Warner Textile Archive

Role Description

Volunteer Collections Assistant (Cataloguing)

Project Overview

This role will offer the opportunity to become part of the volunteer team at the Warner Textile Archive to gain practical experience in collections management. Volunteers will be responsible for assessing hand-painted paper artworks depicting patterns that were translated into printed or woven textiles by Warner & Sons during the period of c.1870s-2000s. The project involves evaluating existing data regarding specific items and cataloguing these pieces, alongside photographic digitisation, and making inert conservation polyester enclosures to protect the designs. This opportunity is suitable for volunteers as well as students looking to complete placements or work experience as part of their studies.

Role Description

- Catalogue at item level, following data input policies, on collections management system CollectionsIndex+ paper designs held within the collection to support improved access. Improve catalogue records to internal and international standards for the paper designs, including creating descriptions, checking locations, adding keywords and manufacturing numbers, as well as information on weave structure and design where possible, materials, colour. Record details on object condition where necessary.
- Cross check information on Collections Index + with index cards to include all relevant historic information.
- Take photographs of catalogued items and name image files within our policy structure. Upload to Collections Index+ records.
- Using our conservation polyester welding machine, create bespoke sized enclosures for designs to repack to conservation standards.
- There is an opportunity to create a short article and related social media content about your experience of working with the collection.

Further Information

Full training and support will be given on all aspects of the role. No previous experience necessary.

We are able to facilitate a flexible work schedule based on the individual's existing responsibilities. For a student placement, we require a minimum of 10 days to provide meaningful work experience.

Some online training on cataloguing, the history of Warner & Sons, and collections care will be required prior to the volunteer's start date.

The role is not remote and will require travel to Warner Textile Archive, Silks Way, Braintree, Essex, CM7 3GB. We have a travel bursary of up to £50 per day which is able to offer support with travel costs and £5 per day for subsistence.

Computer facilities will be provided on-site.

If you have any questions, please contact the Warner Textile Archive Team. To apply, please email your current CV and a covering letter to volunteer@bdmt.org.uk

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About the Warner Textile Archive

The Warner Textile Archive is a significant collection of design, business, economic and social history of textile manufacturing firm Warner & Sons, based in Braintree between the dates of 1870 – 2001. The Warner Textile Archive is the largest collection of an individual textile manufacturer available in the public domain in the United Kingdom. We hold over 100,000 administrative records, paper designs, trial samples, manufacturing equipment and textiles of Warner & Sons, their predecessors and successors, illustrating how furnishing textile manufacturing changed over more than 150 years.

Essential Skills and Knowledge Required

- Excellent Microsoft Office software skills and general computer literacy, with the enthusiasm to learn new systems.
- Must be dedicated to working to a meticulous attention to detail in regards to accurate data inputting, spelling and grammar.
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills, with the willingness to work with a dedicated team of staff and volunteers of different ages and backgrounds.
- Must be able to follow clear instructions and ask questions when unsure.
- This position requires moving and lifting large items.