LILAC Partner Internship | Smithsonian National Anthropological Archives
(National Museum of Natural History)

2019 Summer Internship in Archival Curatorship and Outreach

APPLICATION DEADLINE: Monday, April 1, 11:59PM ET

This is a LILAC Partner Internship in collaboration with the Museum Studies Program at BMC. The selected students will participate in the LILAC Summer Funding Program.

Please apply by submitting a (1) resume and cover letter through this Handshake listing, and (2) completing the LILAC Partner Internship Application form.

Application Deadline: Monday, April 1, at 11:59pm ET

Name of Smithsonian Staff Supervisor(s): Diana Marsh & Joshua Bell
Title of Smithsonian Staff Supervisor(s): Postdoctoral Fellow; Curator of Globalization
Phone Number: 301-238-1190 Email Address: marshd@si.edu; bellja@si.edu
Museum/Institute/Office: National Museum of Natural History (NMNH)
Department/Division/Office: National Anthropological Archives, Department of Anthropology

Students with questions can contact Professor Monique Scott, Director of Museum Studies Program at BMC, at mrscott@brynmawr.edu

PROJECT INFORMATION
Internship in Archival Curatorship and Outreach

Project Description
We seek two interns to work alongside curators and archivists at the Smithsonian’s National Anthropological Archives (NAA), located in the National Museum of Natural History (NMNH). The intern will work to improve access to the NAA and Human Studies Film Archives collections by assisting with an exhibition and a number of related initiatives to increase the archives’ visibility. We seek an intern whose interests include archival studies, anthropology, information science, visual anthropology, museology, material culture, Indigenous studies, Native American history, history of science, and/or cultural history.
The Exhibition
The intern will assist curators in researching, planning, scripting, and promoting the upcoming exhibition, “Documenting Diversity: How Anthropologists Record Culture” (working title), to open in February 2020. The exhibition is part of an ongoing program of the Smithsonian Libraries to host exhibits on the ground floor of the NMNH.

Drawing on the museum’s archival and rare library collections, the exhibition examines the history of anthropology through the technologies anthropologists have used to document the world’s cultures. It will highlight major collections and anthropologists by media—fieldnotes, drawings, audio recording, photography, film—and show how publications from the library’s collections amalgamate this raw field material.

Research sources include the archival and film collections of the National Anthropological Archives and Human Studies Film Archives, print collections of the Smithsonian Libraries, object collections of the Department of Anthropology, and outside scholarly sources. In tandem with the exhibition development process, the interns will have the opportunity to produce online content about the NAA and Smithsonian Libraries collections on a number of Smithsonian platforms, including Smithsonian blogs, social media accounts, and the Learning Lab.

Outreach Initiatives
The intern will work among staff at the NAA and will have the opportunity to see aspects of both museum and archival work in action. They will assist with ongoing work at the NAA including assisting with tours and other activities in the NAA reading room. They will also be able to assist in planning in-person programming events, such as an ongoing NAA talk series Q?RIUS programs at the NMNH main building on the mall, as well as digital programs such as Smithsonian Science How or Wikipediathons. In 2018, the Smithsonian launched its American Women’s History Initiative, and so we are particularly interested in increasing the profiles of women in our collections through creative outreach and web platforms.

Archival Reference
The interns will also have the opportunity to investigate the ways that archival principles (including questions of access versus preservation) are applied and adapted in real-world settings. They will gain first-hand experience in the archival reference process and will assist with projects to improve the accessibility and discoverability of materials, thus improving the researcher experience. The interns will have the opportunity to tailor projects to their own learning objectives as the NAA hosts a wide variety of researchers and houses a wide variety of collections with multiple media formats, levels of organization, and challenges from both preservation and access perspectives.

Skills and Learning Objectives
Interns will gain skills in archival and scholarly research, collections research and documentation, exhibition development, exhibition management, archival practice, and public communication, and will have opportunities to observe conservation, education, and collections management work at the Museum.

Learning objectives:
To gain:
- archival and scholarly research experience in an outreach context
- collections research skills including photographing, describing, and documenting collections and/or determining the provenance of archival or object collections
- archival/object handling skills
- improved written communication skills in both traditional and new media through the creation of public outreach materials including online collections highlights, press release materials, blog articles or other topical publications in cooperation with museum curators
- project management skills working alongside staff to keep track exhibition or conservation processes
- outreach and programming planning experience
- archival experience in archival reference services
About the Collections
The National Anthropological Archives (NAA, located in the Smithsonian’s National Museum of Natural History, Department of Anthropology), collects and preserves historical and contemporary anthropological materials that document the world’s cultures and the history of anthropology. Its collections represent the four fields of anthropology—ethnology, linguistics, archaeology, and physical anthropology—and include fieldnotes, journals, manuscripts, correspondence, photographs, maps, sound recordings, film and video created by Smithsonian anthropologists, other preeminent scholars, and Indigenous peoples from around the world. The Human Studies Film Archives (HSFA), part of the NAA, is devoted to preserving, documenting, and providing access to anthropological moving image materials. The Archives officially began its mission in 1975 when, as the National Anthropological Film Center, it initiated a program that both created and collected films of anthropological research interest. The archives promote the importance of moving image materials as an integral part of the anthropological record related to documentation and research. HSFA collections and resources support research on specific cultures, the development of ethnographic film, and the broad study of visual culture.

The Smithsonian Libraries is made up of a network of 21 specialized research libraries. The collections span the range of scientific and cultural pursuits of humanity from aerospace, anthropology, and art history to business history and botany, cultural history, design, philately, zoology, and much, much more. Individually each of these libraries is among the world’s greatest repositories of knowledge for the specialized fields they support. Collectively they are among America’s greatest scientific and cultural treasures. The John Wesley Powell Library of Anthropology collection reflects the important role that the Smithsonian Institution played in the development of anthropology as a formal discipline in the United States. It contains approximately 80,000 print volumes, including over 400 serial titles, a large number of microforms, smaller collections of CD-ROMs, audio cassettes, slides, and the like.