JOB DESCRIPTION

TITLE:	PROJECT RESEARCHER: INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR CHINA MARITIME VOICES
REPORTING TO:	DEPUTY DIRECTOR (CURATORIAL & EDUCATION)
RESPONSIBLE FOR:	PROVIDING INTELLECTUAL, METHODOLOGICAL AND OPERATIONAL LEADERSHIP FOR THE RESEARCH CENTRE
REPORTING STAFF:	ASSISTANT PROJECT RESEARCHER AND DIGITAL OFFICER

ORGANISATIONAL MISSION

The HKMM is an independent, not-for-profit museum that aims to inspire people's appreciation of their relationship with the sea. As a maritime museum within the Asia Pacific region, we preserve, showcase and commemorate the maritime culture and experiences of the people of Hong Kong; rooted in China, but looking to the world, reflecting Hong Kong's unique history. Working in cooperation with the Hong Kong Government and the shipping community, HKMM operates an international standard maritime museum and research centre at Central, Pier 8.

PROJECT MISSION

Supporting the Museum's strategy to strengthen its collections, public engagement and long-term growth, the International Centre for China Maritime Voices will establish a bilingual oral-history archive documenting the experiences of seafarers, fishermen, shipyard workers and other maritime communities. Funded by Lloyd's Register Foundation, the project aims to produce 100–150 recordings, focusing on maritime safety, changing work practices and under-represented voices. It will develop an evaluated methodology for adoption by mainland Chinese and other partner institutions, preserving knowledge and generating evidence to inform research, maritime regulation, policy, training and public programmes.

POSITION OBJECTIVE

The Project Researcher will provide intellectual, methodological and operational leadership for the Centre. This includes hands-on oral-history research with oversight of staff, quality, ethics, archive development, reporting and partnerships.

Reporting to the Deputy Director (Curatorial and Education), the postholder will ensure the project is delivered to professional, ethical, financial and funder standards and positioned for long-term impact and sustainability.

JOB RESPONSIBILITIES

Research, ethics and archive quality

- Lead the delivery of a rigorous, replicable oral-history methodology, including themes, sampling, interview frameworks and evaluation.
- Conduct and supervise interviews, research and contextual documentation, ensuring appropriate coverage of maritime safety, work, technological change and under-represented voices.
- Responsible for setting and maintaining standards for consent, participant rights, safeguarding, confidentiality, copyright, data protection and access.
- Work with the Digital Officer and Curatorial team to develop a secure, accessible bilingual archive on the Museum's Collections Management System, Digital Asset Management System and online. They are to ensure recordings, documentation, metadata and preservation workflows are complete, consistent and quality assured.
- Oversee bilingual transcription, translation, metadata, preservation and digital workflows, with appropriate human review of AI-assisted processes, while complying with the funder's Generative AI Policy.

Project leadership and accountability

- Direct the project's agreed outcomes, coordinate workflows across research, fieldwork, processing, archiving, and publication online.
- Manage and develop the Assistant Project Researcher and Digital Officer, allocating work, monitoring capacity and deadlines, and assuring output quality.
- Manage the budget, risks, decisions and cross-departmental coordination in line with Museum and funder requirements.
- Monitor progress against agreed funder outputs, impact measures, timetable and budget; provide concise updates and escalate significant risks, delays or compliance issues.
- Coordinate the Internal Working Group and collaboration with Museum departments and external specialists, maintaining clear decisions, actions and risk controls.
- Prepare accurate reports and governance papers for the Curatorial & Collections Committee, Board of Directors and the funder, as required by the funding agreement.

Partnerships, engagement and sustainability

- Lead on building respectful relationships with maritime communities, such as under-represented groups, including women maritime workers, ethnic minorities, Tanka/boat families, small-scale operators and informal maritime workers. Develop productive partnerships with museums, universities, archives, government, research and industry organisations to promote the findings as a source for regulators and trainers.
- Will be the point of contact with China Maritime Museum, Shanghai, to adapt and promote the archive, methodology and programme to ensure comparability of project outcomes.
- Lead the synthesis of the oral-history findings into safety-related themes and contribute evidence and draft material for policy-relevant thematic briefs, research publications and resources for regulators and maritime training providers.
- Plan, where necessary, and represent the Centre at consultations, workshops, conferences and public programmes; lead accessible, culturally sensitive research communications.
- Responsible for identifying funding and partnership opportunities; contribute to funding proposals and budgets; and develop a practical sustainability plan for the Centre beyond the grant period.
- Working with the Assistant Project Researcher, liaise with the curatorial team to ensure the oral histories are embedded into public programming, displays and galleries.

QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE

Essential

- Postgraduate qualification, or equivalent professional experience, in oral history, anthropology, history, sociology, ethnography, heritage, museum or maritime studies, or a related discipline.
- Substantial experience designing and delivering oral-history, ethnographic, community-based or qualitative research, including direct interviewing and fieldwork.
- Strong command of research methodology, ethics and data management, including consent, participant rights, transcription, translation, metadata, preservation, copyright, confidentiality and data protection.
- Proven ability to lead staff and complex concurrent workstreams, manage quality and deadlines, and produce evidence-based reports for senior, governing or funding bodies.
- Fluent spoken Cantonese, with good spoken and written English and Mandarin.
- Excellent analytical, writing and stakeholder skills, with sound judgement, attention to detail and cultural sensitivity.

Desirable

- Doctoral-level research or equivalent advanced expertise, with knowledge of Hong Kong, mainland Chinese or wider Asian maritime history.

- Experience establishing oral-history archives or digital-heritage resources, particularly in bilingual or museum settings.
- A record of securing grants, developing funded partnerships, or presenting and publishing research for specialist and public audiences.
- Familiarity with ethical oversight of digital and AI-assisted research tools.

Note: If requested, unsuccessful candidates will be considered for the Assistant Project Researcher role for this funded project.