To help expedite the application process, we are providing answers below to the most frequently asked questions about the LA as Subject Residency Program. For further information, please do not hesitate to contact project coordinator Cindy Mediavilla at cmediavi@ucla.edu.

What exactly is the LA as Subject Residency Program?
It’s a one-year post-graduate employment opportunity to gain on-the-job archivist experience at a variety of host agencies in the L.A. and surrounding areas. Resident Archivists will work on professional-level projects, applying archival standards and practices to make local collections accessible. Resident Archivists are also expected to make educational presentations to LAAS members and attend relevant meetings and conferences.

What is the salary?
$41,600 hiring maximum, plus benefits

How is the program funded?
The program is funded through a federal Laura Bush 21st Century grant awarded by the Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS).

How many Resident Archivists will be hired?
Three. One will be hosted by the Autry, one will be hosted by the California State University Northridge (CSUN), and one will be hosted by the University of Southern California (USC).

How long is the residency?
The residency is a year long, starting November 2, 2015, and ending October 28, 2016.

Who is eligible to apply?
Anyone who has graduated from an ALA-accredited library or information studies master's degree program since May 2013 is eligible to apply. Preference will be given to graduates who have a background in archival studies. Recent master’s level graduates in other relevant fields are also welcome to apply.

I graduated in December 2012. Am I eligible to apply?
No. Only candidates who graduated in May 2013 or more recently are eligible to apply.

I won’t graduate till December 2015. Am I eligible to apply?
No. Only candidates who have already graduated are eligible to apply.

Why are you only accepting applicants that graduated in the past two years?
Residencies, by their very nature, are created specifically for recent graduates who are entering the profession. Most residency programs limit their eligibility to new professionals who graduated within the prior one or two years.
Do I have to have archival experience to qualify?
No. However, like in most hiring situations, the more you know about the area, the stronger your application.

How do I apply?
Each host institution has its own application process. Links to the three applications are available at http://www.laassubject.org/index.php/residency_program. You may apply to one, two or all three institutions.

Why are there three separate applications?
The Autry, CSUN and USC are three distinct institutions and so have their own application and hiring processes. Although the grant pays the salaries of all Resident Archivists, each Resident Archivist is employed by only one of the three institutions and must adhere to that institution’s employment practices.

Can I apply to more than one host institution?
Yes. You can apply to one, two or all three host institutions. Each institution has its own application and hiring process.

Will I be notified that my application was received?
Probably not. Last year we received nearly 100 applications at each institution and so were not able to contact each person.

How will I know that my application is being considered?
The hiring process at each institution is slightly different. But, generally, if the host institution is interested in your application, you will be asked to participate in an initial interview conducted either online or by telephone. Finalists will then be invited to an in-person interview at the host institution. Out-of-town finalists may be asked to interview via Skype or some other online method.

When are interviews being held?
Each host institution has its own hiring timetable. However, all three institutions hope to conduct their interviews in July and August.

When will jobs be offered?
We hope to offer all three positions by September 14, 2015.

Will preference be given to applicants who live in the Los Angeles area?
No. Last year we had several finalists from around the country. However, if selected, you would be expected to move to the Los Angeles area.

Does the residency program pay for relocation expenses?
No.

When do the jobs start?
All three Residency Archivist positions start November 2, 2015.

What happens during the first three months of the residency?
During the first three months of the residency, you will work at your host institution, acquiring various
archival skills while completing a professional-level archival project. You will also be introduced to the inner workings of the institution by sitting in on meetings and observing operations firsthand. You will also meet regularly with your Mentor, who not only oversees your work but also provides professional advice.

Tell me more about the Mentors.
A Mentor is assigned to each Resident Archivist. The Mentors have extensive professional experience and will provide guidance and career advice throughout the entire residency period. The Mentor also advocates on behalf of the Resident Archivist as needed and helps evaluate the Resident Archivist’s performance during and at the end of the program.

Who is my supervisor?
Your Mentor will supervise your work at the host site. You will have a different supervisor at each rotation site. However, you will continue to keep in regular contact with your Mentor throughout the various rotations.

Please explain the rotations.
After working for three months at your host institution, you will then begin rotating among LAAS member sites that have designated specific projects for the Resident Archivists to complete. Each rotation site provides a project that will help the Resident Archivist acquire one or more of the Society of American Archivists’ ACE components.

How many rotations are there and for how long?
Each Resident Archivist works in three rotation sites. Each rotation lasts three months. In 2015/16, the rotation periods will be: February-April, May-July, August-October.

Where are the rotations conducted?
L.A. as Subject members apply to become rotation sites. Past rotation sites included Pepperdine University’s archives, California State University Dominguez Hills’ special collections, California State University Fullerton’s oral history collection, the L.A. Maritime Museum, and the L.A. Police Museum.

What types of projects have been completed during past rotations?
Rotation projects have included the processing of correspondence, oral history, film, and photo collections, the creation of finding aids, and helping curate a public exhibit.

Will I rotate to the other host sites?
No. Each host institution hosts only one Resident Archivist, though you will have opportunities to visit and tour the other sites.

Do I pick my rotation sites?
The Mentors select the rotation sites in consultation with the Resident Archivists.

Will the rotations all be within easy driving distance?
Very few places are within easy driving distance in Los Angeles! So, no, this isn’t guaranteed.

What if I hate my rotation assignment once I get there?
This hasn’t happened yet. However, if it’s not a good match, then your Mentor, the project coordinator, and the director of L.A. as Subject will work with you to find a better rotational assignment.
What else is expected from the Resident Archivists?

Each Resident Archivist is expected to conduct three educational presentations. These are often conducted as workshops for rotation site staff and/or LAAS members and can be done individually or with other Resident Archivists. Together, the Resident Archivists are also expected to complete a capstone project, which is presented at the annual LA Archives Bazaar in October.

What is this year’s capstone project?

The 2014/15 Resident Archivists are researching and presenting a panel discussion about the history of L.A. as Subject and the LA Archives Bazaar. They hope to turn their presentation into a publishable paper.

What other opportunities are provided through the LAAS residency?

Each Resident Archivist is assigned up to $2000 for professional development, so you will have plenty of opportunities to attend relevant conferences and professional meetings. In fact, we highly encourage the Resident Archivists to submit conference program and poster proposals, as appropriate. All three Resident Archivists are presenting on a panel at this year’s Western RoundUp.

How do the Resident Archivists keep in touch with each other and others involved in the program?

The Resident Archivists are encouraged to create their means of communicating with each other. Otherwise, most communication with Mentors occurs through email, phone conversations and face-to-face meetings. The Resident Archivists meet once a month with the project coordinator to touch base, share accomplishments, discuss challenges, and plan future events. The project coordinator is also always available through email and phone.

How is the residency program evaluated?

Pre- and post-test surveys are administered before and after every rotation to assess the Resident Archivists’ growth in archival skills, etc. The rotation site supervisors are also surveyed before and after each rotation to measure the accomplishment of expectations. Mentors, rotation site supervisors, and Resident Archivists are also interviewed to solicit feedback about the program and the rotations, in particular. Debriefings are also regularly conducted at monthly Resident Archivist and advisory committee meetings. At the end of the project, an extensive report will be submitted, recommending whether or not the program should be continued beyond the grant.

Hosted by the USC Libraries, L.A. as Subject comprises 230 libraries, museums, archives and private collections of valuable primary sources and other materials that document the history and culture of Los Angeles. This program is made possible by an Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS) Laura Bush 21st-Century Librarian grant.