



Introduction

The Devon and Exeter Institution is a thriving independent library and educational charity in the heart of the city. We welcome new members and visitors of all ages. Our founders established the Institution in 1813, in order to promote *'the general diffusion of Science, Literature and the Arts, and for illustrating the Natural and Civil History of the county of Devon and the History of the City of Exeter'*. This resolution remains at the centre of our strategy to this day.

The Institution occupies a Medieval building, originally owned by the Cathedral. It was inherited by the Courtenay family in the 17th Century and used as their town house for over 150 years. In 1814, '200 Gentlemen of the City' took ownership of 7 Cathedral Close and adapted the double-courtyard layout to create two elegant Georgian rooms. These rooms functioned as both library and a museum; museum objects were later donated to form the foundation collection of the [Royal Albert Memorial Museum](#) in 1868.

Today our two galleried libraries hold a unique historical book collection, virtually unchanged since 1813, and collections of maps, prints, drawings, fine and decorative art. The DEI is also the premier institution collecting books on Devon, particularly in the fields of history and biography. The [Library](#) and collections lie at the heart of the Institution and provide inspiration and a place for research and reading, educational activities, cultural events and lectures.

The DEI has been an Educational Charity since 1989 and enjoys a close working relationship with the [University of Exeter](#) and other heritage sites across the city. We offer meeting rooms for business [hire](#); our beautiful libraries are also available to [hire](#) for cultural activities and business events. We are open for [public tours](#) every Wednesday afternoon from 1pm – 4pm.

We are very proud that the Institution is embarking on yet another new chapter in its long and vibrant history. In March 2020, we secured a grant from the National Heritage Lottery Fund for "[The Next Chapter](#)". This 3-year project will see us upgrade our current spaces facilities, while also making them more accessible; carry out essential conservation work and a collection review; and increase and diversify our educational and events programmes.

The Institution, like many independent libraries, could not do without its wonderful team of [volunteers](#), drawn from its membership, and Exeter University students. The Institution is cherished by members for its calm and peaceful atmosphere in the heart of the city, and its ability to bring a wide range of people together.

We are seeking a special collections Librarian to manage the Institution's library collections and all associated research services, including contracts and staff. The postholder will work with the Leadership Team to deliver the strategic aims of the Institution and its charitable objectives. The successful applicant will have a proven track record in managing heritage collections and research services in a museum, library or historic building.

This is a fixed term post for a period of 2 years in the first instance, with the potential for extension thereafter.

Job Description

Role: Librarian

Salary Grade: £25,000-£32,500 pro rata, dependent upon skills and experience

Hours of work: This post is based at the Institution for 21 hours per week, over 3 full days

Reports to: Director (line manager) and Trustees

Line manages: Business Administrator, Digitisation Coordinator, and other staff as required

Contacts: Operational staff; Trustees; volunteers (including membership secretaries, and all volunteer teams); external consultants and contractors; key stakeholders, including DEI members and DEI partner organisations.

Key partners include the University of Exeter, Exeter Cathedral, the Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Devon Heritage Centre, and Exeter City of Literature.

Responsible for: The DEI library, including heritage and local studies collections; operational teams and budgets, including business administration, digitisation of illustration collections, and associated staff; managing all contracted services relating to the library.

Role Overview

- Take a leading role in the organisation and management of the Institution, collaborating with, and working to, the Director.
- Manage the Institution's library and special collections and all associated library services, cataloguing, contracts and staff.
- As a senior member of the staff team your role will involve business and financial management of key parts of the Institution's operations.
- Responsibility for all volunteer teams, working with the Director and Business Administrator.
- Responsible for collections policies, conservation management and research use.

General management responsibility

- Take a leading role in managing the operations of the Institution, working with the Director, including managing staff and volunteers.
- Set, agree, implement and monitor operational budgets, contributing to financial control and meeting financial management requirements.
- Manage all library and collections services.
- Contribute to the strategic direction of the DEI through membership of the Leadership Team and by participating in Trustee meetings, as required.
- Line manage the Business Administrator, Collections and Research Assistant and other staff as required.
- To be a keyholder and assume responsibility for the security of the building while on duty, in collaboration with the staff team, including out-of-hours contact responsibilities.

- Take a lead role in seeking grant funding, and developing donation and gift policies, particularly as they relate to collections management, conservation and digitisation.
- Lead on fire safety, health and safety, and data protection issues.
- Deputise for the Director as required.
- Any other duties that may be required from time to time, consistent with the general nature of the post and the responsibilities attached to it.

Collections Management & research responsibility

- Acquisition, cataloguing and preservation of the library collections, ensuring that policies are up to date and adhered to.
- Monitoring the library management systems, and promoting DEI electronic services
- Answering enquiries from members and external researchers.
- Managing the conservation, cleaning and bookbinding programmes.
- Efficient organisation and book selection for the growing local history collection.
- Recruitment, training, development and supervision of volunteer teams.
- Collaborating with the Director on interpretation and promotion of the collections via events, displays, exhibitions and educational programmes.
- Manage the 'Adopt a Book', 'Rescue a Book' and other collections-based donation and gifting initiatives.
- Represent the DEI at the Independent Libraries' Association and other relevant bodies

Strategic and business development responsibility

- Development of collections-based research strategies, working with the Director
- Collaborate with the Director to deliver capital works for the Next Chapter project, to ensure environmental stability in the libraries and commission new housing for the DEI's special collections.
- In collaboration with the Director, identify and seek additional sources of grant funding as required, for the sustainability of the Institution and to build financial resilience in accordance with DEI's business plan.

Person Specification

Skills, knowledge and experience

Essential:

- Proven track record in heritage collections management.
- Experience and understanding of different aspects of operational management of libraries, museums and archives.
- Team player, able to collaborate with other staff members and contribute to developing plans in partnership, as well autonomously.
- A proven track record of creating catalogue and/or inventory records for library, museum or archive collections, according to relevant professional standards.
- Highly meticulous, with an acute attention to detail, especially in data entry.
- Proven research skills.

- Strong organisational and time management skills, with the ability to multi-task, prioritise, and to work on several areas of the collection and management simultaneously.
- Friendly and approachable personality, with the ability to build relationships with, and work well alongside, a broad range of people, including subject specialists, members and enthusiastic volunteers.
- Ability to lead and support a team of project volunteers.
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills.
- Experience with handling fragile historic objects.
- Physical fitness (as this role requires working away from a desk and retrieving books at height on the galleries).
- Understanding of, and commitment to, the history, charitable aims and vision of the DEI.

Desirable

- Knowledge of Devon and/or Exeter history.
- Research interests relevant to the DEI's heritage collections.

Highly desirable:

- A good and relevant postgraduate degree or equivalent qualification
- A professional qualification in the field of Librarianship or Archive Science
- Experience in setting, managing, and working to budgets