Leeds Museums and Galleries / University of Leeds Cross Disciplinary Innovation Fund

The project *Collections and Contingency* is a collaboration between **Deborah Gardner** and the **Natural Science Curator Rebecca Machin at the Discovery Centre, Leeds** funded through the **Leeds Museums and Galleries Innovation Fund**. An exhibition of the resulting sculptures and photography will be on **exhibition at the Discovery Centre from July 2018.** Deborah proposes to test to what extent can sculpture respond and react to specimens from the collections within the Discovery Centre and cultivate different insights into the growth patterns of physical phenomena? In this sense, art can re-orientate and enlighten us as to the new perspectives it offers on the architecture of matter. Deborah is observing some examples of **palaeontology petrology and mineralogy** in the storage racks as well as a selection of slides on **botany and zoology preparations** with the intention of researching how **practice led research**, where conceptualisation and articulation are driven through making, process and tactility, can operate as a working tool with which to comprehend natural sciences. There are correlations in the processes of this sculpture practice and the specimens viewed, such as **sedimentation, cementation, nucleation, and propagation**.   Deborah is focussing mainly on the huge range of slide preparations stored within various cabinets, which have, for some considerable time, been overlooked due to the lack of specific data to aid solid scientific research activity and findings. A selection of these slides, ranging from **crystallised silver, bird morphology, seeds and pollen** will be studied further by photographing through **light microscopy**. The aim is to both disrupt the closed world of storage and provide alternatives to certain systems of categorisation definition and description. An exhibition of photography and sculpture will be exhibited alongside the specimens within the space of storage and this will be supported by presentations by Deborah.