



Collections Department – Library Placement

Summer 2018

The Royal Academy of Arts is one of the UK's leading arts institutions, dedicated to making, exhibiting and debating art.

Burlington House, an ornate seventeenth century mansion in the middle of bustling modern-day Mayfair, has been our home since 1867. In 2000 we purchased nearby Burlington Gardens and have exciting plans to link these two buildings by our 250th anniversary year in 2018 – our Masterplan.

The Masterplan, which is supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund, will run from 2015 – 2018. During this time we will be running a series of activities designed to encourage even more people to learn about and engage with the history of the Royal Academy, including its buildings and Collection.

The Collection, Library and Archives of the Royal Academy are of international importance holding significant resources about the history of the institution and the development of British art since 1760. The RA has been acquiring works for its Collection since its foundation in 1768 and now comprises of over 900 paintings, 1200 sculptures, 30,000 works on paper, as well as smaller collections of artist's materials, furniture, and other ephemera. The Collection includes paintings by famous past members such as John Constable, Thomas Gainsborough and J.M.W. Turner as well as contemporary works by recently elected Academicians such as Grayson Perry, Yinka Shonibare, and Cornelia Parker. The RA Library is the oldest institutional fine arts library in the United Kingdom. It has built up significant collections of books and other material relating to British art and the history of the Royal Academy, its Members, Schools, exhibitions and collections since the mid-18th century as well as historic rare books and illustrated books.

The Role

This summer, we are offering a placement in the Royal Academy's library, as part of an ambitious Heritage Lottery-Funded programme to raise public engagement and bolster the number of visitors to the library.

The placement will consist of the following responsibilities:

- Assisting with an audit of illustrated book collection
- Researching areas of the historic book collection
- Creating basic inventory and catalogue records in MARC 21 bibliographic format
- Using the database to update locations and enter additional information

There may be opportunities to work with other members of RA staff and assist with other tasks as they arise on an ad-hoc basis. The descriptions above are not exhaustive and are intended to give an overview of the type of work experience on offer.

What is the time commitment?

- The placement is two weeks in length and will take place from Monday 30th July until Friday 10th August 2018.
- Working hours are normally 9:30-5:30 with an hour for lunch.

What will this volunteer opportunity offer you?

- Practical, hands-on experience working in the Royal Academy library
- Guidance on safe handling of early printed books
- Experience in searching, editing and creating bibliographic records in an integrated, MARC21 Library Management system
- An overview of the roles and responsibilities within a specialist art historical research library
- Access to experienced Library and Collections staff and other heritage professionals, and an insight into their work and career paths
- An opportunity to play an active role in research, documentation, and other key areas of collections management
- Develop transferable skills to support your own learning and career development
- Free entry to RA exhibitions whilst on your placement

Interview and training requirements

In order to be taken on for this role you will need to be available to attend an informal interview at the RA on Wednesday 25th July.

What are we looking for?

- Undergraduate students studying Library and Information Studies, Archives & Records Management, Digital Curation/Humanities or similar, who may be interested in developing a career in the arts, museums or heritage sector.
- Good research and IT skills and a high level of attention to detail.
- Good writing skills

- Curiosity and enthusiasm for the RA Library and Collection.
- A good team player with strong interpersonal skills. Will work alongside and take direction from Collections staff but also happy to work independently.
- A willingness to learn and develop new skills.

Please note:

The placements will be based in the Library, Print Room, and Collections Office at Burlington House, Piccadilly, although there may also be opportunities to visit other RA locations.

The placements are unpaid but travel expenses will be reimbursed for this role at a maximum of £12 per day. Proof of travel is required.

How to Apply?

Please complete the attached Expression of Interest form and email to volunteering@royalacademy.org.uk by Sunday 15th July 2018.

You can find more information about the RA Collection and Masterplan project here:

<https://www.royalacademy.org.uk/collections-and-research>

<http://www.royalacademy.org.uk/buildings>