

British Institute of Persian Studies – Executive Officer Role

The British Institute of Persian Studies is currently seeking a part-time Executive Officer to support its work in promoting scholarship and research excellence on all aspects of Iran and the wider Persianate world. The role would suit an applicant with a wide range of administrative experience, an interest in academic endeavour and, ideally, an understanding of Iran.

BIPS is a UK charity and company limited by guarantee. It is also a self-governing membership organisation, in which members are elected to serve on its Governing Council as trustees of the charity and directors of the company. Most Council members are academics in the field of Persianate studies.

Duties of the Executive Officer

Governance

BIPS's Executive Officer is responsible for managing the Institute's Annual General Meetings, its Council meetings and meetings of the smaller Management, Research and Outreach Committees: arranging meetings, preparing agendas, taking minutes, implementing decisions and acting as the central information point for trustees.

The Executive Officer is required to understand procedures and governance as outlined under the Charity Commission's regulations and the Institute's Memorandum of Association and is also responsible for submitting annual reports on the organisation to Companies House and the Charities Commission and for the preparation and publication of an Annual Report on BIPS's work for distribution to BIPS members. The latter includes details of the Institute's academic and outreach activities together with reports from grantees and Research Programme Directors.

The EO works closely with the Officers, in particular the President and the Honorary Treasurer and reports to the Honorary Secretary.

Scholarship

BIPS is a British International Research Institute (BIRI), one of a group of research institutes with overseas centres, financially supported by and headquartered at the British Academy (BA). The Executive Officer takes a leading role in submitting annual applications to the British Academy for grant funding and in completing formal quarterly and bi-annual reports to the BA on BIPS's grant expenditure. The Executive Officer also plays a key role in liaising with British Academy staff on behalf of the Council.

BIPS distributes grants for academic projects to researchers and students at UK higher educational institutions through its Research Committee, which meets three times a year. The Executive Officer manages the grant process: advertising the dates of RC meetings on the website, distributing application forms, processing applications for the Research Committee meetings, notifying applicants of decisions, paying grants, as well as checking that grant

conditions have been fulfilled. The Executive Officer also liaises with directors of the Institute's Research Programmes to organise annual workshops for grant recipients and, if necessary co-organises study days and workshops.

Outreach

BIPS maintains a wide range of outreach activities aimed at increasing the visibility of Iranian studies: the publishing of IRAN, its bi-annual academic journal, and occasional volumes in BIPS's Studies in the History and Culture of the Persianate World Series in conjunction with Gingko Library and BIPS's Archaeological Monograph Series with Oxbow Books, as well as maintaining a website and social media presence. The Executive Officer is the main contact for BIPS's publication programme and liaises with its Outreach Committee to organise events such as lectures and webinars and to produce fundraising materials, acting as the line manager of BIPS's part-time Outreach and Administrative Co-ordinator, who has primary responsibility for BIPS's online and social media presence.

The Executive Office is responsible for maintaining BIPS's membership scheme for academics and interested members of the public, overseeing the work of the Outreach Co-ordinator to manage the membership database and the payment of annual subscriptions.

Tehran Presence

BIPS maintains facilities in Tehran for the use of researchers and field projects. The Executive Officer liaises with scholars and students travelling to Iran with a BIPS grant and also with BIPS's staff in Tehran, providing them with financial and administrative support.

Administration and Book-keeping

The Executive Officer is responsible for general day-to-day administration of the office and for managing the Institute's expenses, paying bills and raising invoices, inputting financial data into the Xero accounting system and key contact with BIPS's bank. In these tasks the Executive Officer is closely supported by the Honorary Treasurer, who also assists the Executive Officer in liaising with BIPS's independent external auditor in the preparation of annual accounts.

BIPS organises public lectures, conferences and courses on aspects of Iranian culture on an occasional basis. While the Outreach Co-ordinator carries out the detailed organisation of these activities, including their online promotion and booking processes, the Executive Officer is ultimately responsible for their smooth running.

Required Skills

Familiarity with MS Office 365 and EXCEL is essential, together with an understanding of financial reporting and book-keeping. An understanding of the charity and the UK higher education sectors is desirable together with a knowledge of the Persianate world.

The Executive Officer role is for 32 hours per week (0.8) and is primarily based at BIPS's offices in central London, with flexibility on how the hours are worked across 3 to 5 days. The salary

is £34,000 per annum pro rata, subject to annual review. The Executive Officer is entitled to 33 days paid leave per year (inclusive of UK bank holidays) pro rata and a workplace pension.