

JOB DESCRIPTION

Role/Title: Archivist

Reports to: Head of ROH Collections

Manages: Volunteers and work placements as required

Liaises with: All ROH departments, conservators and special suppliers

Overall Purpose of the Job:

This Archivist will participate in the full range of activities to ensure the preservation, management, and development of, and engagement with, the ROH Collections. They will join the ROH Collections team which comprises the Head of Collections and three Archivists.

They will develop a sound understanding of the Collections and use this knowledge to appraise and acquire new material to enhance the Collections. They will undertake activities to ensure the care and preservation of the collections stored at the Egham and Purfleet sites, and take responsibility for the archives and objects at Covent Garden. They will catalogue collections to agreed standards using the Adlib database and contribute to the development of the online catalogues. They will encourage access by developing and participating in public engagement activities, and by leading the information and reader services for internal and external users.

Key Responsibilities:

Acquisitions:

- Identify and appraise material offered to Collections in relation to the Acquisition and Disposal Policy.
- Manage the deposit, donation and purchase of archives from ROH departments and external sources. Including liaising with ROH staff, managing donor relationships and preparing legal documents.

Collections Management:

- Undertake the full range of activities to ensure the care, management and preservation of the collections stored at Covent Garden, Egham and Purfleet sites, including repacking collections and participating in preservation projects.
- Deliver day to day management of the Covent Garden store including managing relationships with Facilities staff, monitoring of environmental conditions, pest management, building maintenance and cleaning.
- Oversee the management and preservation of the collections held in the store in Covent Garden, including maintaining accurate location records and liaising with conservators.
- Maintain best practice and contribute to the development of Disaster Recovery plans for all sites with focus on the Covent Garden store.

- Maintain supplies of specialist preservation materials and equipment by monitoring and ordering stock to meet preservation requirements.
- Complete weekly condition checks of the collections on public display in the Grade I listed theatre. Monitor environmental conditions and assist the Head of Collections and Facilities teams with annual conservation work.

Cataloguing:

- Contribute to the ongoing development of the cataloguing structure and in-house cataloguing standards.
- Catalogue and digitize a full range of archives and objects as identified by the Head of Collections, to in-house standards and using Adlib.
- Lead on cataloguing and digitization of the collections housed at the Covent Garden store, including cataloguing of the Design and Playbill Collections.
- Assist in the maintenance and upgrade of Adlib, and develop online catalogues and digital resources.

Public Engagement:

- Participate in the full range of public engagement activities to promote awareness of and access to the Collections.
- Research and create content for the website, social media and intranet.
- Contribute to Collections, Learning & Participation, and ROH displays, publications, live events, talks and workshops, including national and international initiatives.

Information / Reader Services:

- Lead and co-ordinate the delivery of information and reader services for internal and external users in relation to the Access Policy.
- Research and answer enquiries, and assist and supervise researchers.
- Manage digitization requests, including dealing with copyright and licensing issues.

Relationships:

- Develop effective working relationships with ROH departments, contractors and stakeholders.
- Manage and direct the work of volunteers, casual staff and work placements as required, providing support and encouragement.

External Advocacy:

- Represent the ROH and the interests of Collections both within the organization and externally. Deputizing for the Head of Collections where necessary.
- Maintain knowledge of professional developments and initiatives. Attend conferences, training course and special interest groups.

Note: This Job Description reflects the current situation. It does not preclude change or development that might be required in the future.

PERSON SPECIFICATION:

Minimum Skills, Knowledge and Experience:

- A postgraduate qualification in Archives Administration/Management
- Considerable experience of working in archives, preferably special collections.
- Experience of appraising and acquiring new material to enhance collections.
- Experience of managing collections and storage areas, and identifying preservation and conservation needs.
- Experience of cataloguing collections to agreed standards and experience of cataloguing databases, ideally Adlib.
- Experience of delivering public engagement activities and digital resources to promote archives.
- Experience of providing reader services and assisting researchers.

Other Essential Skills, Knowledge and Experience:

- Outstanding written and verbal communication skills.
- Ability to deal effectively with a wide range of people including members of the public, volunteers and potential donors.
- Ability to work independently as well as in close collaboration as part of a team.
- Experience of supervising specialist and non-specialist staff, volunteers, maintenance and removal personnel.
- Ability to promote effective teamwork and harmonious working relationships at all levels.
- Knowledge and understanding of current issues facing the archive and heritage sector, including copyright and GDPR.
- Strong IT skills and experience of digitisation of archives.
- Excellent planning and time management skills, able to demonstrate drive and ability to prioritise and work to tight deadlines.
- Strong project management skills able to complete tasks with a high level of accuracy and attention to detail.
- Judgement and discretion to deal appropriately with confidential and sensitive information.

Desirable Knowledge/Skills and Experience:

- General knowledge of and interest in the history of opera and ballet, the Royal Opera House and its companies.

Job requirements:

- Ability to work at heights and lift heavy loads.
- Flexibility to work off-site and independently, with occasional evening and weekend work.