Bader College Undergraduate Student Summer Research Fellowship (USSRF) Project 2 Description

Supervisor: Ruth M. Cereceda

Position: Senior Lecturer & Experiential Learning Coordinator

Project Title: Banish the Backlog: Bexhill Museum's pre-1930's hat collection.

Project Abstract.

In 2019 Collection's Trust UK launched the 5.0 version of the Spectrum system (museum management protocol), together with the *Banish the Backlog* project, an initiative to support regional small museums to improve their documentation (https://collectionstrust.org.uk/blog/the-banish-the-backlog-programme/)
Bexhill Museum is involved with the initiative and forms part of the East Sussex regional backlog-banishing support group. In collaboration with the Museum Director (Mr. Julian Porter) and the Costume curator (Mrs. Georgina Bradley), I have developed a project that looks at cataloguing the museum's pre-1930's hat collection, with the double objective of helping to reduce the cataloguing backlog in the museum, and creating a temporary exhibition that puts in relationship the museum's hat collection with photographs of local residents (also in the museum's collection) to identify local headgear styles, trends and individuals.

The project has been designed to fit with Bader College's EL and Career Ready frameworks and will also connect with the *1920's at the Castle* research project led by Dr. Claire Kennan. The Banish the Backlog programme will continue to run for the duration of Collections Trust's current Arts Council England-funded Activity Plan.

Aims and Outcomes.

The planned research outcomes for this project are:

1. Short term: participation in the Summer+ conference and production of a written publication suitable to the level of research (USSRF conference, Castle Curiosities or AH department newsletter)
2. Long term: temporary exhibition at Bexhill Museum (in principle, planned for winter 2023), led by Julian Porter

USSRF Learning Outcomes and Skill Development.

Cataloguing is a use-led research procedure, that supports interpretation and research, and the student selected for this project will benefit from being trained in the *spectrum* museum management system and in the *modes* collection management software, while gaining first-hand experience in collection's management and exhibition curation.

Additionally, the student will produce a written piece of scholarly research and will participate in a research conference.

Timeline and Milestones.

Timeline:

Cataloguing: the student will spend 4 x 4-hour days per week throughout May and June at the museum costume department, cataloguing items and collecting information on those items for their subsequent piece of writing. Total: 128h

Study: the student will spend 10h per week working with selected secondary sources. Total: 80h

Training:

1. the student will be given 2 x training sessions in the spectrum system. The first training session will be delivered by the principal investigator (Dr. Cereceda) and will be focused on the primary procedures (object entry, acquisition and accessioning, location and movement control, inventory, cataloguing, object exit, loans in, loans out, and documentation and planning) The second training session will be delivered at Bexhill Museum and will look at how the procedures work in a practical way in a small regional setting. Total: 20h
2. The student will be given 1 x initial training session and ongoing support in the use of Modes collection management software. The training will be delivered at the museum. Total: minimum 4h, but flexible as it might need extra time.

Experiential learning opportunities:

Worthing museum and Art gallery – visit and guided tour of the costume collection, Q&A with the museum's costume curator TBC. Total: 6-8h

Victoria and Albert Museum – costume collection. Total: 10h

Summer+ conference preparation: 20h

USSRF conference preparation: 10h

Total hours: 280 (+10h left for flexibility)

Students interested in submitting an application for this project should complete the USSRF student application found on the Queen's USSRF website. Applications are due to Traci Allen by March 1st, 2023. See submission instructions posted in the Program Guidelines.