

Theme 1: News and Media in South Asia: Past and Present

This fellowship opportunity is within the British Library's Asian and African Collections department, who play a vital role within the Library by curating the collections of manuscripts, books, and other publications in Asian and African languages. A team of specialists work with collections totalling approximately 1 million books and more than 100,000 manuscripts. This is complemented by a very significant collection of newspapers and periodicals, including many published in South Asian countries and collected by the India Office in London. The South Asia news and media collections continue to grow with new acquisitions every year, of both contemporary and historical content.

With the opening of a new reading room at the Library's St Pancras site that is dedicated to news collections, the *Newsroom*, and the improvements in the storage of the newspaper collections made possible by a new storage building at the Library's Boston Spa site, now is a good time to review these existing collections, to consider what the Library could be doing to make them more widely accessible, as well as to review current acquisitions of news and newspapers from South Asian countries.

This fellowship provides an opportunity to research, evaluate and help develop a strategy for the Library that will inform its acquisition policy for news and media in South Asia.

Key responsibilities

- Work with curators in the South Asian Collections team to review historic collections of newspapers and periodicals from South Asia, including their cataloguing, conservation, and digitisation statuses
- Make proposals for how the British Library could make these extremely significant collections more widely known, and more accessible to researchers everywhere. This will probably include delivery of some 'quick-win' collections-based projects identified by the fellow, as well as longer-term recommendations and plans for the Library to implement after the end of the fellowship
- Review current news acquisitions from South Asia, including print and born-digital publications, working with relevant curators. Combine this with analysis of trends in the contemporary news and media environment in the region in order to make recommendations for the Library's future acquisitions policy in this area, within the framework of the overall strategies for purchased acquisitions and for news media
- Organisation of one or more events at the British Library drawing on themes emerging from the fellowship and relating to South Asian news and media
- Through these and other activity during the fellowship, contribute to the successful delivery of the Library's South Asia Programme.

Deliverables

- Report to the British Library comprising an options appraisal and set of recommendations on the forward strategy for the Library's South Asia news and media strategy
- A stakeholder event that promotes the BL collections and the Chevening/British Library Fellowship
- Other engagement and outreach work through the BL blogs and Chevening social media platforms.

Candidate requirements

- Degree or equivalent in a subject relevant to the British Library's Asian and African language collections
- Degree-level knowledge of at least one modern South Asian language
- Excellent written and spoken English
- Interest in library collections, and in learning about the curatorial work of a large library
- Knowledge of, and interest in, newspapers and news media
- Excellent attention to detail
- Good oral and written communication skills
- Strong computer skills, with experience working with databases and/or with metadata an advantage