



University of Reading

MAKING CONNECTIONS WITH COLLECTIONS: MEET THE PROFESSIONALS

South West and Wales Doctoral Training Partnership
University of Reading Training Opportunity

**13 June 2016 from 11:00 to 16:00 University of Reading
[with optional tour from 10am]**

Hosted by Professor Alison Donnell, Head of the School of Languages and Literatures at the University of Reading, and by the Centre for Collections Based Research of the University of Reading's Museums and Special Collections.

This Training Day will provide a valuable opportunity for doctoral students to meet with collections professionals - including an archivist, curator, museum manager, public engagement specialist and academic experts. Through presentations, Q&A and planning sessions, participants will improve their understanding of how effective collaborations can transform the possibilities for locating sources, developing methodologies, engaging different audiences and communicating research outcomes.

Seminar Leaders:

- Professor Alison Donnell, Head of the School of Languages and Literatures, University of Reading
- Dr Paddy Bullard, Co-Director, Centre for Collections Based Research
- Kate Arnold-Forster, Head of UMASCS and Co-Director, Centre for Collections Based Research
- Guy Baxter, University Archivist, University of Reading
- Dr Rhi Smith, Programme Director, Museum Studies, University of Reading
- Isabel Hughes, Curator, MERL
- Dr Ollie Douglas, Assistant Curator, MERL

SCHEDULE

10-11 Optional tours of MERL and archive stacks – Caroline Gould

11:00 to 12:00

Kate Arnold-Forster and Paddy Bullard: ***Making the Most of Professional Relationships***

This 'in conversation' will explain and model some of the productive ways in which academic researchers work with collections professionals in order to develop, enrich and broaden their research questions, methods and audiences.

There will be a Q&A where participants can follow up on the possibilities for connection discussed in the session and/or present their own challenges around establishing connections with collections professionals.

12:00 to 13:00

Guy Baxter and Ollie Douglas: ***Entangling and Disentangling Collections***

This session will introduce participants to some of the myriad ways in which we can work not only *with* but *across* archive, library and museum collections. It will begin with a comparative summary of the ways in which archive and museum approaches converge and differ, using tangible examples to introduce the complex interlinking factors, standards, and stakeholders involved in these respective professional spheres.

The session will then turn to a suite of real-time challenges that collections professionals face. This second part of the session will be more of an open-forum discussion in which participants will be invited to examine key issues in collections cataloguing, data-management, scholarly expertise, research methodology, and public engagement.

13:00 to 14:00

Lunch (provided to attendees)

14:00 to 15:00

Isabel Hughes: ***Engaging audiences in your research***

This session will look at how museums and cultural organisations work to identify target audiences and articulate their needs through consultation, with evaluation being the key to understanding how activities have had impact and can lead to further engagement. Participants are encouraged to come with a proposal which would include planned engagement with different audiences. This will be a practical session with opportunities to undertake planning for engagement activity.

15:00 to 16:00

Rhi Smith: ***Connecting Communities and Collections:
Glastonbury Abbey Uncovered***

This session will outline examples and principles for collaborative working with stakeholder communities, finds specialists and heritage professionals. It will also uncover the new digital reconstructions that these connections have made possible.

Contact on the day:

Prof Alison Donnell: a.j.donnell@reading.ac.uk

INFO LINKS

- South West and Wales DTP Training: <http://www.sww-ahdtp.ac.uk/dtp-training/collaborative-training-events/>
- Centre for Collections Based Research, University of Reading: <http://www.reading.ac.uk/collectionsresearch/>
- University of Reading Special Collections: <http://www.reading.ac.uk/special-collections/>