

Archives at NCBS  
Tata Institute for Fundamental Research  
GKVK Campus, Bellary Road, Bangalore – 560065. India.

### Archiving Internship Call 2023

**When:** Anytime between February 2023-December 2023

**Duration:** 8 weeks

**Where:** In-person at NCBS in Bangalore

**Compensation:** Rs 10,000-15,000 per month

**Contact:** Anjali J R, Archives at NCBS. [archives@ncbs.res.in](mailto:archives@ncbs.res.in)

February 2023

#### Disclaimer

Please keep in mind that this **IS NOT** an internship in biology or any of the sciences. And this is not an entry point into scientific research at NCBS.

#### Archive Description:

The Archives at NCBS (<https://archives.ncbs.res.in/>) is a public collecting centre for the history of science in contemporary India. Over 150,000 processed objects across 24 collections are in various forms, ranging from paper-based manuscripts to negatives to photographs, books, fine art, audio recordings, scientific equipment, letters, and 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. In addition to the collections visible on the website such as the Ravi Sankaran Papers and Obaid Siddiqi Papers, we hold other valuable material like the papers of TSG Sastry, a physicist who worked on the Thumba rocket programme, Leslie Coleman, an early 20th century agricultural scientist in Mysore state, and the renowned agricultural scientist, MS Swaminathan. We are also leading efforts in developing legal and ethical standards, and digital annotation tools for archival material. A full range of activities undertaken by the archives is in the annual report, <https://www.ncbs.res.in/annual-report>.

The Archives has one underlying philosophy—of enabling diverse stories—and operates on four broad verticals. One is to strengthen research collections and access in the history of science in contemporary India. The second is to push the frontiers of research in archival sciences in India, forging intersections with scholarship in law, ethics, information theory and the semantic web, for instance. The third is to collaborate with a variety of individuals in rethinking archives as vibrant public spaces, as sites of education and critical inquiry. And the fourth is to reimagine the archives as part of the commons through vibrant public engagement.

The Archives at NCBS is also a founding member of Milli, a collective of individuals and communities dedicated to the nurturing of archives, and to help the public find, describe and share archival material and stories (<https://www.milli.link>). A longer abstract of the core of this work is available here: <http://oralhistory.columbia.edu/calendar/People/mar-20-thirteen-ways-of-looking-atinstitutional-history>.

## **Internship Description:**

We intend to collect, preserve and make available online, endangered cultural artefacts related to the contemporary (~200 years) history of science in India. These records are primarily research material - administrative records, annotated manuscripts, maps, architectural drawings, lab notes, photographs, negatives, slides, oral histories and other audio/visual material.

You will be part of a team who will be surveying, arranging, describing and performing basic preserving activities on recorded material.

Here are some of the things that you will be involved in with our archiving team:

### **(A) Archival Arrangement and Description**

- a. sorting material to go either into the archive, the library, or to be recycled or disposed of - applying archival judgment along with the team.
- b. building an initial classification and organization structure for the Archives.
- c. building an initial metadata glossary for the Archives.
- d. digitizing the archival records.
- e. cataloguing the archival material with accession numbers, classification hierarchy and relevant metadata. This will be on an open source archives database management system, likely on ArchivesSpace or AtoM. This is a critical task, which lays the foundation for the digital platform, which will be embedded into an interconnected digital archive later.
- f. labelling the boxes and folders with appropriate classification hierarchy.
- g. writing extensive finding aids for the archival records.

### **(B) Archival Preservation and Conservation**

- a. cleaning material under the guidance of the archiving team.
- b. picking out archival records that need further preservation/conservation.
- c. binning the physical material into archive-grade sleeves, folders and boxes, with appropriate interleaving acid-free paper where necessary (such as in old photographs).
- d. working with a conservator for preservation/conservation tasks

## **Eligibility:**

The task of setting up a new physical and digital archive is an opportunity to think about the links between journalism, storytelling using archival material, web annotations, scientific research, IT law and classification of information.

If you are interested and think you'd be a good fit, you should apply. It will be great (not necessary) to have candidates with a degree or be enrolled in a degree-programmes in history, library 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 (English/Hindi/Kannada). 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.

**Interested? Let us know: [archives@ncbs.res.in](mailto:archives@ncbs.res.in)**