

# Preparing for Graduate Study While Sheltering in Place: Suggestions from the Association for North American Graduate Programs in Art Conservation

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The directors and other graduate program members of the Association for North American Graduate Programs in Art Conservation (ANAGPIC) recently gathered via Zoom to share distance teaching and learning strategies, summer and internship placement needs, post-graduate placement schemes and solutions, and opportunities to further connect our work and educational/institutional communities using digital platforms.

We are united in our desire to strengthen conservation education and training, and to assist and advise emerging conservation professionals as you navigate new and unprecedented career paths. As conservation educators, we remain committed to your success.

We recognize that pre-program candidates may not now have access to in-person classes or internships, and we offer a few avenues on how to enhance your preparation for graduate study during these tumultuous times while sheltering in place. Some possibilities include:

- Engage fully with the active American Institute for Conservation – Emerging Conservation Professionals Network (AIC-ECPN) ([www.culturalheritage.org/emerging](http://www.culturalheritage.org/emerging)) and the Canadian Association for Conservation of Cultural Property – Emerging Conservators Committee (CAC-ECC) ([www.cac-accr.ca/about-us/](http://www.cac-accr.ca/about-us/)) memberships, and take advantage of their many educational resources.
- Study the mission statements and online content offered by national and international conservation groups and other organizations including:
  - American Institute for Conservation (AIC) <https://www.culturalheritage.org>
  - American Alliance of Museums (AAM) <https://www.aam-us.org/>
  - National Center for Preservation Technology and Training (NCPTT) <https://www.ncptt.nps.gov/>
  - Institute of Conservation (ICON) <https://icon.org.uk/>
  - International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM) <https://www.iccrom.org/>
  - The Getty Conservation Institute (GCI) <https://www.getty.edu/conservation/>
  - Australian Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Material (AICCM) <https://www.aiccm.org.au/>

- New Zealand Conservators of Cultural Materials (NZCCM)  
<https://nzccm.org.nz/>
  - Netherlands Institute for Conservation+Art+Science+ (NICAS)  
<https://www.nicas-research.nl/>
  - International Council of Museums Committee for Conservation (ICOM-CC)  
<http://www.icom-cc.org/15/about>
  - International Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works (IIC)  
<https://www.iiconservation.org/>
- Review ethical codes in conservation globally. Compare and contrast their content, consider cultural/national backgrounds, and prepare a set of guiding principles. Gather and review interesting articles on ethical challenges in related fields. Examine codes of conduct in related fields of study.
  - Explore and comment on popular videos or other online content having to do with cultural heritage conservation. Which ones are accurate and engaging, versus just provocative and sensational? Can any be recommended more broadly for public audiences and why?
  - Identify useful resources for caring for family treasures. Reach out to friends and neighbors to share these resources, and offer your time and expertise where needed.
  - Review online content centered on emergency planning, response, and recovery to strengthen knowledge and skills. Examine posted disaster plans and templates, and follow the challenges facing cultural institutions worldwide during this global pandemic. Enroll in webinars centered on the impact of COVID-19 more generally.
  - Study different leadership styles through multidisciplinary literature and observation of worldwide leaders at all levels. Identify core leadership skills and strengths for future consideration and reference.
  - Review informational webinars hosted by conservation associations and regional centers. Use these learning opportunities to strengthen your skills and knowledge in areas of interest and in other selected areas or disciplines. Keep a record of all webinars reviewed.
  - Take online, for-credit courses in areas central to our practice, from history of technology to STEM, interdisciplinary humanities, art history, anthropology, cultural studies, data analytics, photography/imaging, programming, etc.
  - Pursue courses and/or certificates of study in areas vital to our fields, including project management, development, equity and inclusion, teaming, leadership, and communications strategies. For those interested eventually in private practice, look for online content centered on health and safety, entrepreneurship,

effective marketing strategies, accounting and insurance practices, and small business regulations. Consider online coursework connected to programs of study in archival practice, emergency management, website design, digital management, and other topics. Check out Harvard University's free online offerings, for example, with courses ranging from the significance of tangible objects to strategic planning.

- Transcribe for the Smithsonian. The Smithsonian provides all the instructions and guidelines for transcribing (<https://transcription.si.edu/instructions>). This is a great way to work with a variety of digitized archival written and printed texts.
- Consider opportunities to connect our work in cultural heritage with social entrepreneurship, sustainability, and societal needs globally. Examine the many reports and papers on art and culture via the Salzburg Global Seminar and other think tanks focused on the cultural heritage sector. Follow issues connected to global warming and sustainability and clear connections to the preservation of cultural heritage worldwide. Volunteer for Culture (contact: [info@kiculture.com](mailto:info@kiculture.com)) to conduct research or compile bibliographies.
- Advocate on the Hill or in Parliament and within your State or Province for greater attention to art and culture and investment in cultural heritage via heartfelt letters and communications. Examine the many advocacy tool kits and grass-root strategies captured on sites from ICOM, AAM, NHA and many more.
- Make things – get to know and master materials and techniques. Strengthen hand skills and your studio portfolio by exploring art making and craft processes that require precision and/or associated historical or community-based research.
- Examine the chemistry of your favorite arts or crafts material. Whether this is a strand of wool, a welded joint, or oil paint, explore its chemical structure and look at how it is made, processed, and used.
- Are you interested in developing interview or oral history skills? Check out the FAIC Oral History Project (<https://www.culturalheritage.org/about-us/foundation/programs/oral-history-project>) or visit Voices in Contemporary Art (<https://voca.network/>).
- Learn another language.
- Research grant programs available to individuals and institutions in preservation at the local, regional, national, and international level.
- Get involved! In reviewing applications, faculty are also looking for students who are engaged in social, cultural, artistic, environmental, and global issues.