Archivist

Reporting to: Head of Community & Impact
Liaison with: All members of staff, some stakeholders, Members
Contract period: 3 days each week, flexible working is possible.
Usual working hours: 9.30am – 5.30pm
Location: The normal place of work is South Kensington, Royal Geographical Society, London
Salary: £28,000 – £30,000 pro rata

Introduction
British Exploring Society is a world class youth development charity with a unique heritage, founded on the belief that challenging experiences can define lives, empowering and equipping young people with the courage, integrity, skills, resilience and motivation to make the most of their future.

We prepare young people for expeditions to remote locations where they face challenges, acquire outdoor skills and learn about themselves - as well as undertaking projects with content relevant to their lives and to the fragile environments that they explore. The results are transformative – not just in terms of practical skills and resilience, but in a new-found confidence and self-belief which they carry forward to their future life. More than this, through their adventure together, our young people forge friendships for life and become part of a unique supportive and continuing community of Explorers with shared experiences, values and perspectives on the world. These are our Members.

Moving forward with our Archive
The archive sits at the heart of our mission to deliver education through exploration and is central to everything we are and do. It contains our surviving records since 1932. We now wish to leverage our archive as a safe space in which young people can explore the past as a step on the way towards taking part in an expedition, as a place where they can learn new skills, meet people from wide-ranging backgrounds, and actively contribute to the changing narrative of wilderness adventure.

Our archive contains letters, journals, films, photographs, documents, and occasional objects providing the evidence and memory of the organisation itself and of our activities out in the world. It is not static. It is a living archive with a historic section, which contains the ever-expanding records of its annual programmes with young people. New material is generated all the time by expedition planners, leaders and Young Explorers who bear witness to the changing world around them through the records they keep in the form of journals, films, photographs, collected samples, poems, drawings, and sound recordings.

We have made a strategic commitment to encourage all young people who connect with us to get involved in our archives as a learning opportunity. We want our archive space and
collections to be constantly renewed and to become embedded in the core work of the charity for the future.

Central to realising this vision is the crucial role of Archivist.

Equal Opportunities
British Exploring Society is committed to equal opportunity and to building an executive and volunteer team that together represent a diverse variety of backgrounds, skills and perspectives on the world. The more inclusive we are, the better we think we will be at delivering our charitable aims.

The role – learning through exploration of our archive
We need an enthusiastic individual to join our team to help shape and lead this vision. We intend to put in place an Archive Steering Group of professionals to support this person.

We wish our Archivist to;
• provide professional oversight of our current and historic archive records
• lead and implement the process of developing the archive to ensure it is fit for purpose to meet our strategic aims
• build a network of partners from the Galleries, Library, Archive and Museums (GLAM) sector - particularly in areas of economic vulnerability and disadvantage - to support our learning outcomes for the archive
• support our plans to position the archive in a designated physical space at the core of the charity’s work.

More about the role

Archive
• Evaluate existing archives for preservation and retention
• Create appropriate management records for the control of the archives and acquisitions
• Devise a numbering system and catalogue the collections to ISAD(G) standard
• Advise, support and encourage fellow team members access, use and interpret the archive to support agreed organisational aims
• Engage an independent Collections Care specialist to develop a Collections Care policy, Disaster Plan and to help identify, quantify, and cost housing and storage detail.

Promotion of the archive
• Work closely with other team members to create and deliver projects/activities that contribute towards agreed archive goals and support positive outcomes for young people. This will include an audience development plan to encourage the
exploration of the archive with/by young people
- Make the archive accessible to a wide range of users through Modes or another suitable platform
- Promote our archive as a space for learning externally, including through partnerships with GLAM

Data and Data Protection
- Work to GDPR guidelines, manage and maintain data stored in the archive, ensure up to date GDPR compliance in relation to archive data.
- Advise other executive team members and Council on legal matters in relation to GDPR and good practice in relation to the archive.

Finance
- Manage and account for any budget allocated to the archive
- Support funding proposals for the archive by providing information needed

Performance
Agree and track performance against key performance indicators with the Head of Community which will include:

- Accessibility of the archive
- Levels and range of engagement with the archive
- Success of projects, partnerships and activities that contribute towards the archive
- Progress towards any accreditation agreed with the Head of Community and/or Council

General
- Contribute to any updating of policies and procedures as required, leading on archive policies.

Experience / Skills
- A post-graduate qualification, or equivalent, in archive studies
- Ideally between 3 to 5 years’ experience of working as an archivist, ideally in more than one setting
- Experience of and competency in the curation of archive resources to promote genuine accessibility and the sharing of knowledge and ideas
- Demonstrable ability to design a user-friendly catalogue structure
- Excellent communication skills in order to relate to, and encourage, a range of users
- An understanding of research skills in order to help users access materials
- Experience of change in the workplace, including responding to changing needs and digital media
- Good IT skills and a knowledge of how digital technology is used for archives
- Knowledge of data protection and freedom of information legislation
Behaviours

- Ability to self-manage, self-motivate, and manage workload independently
- Ability to communicate with and actively engage people from diverse backgrounds using appropriate language and media
- Our core values are courage, challenge, community, and self-belief. You will thrive in a climate of challenge, feedback, and opportunity.
- Ability and willingness to work outside office hours as required.

Qualifications
MA in archive studies or equivalent

Further Supporting Information

Working Practices
Normal working hours are Monday – Friday 09:30 – 17:30.

Full-time staff are entitled to 23 days’ paid holiday per holiday year in addition to normal English Bank and Public holidays.

This role is dependent on satisfactory receipt of an enhanced DBS check.

How to apply

To apply for the role, please complete the Application Form which asks you to answer three competency-based questions and submit your CV and contact details. We utilise an anonymous shortlisting process, which means that no personal data will be visible on the shortlisting panel. Please ensure the answers to the competency-based questions are in detail and have no identifiable information.

The shortlisting panel will review answers to the competency-based questions and shortlisted candidates will be invited for interview. The shortlisting panel will only then be given access to your CV to support your application.

The closing date and time for application is **midday on Monday, 25th April 2022**

Interviews will commence the week beginning 2nd May and will either take place at our office in South Kensington or digitally via Zoom.

In the interview, we will be asking you to evidence the skills and competencies listed in the above job description. We will also invite candidates to complete a short task.

The start date will be as soon as possible for the right candidate.

If you are not invited for interview, we will contact you via email to let you know by 13th May 2022. Unfortunately, we will not be able to offer feedback to any candidates not shortlisted.

Thank you for your interest in this role and British Exploring Society.