

## [Historical Threads: New perspectives on textile history and material culture](#)

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Type:

Conference

Date:

November 17, 2022 to November 18, 2022

Location:

United Kingdom

Subject Fields:

British History / Studies, Digital Humanities, Environmental History / Studies, History of Science, Medicine, and Technology, Public History

Join us in Manchester, once known as 'Cottonopolis', for this far-reaching event exploring the city's place in the global history of textiles.

Manchester is a city built on textiles; its material legacy encompassing not just the fabric itself but machinery, dyes and pattern books, mills and warehouses. Yet this is a complicated legacy that raises important questions, not just about trade, fashion and innovation, but about exploitation, energy, the environment, globalisation and the pressing question of how we talk about this history now.

The Science and Industry Museum is beginning work to develop 'Cottonopolis', a major new gallery about the world's first industrial city and is looking to broker wide-ranging conversations about how museum and archive collections and research can intersect with current scholarly debates. This two-day conference will showcase several strands of current academic and museum research, with the aim of weaving new connections and bringing new perspectives on a complex and contested public history.

Alongside the overarching theme of textiles, the conference gathers new thinking that resonates with the collections and practices of the Science Museum Group and draws out emerging work from our research community.

The full programme for this two-day conference will be released shortly. Highlights will include:

- Keynote addresses from:
  - Professor Prasannan Parthasarathi, Boston College, author of *The Spinning World: A Global History of Cotton Textiles, 1200-1850* (Oxford, 2009), on The Indian Challenge and the Rise of Manchester.
  - Sir Ian Blatchford, Director of the Science Museum Group, on Lyon Playfair's calico legacy in Lancashire.
- Panels on globalisation, the history of trade, Manchester's role in the design and production of fabrics for world markets, contemporary textiles and PPE, featuring academics and researchers from universities including UCL, Manchester, Liverpool and Brighton, together with artists, film makers and performers.

- Demonstrations of historic mill machinery in the museum's Textiles Gallery.
- Networking opportunities between museum professionals and academics working on the trade and production of textiles.

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<https://www.scienceandindustrymuseum.org.uk/smg-research-conference-2022>