

Dean's Outstanding Internship Award
院长优秀实习生奖 (2024/25)

Ms CHENG Kwan Chi Gigi
Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Creative Arts and Culture and Bachelor of Education
(Honours) (Visual Arts)
Year 4 in 2023/24
郑钧之小姐
创意艺术与文化荣誉文学士及视觉艺术教育荣誉学士
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Internship at HKADC: Skills and Future Aspirations

1. Introduction

I had a meaningful internship experience at the Hong Kong Arts Development Council (HKADC) from the 3rd of June to the 5th of July.

HKADC was established in 1995. The Hong Kong Government created it to support and develop the arts in the region. In council composition, the council members include representatives from various art disciplines and community sectors. On the other hand, the council has various operational units that include funding, project management, research, and development divisions.

2. Personal Experience

I was assigned to the Art Information Center (AIC), designed to function as a reference library, offering researchers, arts practitioners, academics, and the general public access to records of arts activities funded, supported, or organized by HKADC. These records include printed materials, images, videos, and documents. AIC is committed to providing an online catalogue, allowing interested parties to access its digital collections anytime and anywhere.

Additionally, AIC plans to gradually develop authoritative records of various arts groups and subjects to create a comprehensive information portal for those interested in exploring Hong Kong's arts sector. Before I started my internship, I set up four goals: Understand the HKADC and AIC organization chart of the company and business model, resolve general inquiries, provide effective assistance to users looking for records and finish job duties on time.

3. Skills Development and Reflection

During my internship, I was assigned to sit at the counter; I was responsible for supporting daily operations, handling general inquiries, and assisting public users, artists, and researchers in locating records. This role honed my customer service skills and enhanced my ability to manage multiple tasks efficiently. I gained various skills and knowledge that have significantly impacted my personal growth and aligned well with my aspirations and interests—each week brought new responsibilities, offering a well-rounded experience.

I prepared for the 8th June International Archives Booth in the first week, which taught me event preparation and organizational skills. Preparing for the International Archives Booth required meticulous planning, coordination, and attention to detail. This was my first big project in an internship. Everything was new to me. I had to organise an event from scratch, set up the booth, manage logistics, and ensure all materials were ready for presentation. However, before the activity, the publisher delivered poor-quality leaflets; there were about 500 hundred, and my colleagues and I used erasers to clean up the messy ink. I also asked the publisher to reprint 200 hundred leaflets before the activity. Luckily, the publisher delivered on time, and we could send leaflets to the public. From my perspective, collaborating with my colleagues and working with different departments to make the event a success showed that although individual skill is essential, it needs to be paired with the capacity to function well in a team environment.

Furthermore, preparing for the International Archives Booth provided a glimpse into the ongoing efforts to make archival materials more accessible and engaging to the public. This reflects a broader trend towards access to information and preserving cultural heritage in digital formats. This activity enhanced my communication skills, as I am a shy person and seldom have these experiences. Therefore, I was learning by doing, trying to promote HKADC goals and AIC services to the public audience. Eventually, we sent all the leaflets to the public and reached the target number of visitors. The experience has equipped me with a robust foundation in event preparation, organisational skills, teamwork, and effective communication.

During my second week of the internship, I gained practical experience in digital archiving and data administration through my work on scanning and organising art archives. It was not an easy job duty because I had to scan different archives such as paper, leaflets, books, etc. They had to be scanned horizontally and without a white line, which was crystal clear and readable. This project improved my technical abilities and made me realise how important it is to save creative and historical materials digitally. Digital archiving, in my opinion, helps to preserve cultural heritage by ensuring that important information is protected against physical deterioration and possible loss. It also tackles the problems of material degradation, physical storage constraints, and accessibility hurdles. Archives may be easily accessible to a worldwide audience and conserved for future generations by transforming physical documents into digital versions. The dissemination of knowledge and inclusion that characterise society appreciates this information, which increases the accessibility of cultural assets to a broader range of people.

During the third week of my internship, I assisted my supervisor with an oral history project about Dr Yam Pak-Kong Leo, focusing on marking video timelines and footage. Sometimes, the subtitles did not fit with the video, and the subtitles in Chinese and English versions were different. I had to do research and discuss this with colleagues because sometimes the interviewee mentioned the specific places and terms needed to be accurate. The experience of marking video timelines and annotating footage underscored the importance of attention to detail and meticulousness in archival work. Each video segment needed to be accurately marked and annotated, requiring high precision and care. This task also improved my ability to manage time effectively, as it involved balancing multiple responsibilities and ensuring that deadlines were met. From my perspective, this experience reveals crucial observations about contemporary

society and the evolving landscape of the archival and oral history industries. In contemporary society, where diverse voices and stories are increasingly recognised and valued, oral history is vital for documenting personal experiences and collective memory. Oral histories provide a rich, nuanced understanding of historical events and cultural contexts, often filling gaps left by traditional archival records. They offer a platform for underrepresented voices, ensuring that a more inclusive and comprehensive historical record is maintained. This aligns with contemporary societal values of diversity, equity, and inclusion, highlighting the importance of preserving various perspectives and experiences.

During my internship's fourth and fifth weeks, my focus was on outreach and marketing, which align closely with my career interests. Involved in developing promotional strategies and engaging with the audience through various channels, this experience significantly deepened my understanding of audience engagement and the intricacies of crafting compelling messages. For example, when designing social media posts about HKADC fun acts, I have to read a series of newspapers from HKADC in the AIC catalogue. Trying different layouts to provide interesting HKADC content to the public and measuring their effectiveness directly applies to the current marketing and public relations industry demands. Moreover, my emphasis on outreach and marketing during my internship also helped me understand how technology plays a part in contemporary marketing practices. Digital marketing tools and platforms have completely changed how businesses connect and interact with their target audiences. From social media management to email marketing and analytics, technology is essential to the execution and assessment of marketing campaigns. This internship experience reinforced the significance of keeping up with technological advancements and honing digital skills.

Reflecting on my internship, I have gained a diverse skill set, including event preparation, digital archiving, historical documentation, and marketing strategies. These skills are relevant to my career aspirations and reflective of broader industry trends towards digitalization, inclusivity, and ethical practices. The ability to adapt to new technologies and methodologies while focusing on accuracy, authenticity, and audience engagement will be crucial as I advance in my professional journey.

4. Suggestion for Further Personal Development or Improvement

About my future plan and internship improvement, I have deeply understood the process of art archival. I would like to learn about grant writing and funding to support projects and initiatives in the arts and archival sectors. This is because securing financial resources is vital to sustaining and advancing artistic endeavours. Therefore, mastering the art of crafting compelling grant proposals and navigating the complex landscape of arts funding will be essential to achieving my career goals, and trying to preserve cultural heritage, foster creative expression, and make the arts more accessible to diverse audiences.

5. Conclusion

To conclude, my five-week internship has been an invaluable experience that has equipped me with practical skills and deepened my understanding of the arts and archival industries in contemporary society. The lessons learned and insights gained will undoubtedly inform and inspire my future contributions to the field, ensuring I remain adaptable and innovative in an ever-evolving landscape. This internship has prepared me for the professional world and solidified my commitment to pursuing a

career that combines my passion for the arts with my skills in marketing and communication. My future plan involves continuing my education with advanced marketing, communication, and digital archiving courses while enhancing my skills through workshops and professional training, eventually contributing to industry evolution through research and mentorship.



Promoting at HKADC AIC Booth