

Archival Processing Internship

About the Archives

The Archives at NCBS (<https://archives.ncbs.res.in/>) is a public centre for the history of science in contemporary India. We have over 350,000 processed objects across 50+ collections (<https://catalogue.archives.ncbs.res.in/repositories/resources>) that are in various forms, ranging from paper-based manuscripts to negatives to photographs, books, fine art, audio recordings, scientific equipment, letters, manuscripts, field and lab notes.

The 2000-square-foot state-of-the-art physical centre at NCBS includes space for research, processing, exhibitions, recording, and a leading-edge storage facility with monitors for temperature, light, humidity, air quality, water, fire, pests, and noise. All archival processing is done at a processing lab called Lab18 at NCBS. The Archives has one underlying philosophy—of enabling diverse stories—and operates on four broad verticals – research, collection, public engagement and education.

The Internship programme comes under our education vertical, where we hope to build capacity and public awareness through education, training and programming, from high school to professional practice. Much of the work of the Archives at NCBS is supported by TNQ Technologies and Arcadia.

About the Internship Programme

Archives at NCBS offers long-term (12 week) and short-term (8 week) internships on a rolling basis throughout the year to undergraduate and graduate students from both local and international schools. An open call is made every March. Interns at the Archives receive a small stipend, we expect interns to work on weekdays (between 10 am to 5 pm) at the Archives, National Centre for Biological Sciences, Bangalore. No campus housing is available for this internship, though interns can avail subsidised meals and transportation facilities provided by NCBS.

Job Description

We collect, preserve and make available online endangered archival records related to the contemporary (~200 years) history of science in India. These records are in the form of primarily resources - boxes of numerous dusty folders containing paper documents such as administrative records, annotated manuscripts, maps, architectural drawings, lab notes, photographs, negatives, slides, oral histories and other audio/visual material. You will be spending your time at the Archives going through such material, trying to make sense of it and working with our team to appraise, arrange, classify and describe archival records.

Eligibility and requirements

Though there are no specific requirements, it will be useful if you have training or have an interest in history, library and archival sciences, law, museum studies, design or archives. Science backgrounds help (including being enrolled in science degree programmes). Interns should be competent with most things digital (spreadsheets, word processing, database entry, web navigation, ability to figure out scanning and archiving cataloguing needs). They should have good organization and communication skills. Commitment to time, an eye for detail and an ability to self-direct after initial training is critical. Also essential is an ability to maintain confidentiality of sensitive documents. A sense of humour and being resourceful helps. Depending on the nature of the task, interns should expect to work both alone and as part of a larger team in hot, humid and dusty work environments at times.

You will be working with the archiving team in the following activities:

Archival Appraisal, Arrangement and Description

- Sorting and classifying material to go either into the archive, the library, or to be recycled or disposed of – applying archival judgment along with the team.
- figuring out an initial classification and organization structure for archival material.
- creating initial metadata descriptions for the archival collection.
- cataloguing the archival material by giving it accession numbers, folder-identifiers, classifying and grouping items as per archival classification scheme and creating relevant metadata and determining access status. All our archival collections are on our open source archives database management system on ArchivesSpace.
- labelling the boxes and folders with appropriate classification scheme.
- writing extensive finding aids for the archival records.

Archival Preservation and Conservation

- cleaning material under the guidance of the archiving team.
- removing any metal fasteners like staplers, paper clips etc.
- picking out archival records that need further preservation/conservation.
- binning the physical material into archive-grade sleeves, folders and boxes, with appropriate interleaving acid-free paper where necessary (such as in old photographs).

Archival Theory and Practices

- get acquainted with the basics of archival theory.
- present to the archives team papers on archiving and oral history.
- conduct secondary research.
- participate in reading groups in which they can discuss what they are working on and broach issues they have encountered or ideas they have had.
- visit local archives, libraries or museums in Bangalore.
- at the end of the programme, interns will make a brief presentation on their work to the archives team.

Working in a public archive

- assist the archives team in organising public events and exhibitions.
- manage tours and visitors.

Application Process

Please send the following materials to archives-edu@ncbs.res.in

- A statement detailing your interest in archival work; what you aim to achieve from your time spent at the Archives; and why you are interested in working with us.
- A CV.

The Archives team will review your application and shortlisted candidates will be asked to fill out a questionnaire. Based on your response, you will be asked to attend a 30 minute interview. We usually also ask for references. All Applicants will be informed about the outcome of their application.

For questions regarding the internship programme, please contact:

archives-edu@ncbs.res.in , archives@ncbs.res.in

Contact person : Anjali JR (anjalir@ncbs.res.in)