

Spaces of industrial heritage: a history of uses, perceptions and remaking of the Liverpool Road Station site, Manchester

Fully-funded AHRC PhD studentship

Applications are invited for an AHRC-funded PhD on the former Liverpool Road Station complex which forms the site of the Museum of Science and Industry in Manchester. This studentship is one of eight fully-funded awards made by the newly-established Collaborative Doctoral Partnership managed by the Science Museum Group. The project will be supervised by Dr James Sumner (University of Manchester) and Jack Kirby (Museum of Science and Industry). The studentship, which is funded for three years full-time equivalent, will begin in September 2013.

The Studentship

The world's first passenger railway, connecting the manufacturing and trading hub of Manchester to Liverpool and the coast, opened in 1830. The original Manchester terminus building on Liverpool Road in the Castlefield district, site of the fort of Roman Manchester, survives along with its departure platform. Yet the site was closed to passengers within a few years: it developed instead as a goods station, with a major complex of warehouses, extending Castlefield's established importance as a canal freight hub. After a long period serving the growth of industrial Manchester, and following sharp decline across the middle years of the twentieth century, Liverpool Road Station closed in 1975. Soon afterwards, the site found a new role as home to the Museum of Science and Industry, re-opening in 1983.

The project will chart the uses and perceptions of Liverpool Road, and its relationship with the city and wider region, from the 1820s origins of the railway project to the Museum's opening. It offers opportunities to combine approaches from social and cultural history, the history of science and technology, historical geography, industrial archaeology, heritage studies and museology. Research questions include: how did the wider contexts of industrialisation and de-industrialisation influence the uses and meanings of Liverpool Road, and how, in turn, did the material form and working cultures of the site influence wider developments? What can we learn by bringing sites of transportation (of goods and people) more strongly into a narrative of industrial history currently dominated by sites of production and dwelling? How far can the historian go to capture the changing nature of buildings and landscapes 'as lived', including sights, sounds, smells, reputations and expectations? And how can museum professionals use these insights in interpreting historic sites?

The student will be based in Manchester and will use the fabric of the site itself – the Museum buildings and adjacent viaducts and goods yards – as a central resource. The focus will not be on industrial archaeology (on which extensive research has already been carried out), but on tracing documentary evidence to explain how the site was formerly used and understood, and examining how to interpret its significance for Museum visitors. This research will involve surveying sources such as local newspapers, and business and family records held in local archives. The study will

also seek to identify and interview former workers at the goods station, and those involved in the site's 150th anniversary celebrations in 1980 and the establishment of the Museum in 1982-3.

How to Apply

Applicants should have a good Master's degree (or equivalent) in the history of science/technology, general history, human geography, museum studies or another related subject, and will need to satisfy AHRC academic and residency eligibility criteria.

Applicants should submit a short curriculum vitae and a brief letter outlining qualifications for the studentship in the form of a single Word file no more than three pages in total. The names and contact details of two academic referees should also be supplied. Applications should be sent to james.sumner@manchester.ac.uk no later than **Friday 14 June 2013**.

Interviews are scheduled to be held at the Museum of Science and Industry, Manchester, on **27 June 2013**.

For further information concerning the project, please contact James Sumner (james.sumner@manchester.ac.uk).