

Report: British School at Athens Summer School 2026

Yoana Nikolova

I want to begin by thanking the Society for the Promotion of Hellenic Studies for the bursary that made my place on this year's British School at Athens Summer School possible. Without that support, an experience that has genuinely reshaped how I think about my future in this field simply would not have happened, and I am deeply grateful.

The programme ran for three weeks across Athens, Central Greece, and the Peloponnese, taking in around 30 archaeological sites and 18 museums — from the Athenian Agora and the Acropolis to Delphi, Mycenae, the Palace of Nestor, and the Temple of Apollo Epikourios at Bassai. I have spent 5 years now studying Greek archaeology and material culture from a desk, in books, seminars, and essays. Standing in these landscapes in person was something else entirely. Being able to walk inside the Temple of Hephaestus, discuss the restoration of the Parthenon whilst standing around the scaffolding, or see objects I had studied for years in the flesh — the Kritios Boy, the Peplos Kore — closed a gap between knowledge and experience that I don't think anything else could have.

Further, this course has had a direct and practical impact on my career direction. I graduated this summer with a First-Class degree in Archaeology of Ancient Civilisations and have just begun a part-time MA in Art, Philosophy and Cultural Institutions, alongside work in museums and heritage publishing, all building toward a career in curation and collections. The Summer School has given me first-hand exposure to conservation practice, museum curation across very different institutional contexts, and the kind of on-site scholarly thinking that no amount of reading can substitute for. It has sharpened both my confidence and my sense of direction as I move into this field, and I am already developing several pieces of independent research and writing that grew directly out of what I saw and learned on the programme.

I am enormously grateful to the Society for the Promotion of Hellenic Studies for making this possible, and to the British School at Athens for such a generously run and genuinely transformative three weeks!



Yoana Nikolova at the Parthenon, Acropolis of Athens, during the British School at Athens Summer School 2026.



The Parthenon Gallery at the Acropolis Museum, where the frieze, metope, and pediment sculptures are displayed in the positions they originally occupied on the temple.