Graduate Student Assistant – Indigenous Digital Collections

Simon Fraser University Library invites applications from SFU graduate students for a part-time position to take place through the Fall 2022 and Spring 2023 terms. The work can be undertaken online, at WAC Bennett Library on the Burnaby campus, or a combination. This position is an excellent opportunity for a graduate student who seeks to gain experience working with Indigenous digital collections in a supportive environment and academic library setting.

Working with members of SFU Library’s Special Collections and Digital Services, and supervised by an Indigenous Initiatives Librarian, the incumbent will be responsible for providing assistance to review Indigenous material in SFU Library’s digital collections. The position will be attractive to adaptable and innovative individuals with excellent communication and collaborative skills, and a strong interest in Indigenous collections, intellectual property, and cultural heritage.

SETTING

SFU’s three campuses are located on the territories of the Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), x̱wməθkwəy̓əm (Musqueam), Sel̓ílwelth (Tsleil-Waututh), q̕íc̑əy̓ (Katzie), K̵w̓ikw̓etl̓əm (Kwikwetlem), q̓iqéyt (Qayqayt), Sə̓myəmə (Semiahmoo), and sc̓əwaθən (Tsawwassen) Nations. By recognizing the traditional Coast Salish territories, we aspire to create space for Reconciliation through dialogue and decolonizing practices.

Ranked by respected national surveys as one of Canada’s top three comprehensive universities for the past 20 years, Simon Fraser University has also been consistently named one of British Columbia’s Top Employers in recent years, as well as one of Canada’s Top 100 employers, and one of Canada's top family-friendly employers. SFU offers more than 100 undergraduate major and joint major programs and more than 45 graduate offerings, spanning many disciplines in eight faculties, and has an international reputation for its innovative interdisciplinary and professional programs. The main, WAC Bennett Library is located on the Burnaby campus, while the Samuel and Frances Belzberg Library is on the Vancouver campus, and Fraser Library is at SFU Surrey.

The SFU Library is known for the development and implementation of innovative technology, leadership in Open Access, and excellent in-person and online user services. We serve an ethnically diverse student population, most of whom live off-campus and work part-time while attending university. SFU Library collaborates broadly with other institutions through membership in the Canadian Association of Research Libraries, the Association of Research Libraries, and regional consortia. For more information, see our web site at https://www.lib.sfu.ca. The SFU Library commits to a continuous process of transformation to advance equity, diversity, and inclusion and to serve the cause of social justice. The Library’s Statement on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion provides more information.
ASSIGNMENT

Under the direction of and in consultation with an Indigenous Initiatives Librarian:

• Work with Special Collections & Rare Books (SCRB) librarians to review content in existing Indigenous digital collections in the context of UNDRIP and OCAP®
  o Examples include the White Mountain Apache Collection, the Pacific Herring Video Collection, and several collections from Special Collections that have Indigenous content: Phillip Francis Postcard Collection, Editorial Cartoons Collection, Pacific Tribune Photo Collection, BC Postcards Collection, Perry the Poster Man Collection, Canadian Farmworkers Union Collection, and others.
  o This is the necessary background work before the Library can develop and make a public statement in support of UNDRIP and OCAP®, and how they are being implemented at SFU Library.
• Based on the review of existing Indigenous digital collections, conduct a literature review on best practices and how to update collections, access, and description, in light of UNDRIP and OCAP®, including examples of updated collections in galleries, libraries, archives, museums, and cultural centres
• With guidance from the Bill Reid Centre for Northwest Coast Studies, look for and flag disrespectful content, duplicates, items of questionable copyright, low quality images, etc. in the George and Joanne MacDonald Northwest Coast Image Archive
• Work with Indigenous Initiatives and Digital Services librarians to explore best practices for digital collections and collaborations with Indigenous communities using Islandora, including community crowd sourcing
• Share the outputs, including a report, for consultation with Digital Services and SCRB librarians, and the Bill Reid Centre for Northwest Coast Studies
• Present project work to relevant members of SFU Library and community
• Advance the values and goals outlined in the Library’s Strategic Plan
• Incorporate SFU Library’s commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion

QUALIFICATIONS

Required:

• SFU graduate student with an interest in Indigenous digital collections, Indigenous intellectual property, community-based research, and cultural heritage
• Familiarity with Indigenous digital collections and issues pertaining to access and description, including Indigenous knowledge sharing practices and protocols
• Familiarity with Indigenous research methodologies within an academic context
• Analytical reasoning and problem-solving skills
• Ability to take initiative
• Ability to meet deadlines
• Ability to master information sources and technology thoroughly and quickly
• Ability to recognize, respect and work effectively with individuals and groups with diverse perspectives and backgrounds
• Excellent interpersonal and intercultural communication skills, both orally and written

Desired:

• Knowledge of the principles of OCAP® and UNDRIP
• Experience working with Indigenous digital collections and cultural heritage material
• Knowledge of Indigenous Northwest Coast Peoples and cultures

TERMS OF APPOINTMENT

The position is preferred to be part--time for Fall 2022 and Spring 2023 terms for up to 420 hours. Weekly schedules will be flexible. Rate of pay is $26.50 per hour, plus four per cent in lieu of vacation time.
All qualified candidates are encouraged to apply; however Canadians, permanent residents, and holders of valid work permits will be given priority. Simon Fraser University is committed to employment equity and encourages applications from qualified candidates of all genders, visible minorities, persons of First Nations, Inuit, or Métis heritage, persons with disabilities, and LGBTQ2SIA+ identified persons.

TO APPLY

Please send a cover letter and resume in one consolidated PDF to Jenna Walsh, Indigenous Initiatives Librarian, and Librarian for Indigenous Studies, Archaeology, Environmental Science, and Resource & Environmental Management at jmwalsh@sfu.ca by October 3, 2022 at 9:00 am Pacific Time.