

## Digital Conference *National Libraries Now: International Perspectives on Library Curation*

Reference: 2021-EA-Con

<b>Supervisor (name &amp; role)</b>	Lucy Rowland (Curator, Oceania & Western-language Asian Published Collections post 1850)
<b>Department &amp; Site</b>	European & American Collections, London (St Pancras)
<b>Start date/Timeframe</b>	Full-time placement: July or August 2021 – October 2021 Part-time placement ( <b>preferred</b> ): June 2021 – end November 2021 The conference is planned for September 2021 and would ideally fall in the middle of the placement.
<b>Duration</b>	<b>3 months</b> (or part-time equivalent) For a part-time placement, the student would be required to spend a minimum of <b>2 days/week</b> on the project. A part-time placement should ideally take place over 6 months.
<b>Suitability for remote working</b>	This placement could be undertaken remotely.

### Context for placement

The British Library's curatorial team for the Americas develops and manages physical and digital collections from North America, Latin America, the Caribbean and Oceania published after 1850. This work is enhanced through research, collaboration and sharing of expertise with professional colleagues as key elements of curatorial practice and development.

This placement is designed to support National Libraries Now: International Perspectives on Library Curation, a digital conference developed by curators in the Americas Collections for curatorial professionals in national libraries across the globe. Participants will be able to discuss and interrogate curatorial practices and challenges and share developments in the field.

Bringing together an international audience of professionals in national libraries, this innovative conference will explore the state of national library curation now, interrogating the complex challenges we face in building and interpreting collections, and the practical approaches that are being taken to address them. Key questions will include: What does it mean to be a curator in a national library today? What new opportunities are there for international collaboration? The conference will be held online over two days in September 2021. We anticipate an attendance of over 100 delegates, with the conference structured by speaker panels, roundtables and practical workshops to ensure a range of opportunities for participation.

We are looking for a PhD student keen to help shape and support the content and aims of this conference, encourage international expertise sharing and develop legacy material. This will include an evaluation of the conference and preparation of a report, initiation of a professional network for national library curators, and assistance with the selection of papers prior to the publication of the conference proceedings.

### Expected tasks and outcomes

Indicative tasks before and during the conference include:

- Assisting the Conference Working Group with the development of a schedule and formats;
- Managing content on the digital conference platform, including discussion boards;
- Monitoring communications and discussions;
- Advising speakers and contributors, including providing technical guidance;
- Preparing and disseminating publicity materials and supporting social media activity;
- Assisting with delegate registration and queries;
- Encouraging professional networking, development of expertise and knowledge sharing.

Indicative tasks after the conference include:

- Establishing methodology and carrying out evaluation;
- Developing conference legacy material, including the evaluation report;
- Working towards the creation of an international network platform for library curators;
- Assisting with the selection process for the conference proceedings.

Key outcomes:

- A report evaluating the conference, based on anonymous delegate feedback, to include analysis and recommendations to help inform future British Library conferences and events;
- A framework for the development of a national library curatorial network, including recommendations for a suitable digital platform and continuity of contact with delegates.

### Training and development opportunities

All placement students are welcome to access the Library's offer of workshops, talks and training. For further details please refer to the Application Guidelines on the British Library website.

In addition, this placement project will offer the following:

- Training in key systems and areas such as data protection, an overview of the European and Americas department and introduction to key stakeholders.
- An opportunity to learn about the work of other relevant Library departments, such as the International Office, Digital Scholarship and Cultural Events.
- An opportunity to help shape key aspects of the overall conference approach, such as the programme and evaluation.
- Experience of developing a range of valuable transferable competencies in a major cultural heritage organisation, in particular in the areas of international knowledge exchange and collaborative working on digital platforms.
- An opportunity to present at the event, if desired and if the student's own research interests were very closely aligned with the conference themes.

### Required knowledge and skills

Please ensure that you are aware of the general expectations for all applicants, as detailed in the [Application Guidelines on the British Library website](#).

For this specific project, the following additional criteria apply:

- Experience of website management, e.g. WordPress or similar, and digital communication technologies (including video conferencing, discussion boards, and social media platforms).
- Although not essential, a strong research interest in the work of a national library (or similar cultural heritage institutions), its collections and core purposes would be desirable.

Application deadline: **5pm on Friday 18 December 2020**

Further information on eligibility, conditions and how to apply is available on the British Library website: <https://www.bl.uk/news/2020/october/phd-placement-adverts-2020>