

Museums, Galleries and Collections Institute (MGCI), University of St Andrews

Call for Papers:

Museum Studies: Past, Present, Future

A conference celebrating 30 years of Museum and Gallery Studies at St Andrews

Thursday 7th and Friday 8th May 2020

It is more than half a century since the first museum studies courses in the UK were founded at Leicester in 1966 and Manchester in 1971. They were designed in close consultation with the Museums Association (MA) and initially followed the MA's Diploma syllabus. Postgraduate museum studies courses have developed and proliferated enormously since then. Until 2009, the St Andrews course was one of only 13 courses recognised by the MA as a route to the Associateship of the Museums Association (AMA). With changes in the Associateship to Continuous Professional Development, the MA ceased to provide validation for the Recognised Courses. There are now 46 organisations providing postgraduate training listed in the *MA Courses Guide 2019* with nearly 160 options to choose from. There are also many alternative training routes into museum work now, including internships and apprenticeships. This raises many questions about the provision of post-graduate courses. What are the implications and ethics of this burgeoning number of courses for students and their future employability? Are universities producing too many graduates for a highly competitive market? And are we providing the training that the museum sector needs?

Our conference will focus on three themes:

Theme 1 Museum Studies and the Curriculum

How has the curriculum developed in the past? What does the museum sector need in the 21st century? Are we providing students with the necessary skills, or are we producing 'over-qualified' masters? Are these courses offering the right curricula and content and the right balance of theory vs practice? What kind of external validation would work to ensure high quality learning experiences for our students?

Theme 2 – Museology

When and where were the first academic curricula dedicated to Museum Studies developed? Can we detect different approaches? For instance, the first training in Museum Studies in France was led by the Ecole du Louvre in close connection with the Louvre itself, whereas, in other countries, universities have taken the initiative for those courses. The balance between practical and theoretical teaching should be addressed: are there significant differences over time or/and countries? What are the cultural and historical divergences between Museum Studies and Museology? In what ways do the different languages used in museology and museum studies training courses affect the field?

Theme 3: Diversity and Inclusion: creating a sustainable museum workforce

Current and recent research has shown, in no uncertain terms, that the museum workforce does not reflect the diversity of its audiences (existing and potential). Though a number of initiatives have attempted to address these shortcomings, progress is slow. This conference sub-theme asks: what can, or should, museum

studies courses do to effect greater change? How can diversity and inclusion be fully embedded into the museum studies curriculum - in both teaching and practice? In turn, what contributions can be made by students and recent graduates in support of this effort? This theme also considers the role of apprenticeships, traineeships, internships and the suite of qualifications now offered by educational institutions and organisations. Do these initiatives inspire long-term change? Can we trace their impact beyond their lifespan? How do we evaluate these initiatives for a wider and more diverse audience?

We would like to invite responses to this call in the form of case studies, workshops, presentations and other appropriate formats. We would be particularly interested in sessions that take an innovative and non-traditional form.

Proposals: in English, 300 words
Short biography: 250 words

Deadline for proposals: 1st November 2019
Announcement of accepted proposals: 31 January 2020

Proposals should be sent to: mgci@st-andrews.ac.uk