The secret lives of digital museum resources and collections
ESRC DTP Collaborative Studentship

University of Leicester and Smithsonian Center for Learning and Digital Access

The Midlands Graduate School is an accredited Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) Doctoral Training Partnership (DTP). One of 14 such partnerships in the UK, the Midlands Graduate School is a collaboration between the University of Warwick, Aston University, University of Birmingham, University of Leicester, Loughborough University and the University of Nottingham.

The School of Museum Studies at the University of Leicester as part of the Midlands Graduate School is now inviting applications for an ESRC Doctoral Studentship in association with our collaborator, the Smithsonian Center for Learning and Digital Access (SCLDA), to commence in October 2019. The project aims to contribute to debates on the educational potential of digital heritage collections by exploring the ways in which the SCLDA’s Learning Lab platform is used by educators to integrate digital content from Smithsonian museums, libraries, archives and research institutions into their curricula. Digital heritage collections such as this represent primarily curatorial knowledge that is not always readily usable as educational content, but requires interpretation and rendering to the target educational context(s) and audience(s). By studying how teachers use the Learning Lab in their educational practice, the project will explore the acts of interpretation and instructional rendering that are part of such educational practice.

The project aims to generate insights into the impacts the Learning Lab is having on teaching practices, a deeper understanding of how to further support these practices, and to generate research instruments for continuing assessment of these impacts. The successful candidate will gain experience and skills in supporting users of digital heritage collections, networking and dissemination opportunities with Smithsonian museums throughout the US, and important experience in working with users towards implementing user-centred design practices in an existing robust museum software platform.

The project would fit candidates with a background and/or interests in digital learning and pedagogy, Open Educational Resources, and object- and collection-based museum learning. The award may be made as 1+3/+3.5/+3 dependent on prior qualifications and training.

More information about the SCLDA:
https://learninglab.si.edu/about/SmithsonianCenterforLearningandDigitalAccess

More information about the School of Museum Studies, University of Leicester:
https://le.ac.uk/museum-studies
Application Process

To be considered for this PhD, please email the following to Christine Cheesman (cmc17@le.ac.uk) by the application deadline:

- completed Collaborative Studentship application form available online here
- a CV
- a cover letter
- two references

**Application deadline: Monday 11th March 2019**

It is anticipate that interviews will be held on Tuesday 19th March 2019

**Midlands Graduate School ESRC DTP**

Our ESRC studentships cover fees and maintenance stipend and extensive support for research training, as well as research activity support grants. Support is available only to successful applicants who fulfil eligibility criteria. To check your eligibility, visit: www.mgsdtp.ac.uk/studentships/eligibility/

Informal enquiries about the research or the School of Museum Studies prior to application can be directed to Dr Giasemi Vavoula (g.vavoula@le.ac.uk).