

Cultures for Sustainability: A Cross-Cultural Model for Sustainable Education

Li Yingchong (China, ITP 2025), Steven Roper, The Whitworth, Fan Xuechun, The Palace Museum

Our collaborative project linking the Palace Museum and the Whitworth is moving forward steadily! Our team will travel to Manchester starting 19 October for a full week of in-person exchange activities.

We have planned site visits to the University of Manchester's Firs Environmental Research Station - a historic botanical research hub with greenhouses, living plant collections and community ecological programmes. Key local partners, including staff Oliver Hughes and Giles Johnson, will join our student workshop day and deliver sharing at our professional knowledge exchange event. We will also dive into the university's university-wide Social Responsibility framework - a leading global initiative covering environmental sustainability, public engagement and cross-disciplinary art-science collaboration.

During our stay, we will co-deliver two themed student workshops: a morning hands-on art creation session and an afternoon eco-botanical session. We are excited about a brand-new textile dye workshop developed by the Whitworth artist, which combines local community garden plants and textile creation. We intend to integrate its creative practical concepts with our oracle bone culture activities to form a blended cross-cultural workshop experience.

Aside from student workshops, we will host a knowledge sharing session for industry peers. We will exchange ideas with practitioners from Manchester Museum and the University of Manchester on sustainable public education and cross-cultural heritage communication.

The core of our project explores the intersection of traditional culture, ecology, sustainability and contemporary art.

Now we are developing educational materials connecting oracle bone characters for wood, earth and birds to artworks from the Performing Trees exhibition, alongside custom observation worksheets for on-site learning. Having rolled out this integrated culture-science-social practice education model in China, we hope to iterate and adapt it with Manchester's local botanical and artistic resources. We will keep the ITP network posted with further updates on this collaboration.