Volunteer Role Description: ‘Archive Digitisation’ Volunteers

About the opportunity
The Museum of Natural History archive includes a wide range of letters, drawings, and prints relating to both the building and the collections.

We would like to recruit a new team of Archive volunteers to support a targeted digitisation project:

scanning documents and systematically checking and labelling the digital files they create. The aim of the project is to increase both the searchability and the usability of popular archive collections, making them more accessible whilst also preserving them for the future.

Volunteers will be based behind-the-scenes in the Museum library and will be supervised by Danielle Czerkaszyn, the Librarian and Archivist, and Matthew Barton, the Digital Archivist – one of whom will always be on hand to give instruction and support. Whilst limited space and equipment mean that only one volunteer can help at a time, Danielle and Matthew will send regular group updates to help volunteers feel part of a wider team.

Timing
We plan to start this opportunity in January 2022 and review it after 3 months. We would initially like volunteers to help for 2 - 3 hours at a time, between 10 am and 4 pm, Monday - Friday. Within those timings, we can be relatively flexible and will do our best to accommodate different volunteers’ availability. Volunteers may prefer to do a regular slot or to help on a more ad hoc basis, but we hope that everyone will have the chance to do at least a few sessions.

Training
Training on how to safely handle archival documents will be provided, as will instruction on how to use the computer and scanner.

Who are we looking for?
Volunteers who would:

• be careful when handling delicate paper documents
• have attention to detail to ensure that scans are clear, complete, and correctly labelled
• be confident using a computer and scanner, once shown (written instructions can be provided if helpful)
- be patient in following a process and doing repetitive tasks
- be happy helping in a relatively self-contained way but would ask questions if unsure of anything

A prior interest in the museum and/or archive collections might make the opportunity more interesting; however, no particular knowledge is required, and general interest in the role is more important than expertise.

**Why volunteers might enjoy this opportunity**

It’s a chance to:
- (re)connect with the Museum and other volunteers
- contribute to a project to make the Museum’s collections more accessible to others
- see behind-the-scenes in the Museum archive
- learn a bit about collections care
- handle historical (original and largely unpublished) documents dating 1800s-1950s.

**Practicalities**

- The library is only accessible via stairs.
- The role will involve some lifting and carrying of archive boxes (<5kg). Please let us know if this would be challenging for you, so we can discuss any possible adaptations.
- Whilst we anticipate this role being predominantly seated, volunteers will be actively encouraged to have short breaks and a stretch from time to time!
- This opportunity is open to volunteers aged 18+.
- This role does **not** require a Right to Work check.
- Volunteers can claim reimbursement of travel expenses up to £4.30 per volunteering session upon presentation of original tickets or receipts.
- Covid mitigation measures (i.e. wearing a face covering, maintaining social distance, taking lateral flow tests) will be communicated, maintained, and reviewed according to Museum guidance.

**Interested?**

Danielle and Matthew would like to meet potential volunteers on the afternoon of **Thursday 16th December**. Please email Caroline at volunteering@glam.ox.ac.uk by the end of the day on **Thursday 9th December** if you are interested in being involved and please confirm whether or not you would be free on the 16th.

*For more about the Library and Archive:* [https://oumnh.ox.ac.uk/library-and-archive](https://oumnh.ox.ac.uk/library-and-archive)
*For more about the Museum of Natural History:* [https://oumnh.ox.ac.uk](https://oumnh.ox.ac.uk)
*For more about the GLAM Volunteer Service:* [https://www.glam.ox.ac.uk/volunteering](https://www.glam.ox.ac.uk/volunteering)