

Job description

Archivist

- Grade: SO1
- Reports to: Head of Heritage
- Direct reports: Assistant Archivist
- Your team: Islington Archives
- Service area: Heritage Service
- Directorate: Community Wealth Building

Special requirements of the post

Workstyle: Frontline. The post holder will be based at Islington Archives, 245 St John Street, EC1V 4NB

This post requires a DBS check at the appropriate level (Standard)

Our mission

Islington is a place rich with diversity and culture. As a council our sense of purpose couldn't be clearer: we serve. It's in the logo. We are committed to challenging inequality in the borough and as one of the largest employers we know that to look after the place and the planet, we have to look after our people. **Together we can change the future.**

To do this, everyone who works at Islington Council lives by a set of values which guide us in everything that we do: collaborative, ambitious, resourceful, and empowering. They spell out 'CARE', which is what we think public service is all about.

Overview of the role

Islington Archives is based in the Finsbury Library complex, in the south of Islington on St John Street. It sits within the Heritage Service which is responsible for Islington Museum, Archives, several historic sites including the Clerks' Well, and borough wide projects.

As well as the historic Council archives and a large image collection, the Local History Centre has several special collections including: Joe Orton & Kenneth Halliwell collection, Walter Sicker

archive, LGBTQ+ archive (a new collection of 4,000+ items collected as part of the NLHF-funded Islington's Pride project) and the Sadler's Wells Theatre archive. We also hold several personal collections from politicians connected with the borough.

Islington is well known for its radical social and political heritage, which includes the 1381 Peasants' Revolt and the building of Finsbury Health Centre, a pioneering free, community health centre, created a decade before the NHS. We use this heritage to help improve residents' lives and life choices. Every resident has a right to connect meaningfully with Islington's story and to access the myriad tangible benefits granted by cultural enrichment. Heritage provides an extraordinary opportunity to build community wellbeing, create a shared but diverse local identity, and to promote lifelong learning for all.

The main role of the Archivist is to maintain and develop the archive collections and to use them for the benefit of our residents. You will do this by:

- Managing Islington Archives
 - Manage and improve the day-to-day visitor service, experience, and the reading room
 - Care for and grow the collections via community-based projects
 - Supporting the development of the Assistant Archivist
- Delivering the public engagement programme
 - Work with the Learning and Engagement Managers to devise and deliver the learning programme
 - Devise and develop special projects for target audiences
 - Work with the Museum team on public exhibitions and associated programmes
- Developing the Islington Archives
 - Investigate potential TNA Archive Service Accreditation—including developing and delivering our digital preservation strategy
 - Input into the care and development of the Clerks' Well
 - Collaborate with cultural organisations in Islington to deliver partnerships

Key working relationships will be with the Curator and the Learning and Engagement Managers. The post holder will work closely with other members of the Heritage Team, including the Heritage Project Managers.

Key responsibilities

- Manage and develop the enquiry service/search room in Islington Archives
- Manage volunteers, their development and input into the Archives
- Be responsible for the development of the archive and local history collections, including identifying gaps in the current collections and developing appropriate methods to fill these gaps
- Be responsible for the online Adlib collections management system, including prioritising collections to catalogue and the digitisation of specific collections
- Partner with colleagues on the transfer of Council material into the Archives

- Develop and maintain internal partnerships that will help to achieve the Archive's vision and objectives, including colleagues in Planning, children's services and Children's Centres etc
- Work with appropriate colleagues to plan, promote and deliver a public programme with specific reference to demystifying archives aimed at our target audiences
- Collaborate with Council colleagues, external partners and community groups to co-produce community projects to reflect local needs and priorities
- Keep up to date with current archive sector priorities locally and nationally and take responsibility for own personal development and professional awareness
- Ensure the requirements of Health and Safety legislation and the Council's relevant policies are carried out in relation to the responsibilities of the job
- At all times carry out responsibilities and duties with due regard to the Council's Dignity for All Policy and the Data Protection Act and other legislation
- Ensure all services within the area(s) of responsibility are provided in accordance with the Council's commitment to high quality service provision to users
- Achieve agreed service outcomes and outputs, and personal appraisal targets, as agreed by the line manager
- Work in a corporate, co-operative and collaborative way with other Council officers

Compliance

Ensure legal, regulatory and policy compliance under GDPR, Health and Safety and in area of your specialism identifying opportunities and risks and escalating where appropriate.

Person specification

You should demonstrate on your application form how you meet the essential criteria. Please ensure that you address each of the criteria as this will be assessed to determine your suitability for the post.

Criteria

Essential: the basic requirements that must be met for someone to be considered for a particular job. These criteria are mandatory and cannot be negotiated. Essential criteria directly impact the core qualifications or skills necessary to perform the job effectively.

Desirable: the additional qualities, skills, or qualifications that would be advantageous for a candidate to possess but are not mandatory. Not meeting them does not automatically disqualify someone from consideration for the job. This also allows candidates who do not possess certain desirable criteria the opportunity to explain how their other knowledge, experience and skills relate to these and what they may be in the process of doing or willing to do to achieve these.

Knowledge, experience, and skills

Point	Criteria description	Essential/desirable
1	Recognised professional qualification in archives	Essential
2	Experience of working in a archive or similar cultural environment	Essential
3	Substantial experience of working with the public and researching information	Essential
4	Experience of managing and developing staff and volunteers	Essential
5	Knowledge of, and commitment to, the educational and wellbeing role of archives, and the awareness of current thinking around this	Essential
6	Experience of using archives to design and deliver learning programmes that meet the identified needs of a target audience, such as families, schools, people facing discrimination or social exclusion	Essential
7	Experience of collaborating and co-producing learning initiatives with partner organisations and targeted groups to produce new, innovative learning initiatives	Essential

Point	Criteria description	Essential/desirable
8	Creative flair in using archives to develop successful public engagement programmes and interpretation interventions, supported by robust monitoring and evaluation strands	Essential
9	Extensive research skills with the ability to evaluate and disseminate primary resources through appropriate channels	Essential
10	Ability to manage effective partnerships with a range of partners and to communicate complex issues to a broad range of audiences	Essential
11	Self-motivation and ability to work independently in all aspects of the role and to develop practical and realistic responses to problem solving	Essential
12	Social media skills to promote the service and engage new audiences	Essential
13	Able to work one weekend a month and occasional evenings where necessary to meet the requirements of the service	Essential
14	Demonstrable, archive-based project management experience	Desirable
15	Experience with digital preservation strategy and rollout	Desirable

Our accreditations



Our accreditations include: The Mayor's Good Work Standard, Disability Confident Employer, London Living Wage Employer, Stonewall Diversity Champion, and Employer with Heart.