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| **JOB TITLE** | Post-doctoral Researcher Level 2 | |
| **FACULTY & SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT** | School of Arts, Department of History of Art | |
| **REPORTS TO** | Prof Fiona Candlin | |
| **SUPERVISES** | Not applicable | |
| **POST REFERENCE** | *to be issued by HR* | |
| **GRADE** | Grade 7 | **DATE** April 2018 |

Birkbeck is a world-class institution, a vibrant centre of academic engagement and excellence and the UK’s leading provider of part-time, evening education for mature students.

There are nearly 19,000 students studying short courses, certificates, diplomas, first degrees, postgraduate taught and postgraduate research degrees. Birkbeck provides Londoners with the unique opportunity to fit study around their busy lives.

Founded in 1823 as the London Mechanics’ Institute, Birkbeck was incorporated in the University of London in 1920.

**The Research Project**

‘Mapping Museums’ is an ambitious interdisciplinary undertaking that combines expertise from the arts and humanities, computer science, and social sciences. Its aim is to document, map, and analyse the emergence, character, and development of the UK independent museums sector from 1960-2020.

It is well established that large numbers of new museums opened in the UK between 1970 and 1990. The vast majority of these new venues were independent, were founded by community and special interest groups, and individual collectors, and they differed from public-sector museums to such an extent that that they were judged to have 'revolutionized' the sector. Official estimate now place the number of independent museums at around 1200, but despite the extraordinary boom in their numbers very little is known about them. It has not been clear where they were located, when they opened, if and when they closed, the subjects they covered, the forms they took, and whether there were any correlations between those characteristics.

The Mapping Museums project has two phases. In the first phase of the research, we collated existing surveys and researched further museums to establish a dataset of all UK museums from 1960-2020. We designed a new classification system for subject matter, considered museum definitions in depth, and developed a web application that allows us to search and visualize the knowledge base according to factors including location, date of foundation, subject matter, size, type of museums, accreditation, and combinations of these attributes. In addition, we are integrating additional datasets, specifically census data, which will provide an insight into the socio-demographic context of UK museums.

In the second phase of the research, which we have just begun, we are using the web application to identify patterns in the emergence, development, and closure of independent museums. We will then seek to account for those trends (or anomalies) and characteristics via historical research on the broader context of museum development and through extensive interview based research principally with staff in museums.

The Mapping Museums research will have a number of outcomes: a web application that will be freely available in open source format; a project website; conference papers; a series of interdisciplinary articles; monograph; and publications in professional journals. Data, interview recordings and transcripts, and ephemera will be deposited in the Micromuseums Archive at Bishopsgate Institute.

The project is funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council. It is led by Fiona Candlin, Professor of Museology (Principal Investigator), and by Alex Poulovassillis, Professor of Computer Science (Co-investigator). More information is available online at <http://blogs.bbk.ac.uk/mapping-museums/>

**PURPOSE OF THE JOB**

To contribute to the development of the Mapping Museums research; specifically to take responsibility for the interview-based component of the project, to conduct and write up interviews, and to work collaboratively in writing for publication.

We anticipate that the interviews will be semi-structured, organized according to location, date of foundation, subject matter, and closure of museums, and will be held at approximately forty venues across the UK. They are intended to provide a highly textured, localised account of the factors underpinning the emergence, character, and development of independent museums.

**Main Duties of the Jobholder**

Research and Scholarship

* To develop the Mapping Museums research objectives with the assistance of a mentor if required. This will include:

Assisting with the selection of research themes

Selecting museums where interview-based research will take place

Organising interviews

Transcribing and analysing interviews

* To contribute to the collaborative process of developing research and to write up research for publication. This may include:

Writing reports on work in progress

Contributing to collaborative publications

Leading on an article for a peer reviewed journal

Writing blogs for the project website.

* To update knowledge and understanding within the subject area
* To translate knowledge of advances in the subject area into research activity.
* To ensure that research content and the methods used are in accordance with equal opportunities.

Communication

* To deal with routine communication using a range of media.
* To communicate complex information, and material of a specialist nature orally, in writing, and electronically.
* To prepare proposals and applications to external bodies, for example, for funding and contractual purposes.
* To communicate research aims, activity, and outputs to a non-academic audience.

**Working Relationships and Contacts**

People Management and Teamwork

* To manage own research, administrative and organisational activities, with guidance if required.
* To work closely with colleagues on the Mapping Museums project
* To collaborate with other academic colleagues on areas of shared research interest where required
* To attend and actively contribute to regular meetings.

Liaison and Networking

* To liaise with academic colleagues, with staff at the Bishopsgate Institute Archive, and with staff and volunteers in museums and museum services.
* To build internal contacts, and participate in internal networks for the exchange of information and to develop new knowledge.
* To join or participate in external networks to share information and identify potential sources of funding or collaborative activity.

**Dimensions**

Problem Solving and Impact

* To use new research techniques and methods.
* To use own initiative and creativity to identify areas for research, develop new research methods, and extend the research portfolio.
* To use creativity to analyse and interpret research data, and to draw conclusions on the outcomes.
* To contribute to collaborative decision making with colleagues on the Mapping Museums research.
* To understand equal opportunity issues as they may impact on areas of research content and methods.

Resource Management

* Plan and manage own research activity in collaboration with others.
* Make travel and accommodation arrangements, and handle finances accordingly.
* To use research resources as appropriate.

Working Environment

* To balance, with help the competing pressures of research and administrative demands and deadlines.
* To carry out tasks that require the learning of certain skills.
* To engage in continuous professional development.
* To be aware of the risks in the work environment and their potential impact on their own work and that of others.

**General Responsibilities**

These are standard to all Birkbeck Job Descriptions

* To adhere to the College’s Equal Opportunities policy in all activities, and to actively promote equality of opportunity wherever possible.
* To be responsible for your own health and safety and that of your colleagues, in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974) and relevant EC directives.
* To work in accordance with the Data Protection Act and to ensure that all new systems are reported to your Data Protection Controller.
* To undertake such other duties as may be reasonably expected.
* To provide a healthy and comfortable working environment, smoking is prohibited throughout the College, except in specially designated areas.

**PERSON SPECIFICATION**

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| **Job Title:** Post-doctoral researcher Level 2 | **Post No:** | **Faculty and Dept/School:** School of Arts/Department of history of Art |

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| **Attributes** | **Essential** | **Desirable** | **Method of Assessment** |
| **Knowledge** | * Possess sufficient breadth or depth of specialist knowledge in museology or a related discipline, and of research methods and techniques to work within the established research programmes. | * Knowledge of museum history and/or grass roots or DIY culture. | *Interview*  *Application*  *Test*  *Presentation* |
| **Technical/Work-based Skills** | * Highly developed skills in semi-structured interview based research * Excellent oral and written communication skills, the ability to clearly and concisely write up complex research findings and to discuss with colleagues and non-academic stakeholders. * Ability to critically reflect upon and analyse research in progress. * Driving licence * Computer proficiency in standard packages (e.g. word processing, spreadsheets, e-mail and internet use) | * Interest in / knowledge of data analysis. * Skills in audio-editing. * Willingness and ability to use social media. |  |
| **General Skills/Attributes** | * Willingness to travel extensively within the UK * Initiative and creativity to ensure research is effective. * Effective presentation skills. * Excellent organisation and administration skills. * Good interpersonal skills, including the ability to collaborate with others within the team. * Good telephone manner * Self-motivated and trustworthy. * Ability to manage a budget. * Commitment to working with diversity. |  |  |
| **Experience** | * Experience of interview based research and the associated methods and techniques * Previous experience of contributing to research | * Experience of data analysis. |  |
| **Qualifications** | * PhD (or equivalent) in a relevant subject area e.g. Anthropology, Cultural or Oral History, Museology. |  |  |

**FURTHER PARTICULARS & INFORMATION ON THE POST**

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| **Salary:** | £37, 169 - £42,483 which is Grade 7 spine point 31-38 of the College's London Pay Scale. The salary quoted is on the College's London Pay Scale, which includes a consolidated Weighting/Allowance. |
| **Probation:** | The appointment may be subject to a probationary period of 3 months. |
| **Duration of post:** | Fixed term contract for 12 months |
| **Hours:** | 35 hours per week (1.0 FTE) |
| **Annual leave entitlement:** | 25 days per year pro rata, plus an additional six days when the College is closed during the spring and winter breaks. This is in addition to the eight bank holidays. |
| **Superannuation:** | The post is superannuable under the SAUL Scheme (Superannuation Arrangements for the University of London). This is a defined benefits scheme, and is often substantially more beneficial to the employee than a "money-purchase" scheme. |
| **Closing date:** | Midnight on May 25th 2018 |
| **Interview date:** | Monday June 25th 2018 |
| **Start date:** | October 1 2018 or as close as possible. |

**Informal enquiries can be made to:**

Fiona Candlin, Professor of Museology, History of Art department, Birkbeck: f.candlin@bbk.ac.uk