

Job Description: Archives and Library Assistant

Background

The Linnean Society of London is the world's oldest active biological society. Founded in 1788, the Society takes its name from the Swedish naturalist, Carl Linnaeus (1707-1778) whose botanical, zoological and library collections have been in its keeping since 1829. As it moves into its third century the Society continues to play a central role in the documentation of the world's flora and fauna – as Linnaeus himself did – recognising the continuing importance of such work to biodiversity conservation.

The Society uniquely embraces the entire sweep of natural history. It promotes the study of all aspects of the biological sciences, with particular emphasis on evolution, taxonomy, biodiversity and sustainability. It encourages and communicates scientific advances through its three world-class journals, special publications and events, while reaching out to future biologists through schools and educational programmes.

Our Collections

The Linnean Society has in its care several important collections, including that of the Swedish botanist, Carl Linnaeus, and the Society's founder, Sir James Edward Smith.

Designated as of outstanding national importance by the Arts Council England, the collections of the Linnean Society, which include library, archive and biological material, create a world renowned centre of research for studies in natural history.

The Post

To allow our Collections Team to concentrate on a major development for our collections, we have a temporary position available for an Archives and Library Assistant. The post-holder will provide support to the Collections Team in facilitating access to our collections primarily through cataloguing work, but also through enquiries, assisting researchers in the reading room and taking part in outreach activities.

This post is suitable for an individual intending to apply for a postgraduate course in Archives and Records Management or in Library Science.

Key targets

- To catalogue the Linnean Society's bound correspondence from the 1880's onwards on to the archive catalogue, Calmin CALM)
- To OCR the paper box lists for the smaller correspondence collections, and transfer these to the archive catalogue, CALM
- To list journal holdings and add these to the Library catalogue (Heritage)
- The Assistant will also assist and gain experience in other areas of the Library and Archives, as follows:
 - Training in use of Heritage and cataloguing books Answering enquiries from Fellows staff and members of the public, and invigilating in the Reading Room
 - To assist with rehousing collections in line with best practice methods during the 2 weeks of planned closure in the library ; this will involve use of ladders, negotiating stairs, lifting boxes and getting dusty
 - To assist with public engagement, preparing exhibits and writing blogs, etc.
 - To gain an understanding of book handling/cleaning/repairs and general paper conservation with the Conservator

Person specification

Essential:

Skills/Aptitudes:

- Good IT skills, including accurate keyboard skills and familiarity with databases.
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills
- Ability and willingness to learn new software, new systems and new processes.

Experience and personal attributes:

- A first degree in a relevant subject
- An interest in studying for a post graduate qualification in Archive Management, Library Science or similar heritage sector qualification
- A genuine interest in history and in preserving records for posterity
- Excellent communication skills
- The ability to deal politely, confidently and efficiently with members of the public, with a commitment to providing a good service
- The ability to work under pressure and to meet deadlines
- The ability to organise own work and prioritise duties
- A high level of commitment to customer service and making materials accessible
- Good organisational ability to manage a wide range of tasks
- Excellent attention to detail and accuracy
- The ability to skim and understand an extensive and varied range of material
- Adaptability and a high degree of flexibility
- The ability to work unsupervised and as a member of a team
- The ability and willingness to use ladders and being prepared to work in a dusty environment

Desirable:

Knowledge/Experience:

- Previous experience of Calm ALM for archive work or Calm Records Management
- Experience of cataloguing archive and/or library material
- Experience of handling archival material and rare books

Terms of employment:

Salary: £ 18,000-20,000 per annum (pro rata)

Contract: This is a 6 month contract, but may be suitable on a part-time basis

Hours of duty: Normal hours of work are 35 hours per week, 9.30am-5.30pm Monday – Friday, with an hour's unpaid break for lunch

Annual leave: 25 days per annum (pro rata)

Location: Burlington House, Piccadilly, London, W1J 0BF