

## **Oral Historian Volunteer Brief**

### **About Sampad**

Sampad is a dynamic development agency for South Asian Arts based in Birmingham. It plays a significant role regionally, nationally and beyond in promoting the appreciation and practice of diverse artforms originating from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. Through its work sampad serves, supports and initiates South Asian arts in all its forms working with youth, community, education and professional artists.

### **About The Partition Trail**

Supported by the National Lottery through the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), “The Partition Trail” will examine the complex legacy of the Partition and its lasting impact on communities in Birmingham and the West Midlands, particularly those of Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi descent.

Sampad’s project will capture personal memories from local people who were directly affected by the sweeping turmoil of the Partition, recording their first-hand experiences as well as uncovering stories that have been passed down through families. The 18 month initiative will also incorporate talks, learning workshops, an exhibition in partnership with Birmingham Museums Trust and a public commemorative event.

### **The Role**

Sampad is looking to recruit volunteers to assist with the collation of oral histories from people who remember the partition, or the stories which have been passed down to them by family members who were affected in 1947.

After receiving free professional training on how to interview people, each volunteer will be teamed up with a filmmaker who will record the interview the volunteer will undertake. Guided by Sampad, the volunteer will be expected to contact their interviewee to introduce themselves and arrange a suitable time and location for the interview to take place. On the day they will then go to the specified location and undertake an interview with the individual for approximately 1.5 hours, using a series of questions as prompts to help maintain focus. The interview may bring up sensitive memories, so the volunteer will be

expected to support the interviewee throughout emotionally, as well as prompting them if they struggle with knowing what to say. Once the interview has ended the volunteer will be responsible for writing up a summary of the interview (training will be provided), and helping Sampad with any translation issues.

As volunteers may be entering the homes of potentially vulnerable people (such as the elderly), all volunteers will be expected to adhere to Sampad's Young People and Vulnerable People Policy, which includes allowing a barring and disclosure check to take place (formerly called a CRB).

Reasonable expenses agreed with Sampad beforehand that arise from undertaking this work will be reimbursed by Sampad.

## **Commitment**

Volunteers **must** be able to attend the first training session early June 2017. Each volunteer is expected to undertake at least one 1.5 hour interviews in a two month period, which will require a certain amount of planning and preparation.

## **Benefits**

- Free professional training in Oral History Interviewing
- Improved communication and technological skills which will look good on your CV
- Opportunity to gain experience in the heritage sector
- Opportunity to meet new people and make new friends
- Opportunity to learn something new about the area you live in
- A reference on request upon successful completion of work

## **Can I apply?**

We are keen to hear from anyone over the age of 16, particularly if you can speak Urdu, Punjabi or Bengali. Places are limited, and due to the sensitive nature of the topic volunteers will need to show that they will be capable of helping interviewees- particularly the elderly- and being sensitive about the topic being discussed.

The checklist below should help clarify whether you are a suitable candidate.

- I am at least 16 years old
- I would be willing to have a Disclosure and Barring Service Check (previously called CRB)
- I have excellent communication skills – particularly spoken
- I enjoy meeting new people and can make people feel at ease
- I have excellent listening skills
- I am interested in the Partition Trail
- I have excellent punctuality
- I am independent and am happy to travel to different locations to carry out the work

## How to apply

Please email a CV and a cover letter explaining why you would like to volunteer with us, and why you think you would be a good candidate to [katy@sampad.org.uk](mailto:katy@sampad.org.uk)

