposes,* with appropriate safeguards in place to protect your rights and interests.

All data will be handled in accordance with GDPR, the Data Protection Act (2018), and Northumbria University's data protection policies.

Who are the recipients or categories of recipients of personal data, if any?

Your personal data will be accessed and processed only by the researcher at Northumbria University, who is directly responsible for conducting and analysing this study.

In some cases, limited, non-identifiable information (for example, anonymised feedback or aggregated survey responses) may be shared with project partners such as the Hunt Museum, the Irish Museum of Modern Art (IMMA), or the Digital Repository of Ireland (DRI). These organisations are involved in the delivery and evaluation of the training programme but will not receive personally identifiable data.

No personally identifiable data will be transferred to third parties, funders, or agencies outside of the immediate researcher. If data must be stored or accessed via secure online platforms (e.g. University-approved OneDrive or SharePoint), access will be password protected, strictly controlled, and limited to authorised members of the project.

If any transfer of anonymised data outside the UK/EU is required (e.g. for academic

publication or collaboration with international research teams), this will be done in full compliance with GDPR requirements and with appropriate safeguards in place, ensuring no personally identifiable data leaves the EU.

What will happen to the results of the study, and could personal data collected be used in future research?

The results of this study will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the training workshops and to help develop open-source resources that support inclusive practice in museums and galleries. The general findings may be presented at academic conferences, published in scientific journals, or shared through professional networks, but any information used in these outputs will be anonymised so that no individual participant can be identified unless you explicitly request.

Anonymised data (such as aggregated survey responses, general feedback themes, or non-identifiable quotes) may also be shared with partner organisations such as the Hunt Museum, IMMA, and the Digital Repository of Ireland, who are supporting the training programme.

Your personal data (e.g., your name or contact details) will not appear in any publications, presentations, or shared outputs. It will not be used in future research unless you give explicit consent for this. Only anonymised data may be retained for future research projects, which will always be handled in accordance with Northumbria University's data protection policies and GDPR requirements. If you would like, you can request a summary of the overall findings once the study has been completed by contacting the lead researcher at the email provided below.

Who is organising and funding the study?

This study is being organised by the researcher Tadhg Charles on behalf of research at Northumbria University, as part of doctoral research carried out by Tadhg Charles in the Department of Architecture and Built Environment.

The project is supported through collaboration with partner institutions, including the Hunt Museum and the Digital Repository of Ireland (DRI) via the 3DBigDataSpace Project. The study is self-funded by the researcher with additional in-kind support provided by the partner institutions (e.g., access to collections, workshop participation, and dissemination support). No commercial organisations are funding or influencing the research.

Who has reviewed this study?

The research project has been approved through Northumbria University's Ethics Online system. It has been reviewed to safeguard participant interests, and approval has been granted to conduct the study.

Before this study could begin, permissions were obtained from Northumbria University's Research Ethics Committee.)

What are my rights as a participant in this study?

As a participant, you have a number of rights under the UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR):

- **Right of access** – You can request a copy of the personal data we hold about you (by submitting a Subject Access Request).

- **Right to rectification** – If any of the information we hold about you is inaccurate or incomplete, you can ask us to correct it.
- **Right to erasure** – In certain circumstances, you may ask for your personal data to be deleted.
- **Right to restrict processing** – You can request that the use of your personal data is limited in certain situations.
- **Right to object** – You can object to your personal data being processed for specific purposes.
- **Right in relation to automated decision-making** – You have the right not to be subject to a decision based solely on automated processing (i.e., without human involvement).

All personal data collected in this study will be handled in line with Northumbria University's policies and the Data Protection Act (2018).

If you are dissatisfied with the way your personal data is being processed, you have the right to raise a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), the UK's independent authority for data protection. More details can be found on their website: www.ico.org.uk.

Contacts for further information

Researcher: Tadhg Charles at tadhg.charles@northumbria.ac.uk Contact details of the Records and Information at Northumbria University Duncan James (Records and Information Manager: dp.officer@northumbria.ac.uk)

You can find out more about how we use your information at our [GDPR webpage](#), or by contacting a member of the research team.

A copy of the Participant Consent form is available overleaf for you to review.

Consent Form

Project Title: *Inclusive Tactile Heritage - Training Workshops on 3D Digitisation and Accessibility*

Researcher: Tadhg Charles

Please read the statements below and tick ✓ the boxes you agree with.

Statement	Tick ✓
I have read and understood the presented Participant Information.	
I understand that my participation is voluntary, and I can withdraw at any time.	
I give permission for my written/audio/visual contributions to be used for research purposes.	
I understand that my contributions to the work may be shown publicly (e.g., in exhibitions).	
I agree for my voice to be recorded and consent to its use in work relating to the research if it is deemed necessary to present it.	
I give permission for photographs and 3D scans of object(s) I produce during the sessions to be used.	
If credited in material related to the research, I want to be by referred to by (please select one):	
<input type="checkbox"/> Full name <input type="checkbox"/> First name only <input type="checkbox"/> Pseudonym <input type="checkbox"/> Remain anonymous	
I consent to the use of my contributions in: publications <input type="checkbox"/> / exhibitions <input type="checkbox"/> / educational materials <input type="checkbox"/>	
I agree to take part in this research project.	

Participant Name: _____

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Researcher Signature: _____ **Date:** _____