

New England Archivists Contingent Employment Study Report to the Executive Board, January 2017¹

Submitted by Micha Broadnax, Elizabeth Carron, Anna J. Clutterbuck-Cook, Katie Fortier,
and Allyson Glazier

Introduction

This study was undertaken to gather data to help New England Archivists better understand the growing phenomenon of contingent employment in our region, for the members of our profession. It is our hope that the information in this report will help NEA better support its economically vulnerable members, making sure their needs and priorities are represented and addressed in organizational programming and through simple peer-to-peer understanding of the unique experience that is contingent employment status.

Background & Methodology

Anecdotal reports and personal experience have led many of New England's archivists to believe that "adjunctification,"² or the "gig economy"³ has arrived for the archives profession. Especially among those emerging professionals who are in the early years of their careers, extended periods of employment precarity seem to be the new norm. The New England Archivists (NEA) Contingent Employment Study (CES) was born out of a need for NEA to better understand the experience of those members who are employed in what we termed "contingent" positions. We wished to understand the nature of this contingent employment and speak directly with contingently employed archivists to ask them what benefits and drawbacks they experienced as contingent workers -- and how NEA, as a membership association, might better support this specific subset of professionals.

A team of volunteer researchers⁴ was formed through an open call to the NEA membership in the spring of 2015. The five members of the research team then spent the summer/fall of 2015 reviewing existing literature and designing the survey instruments. The survey was

¹ While this report was delivered verbally to the NEA Executive Board in January 2017 this written report was lightly edited (mostly to fill in some gaps in footnotes) in August 2018 for public consumption.

² "Manifesto." The Adjunct Crisis. <http://adjunctcrisis.com/about/>. Accessed 6 January 2017.

³ "How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Join the Gig Economy." WBUR. Accessed 6 January 2017. <http://www.wbur.org/radioboston/2016/12/20/diane-mulcahy-gig-economy> . Accessed 6 January 2017.

⁴ Anna J. Clutterbuck-Cook (Inclusion and Diversity Coordinator, NEA; Reference Librarian, Massachusetts Historical Society), Micha Broadnax (Student, Simmons College; Digital Archivist, Emerson College), Elizabeth Carron (Smith College, later University of Michigan), Katie Fortier (Student, UMass-Boston; Knowledge Management Specialist, Pathfinder International), and Allyson Glazier (Adjunct Faculty Reference and Instruction Librarian, University of New Hampshire-Manchester).

launched on 1 April 2016 in conjunction with NEA's Spring 2016 Meeting in Portland, Maine, and remained open until 31 July 2016.

Respondents were eligible to complete the survey if:

- They were working, had worked, or are had sought/were seeking **work in the archival/library science field** within the last ten years (2005-Present) and
- During that time they had live(d) and/or work(ed) **in New England**.
- They were currently **contingently employed**, or had at any time in the past decade experienced contingent employment, as an archivist/librarian.⁵

We promoted the survey on social media, professional listservs, and through personal networks. Seventy (70) participants completed the online survey during that time and twenty-three (23) of those participated in follow-up interviews that took place over the summer/fall of 2016. The results were then analyzed by the research team for this final report.

Between 1 April and 1 October 2016 two members of our research team -- Allyson Glazier and Elizabeth Carron -- also conducted an analysis of aggregate job postings made public on the Simmons Jobline⁶ and Archives Gig⁷ websites. The purpose of this companion survey was to compare the current job market with the needs and aspirations of the workers we heard from in the primary CES survey and interviews.

This report comprises the final report and recommendations of the CES research team to the Board, as enumerated in the 2016-2020 strategic plan.⁸ At the time of this writing, the research team has not yet determined whether or not this survey will form the basis of an article for submission to a peer-reviewed journal. Whether or not an article is produced, the anonymized data from the survey will be made available in some form for further analysis by the archives community.

Findings

Online Survey

The online survey was divided into five sections: Demographic Information, Education, Paying for Your Education, Employment History, Contingent Employment Experience (a series of open-ended questions), and finally Experience Job Searching. Below we summarize the findings from the first four and final sections, followed by discussion of the qualitative

⁵ Research Statement and Participant Consent Form, see Appendix 1.

⁶ <http://blogs.simmons.edu/slis/jobline/>

⁷ <https://archivesgig.wordpress.com/>

⁸ New England Archivists Strategic Plan 2016-2020, 4.5 Inclusion and Diversity, Strategy 2.a, p. 7.

responses to both the written Contingent Employment Experience questions and the follow-up semi-structured interviews.

Part I: Demographic Information

Based on the demographic information provided by study participants, contingently-employed archivists are broadly similar to the NEA membership as a whole. This is not terribly surprising due to the fact that -- while not limited to NEA membership -- the survey was promoted most heavily through NEA channels. Fifty (71.4%) of the survey participants currently live in Massachusetts and fifty-two (74.3%) work in the state with a scattering of representation from other states. This is roughly comparable to 2015 membership data showing that 64% of the 737 members of NEA were from Massachusetts with between 3-10% hailing from each of the other five New England states or outside of the region.⁹

Table 1: In which state do you currently live? / In which state do you currently work?

	CT	ME	MA	NH	RI	VT	Other
Live	2	3	50	2	3	3	7
Work	2	3	52	1	2	3	7

Over 90% of respondents identified as white (not of Hispanic Latina/o, or Spanish origin), and over 90% identified as female. Forty-eight (68.6%) of the respondents did not identify as LGBT+ and fifty-eight (82.9%) did not identify as dis/abled and/or as someone with chronic mental or physical health concerns. Just under 80% of the respondents were between the ages of 23 and 39 (22 = between 23-29, 33 = between 30-39).

In order to gain a better understanding of respondents’ financial situation, we asked a series of questions about their household and economic responsibilities. Almost half of the respondents (48.6%) were renting and living with others, roughly a third (34.3%) were home-owners, and the remainder were in a variety of living situations including 7.1% who were living in the home of a relative. 55.7% of the respondents indicated that they were “sharing significant material resources” with another adult, and 27.1% indicated that they were at least partially financially responsible for at least one other person. Over 90% were either married or partnered and cohabiting.

[intentional space]

⁹ According to the handout given to attendees at the 2016 annual business meeting, 474 (64%) of the 2015 members were from Massachusetts, 77 (10%) from Connecticut, 36 (5%) from New Hampshire, 29 (4%) from Rhode Island, 23 (3%) from Maine, 20 (3%) from Vermont, and 76 (10%) from outside of New England.

Part II: Education

Almost all (91.4%) respondents had completed an M.A. and/or M.S. degree at the time of the survey, with three (3) in the midst of postgraduate study, two (2) having obtained a Ph.D., and one having completed a B.A./B.S. 85.7% were not currently enrolled in a degree program and 72.9% were not currently pursuing continuing education relevant to their work. Those who were mostly enrolled in a degree program were (not surprisingly) working towards degrees in archives, library science, or information science. One participant was completing an M.Ed. Those who were engaged in continuing education efforts identified a wide variety of activities including offerings in technology, digital preservation and digital asset management, management, instruction, copyright, digital humanities, and history. When asked to list the subjects in which they obtained formal training, respondents gave a wide variety of answers in addition to library and information science, archives management, and history. While concentrated in the humanities, social science and science disciplines were also represented.

Part III: Paying for Your Education

Almost three-quarters of the respondents took out student loans to finance their higher education with monthly payments ranging from between \$0.00 to \$1,700.00 per month (the majority falling between \$100-500.00). Of the 59 respondents who indicated what repayment plan they were on, 29 were on some form of income-sensitive repayment plan, 13 were on a standard repayment plan and 17 indicated “other.” Most were not responsible for another person’s debt (such as a spouse’s education debt), but 10.2% (6 respondents) indicated that their financial responsibilities included such. We asked whether respondents felt their student loan payments were affordable and while a majority answered with some version of “yes,” loan payments often came at the cost of other core expenditures such as home ownership, rent, and savings. The following comments are representative of that type of response:

Yes? They total 23% of my monthly take-home pay and are my second biggest monthly expense (my rent is 24% of my take-home pay)¹⁰

Define affordable? I am not living in poverty because of them. Are they a hindrance for things I would like to do in life, like buying property? They are affordable in that I am not going to miss payments, but there is large opportunity cost there.¹¹

When asked whether their education had been worth the cost in hindsight many answers were mixed. Respondents in general pointed to the gap between student loan burdens and

¹⁰ Interviewee #55. Interviews were numbered according to the order of the interviewee’s response to the online survey. For example, interviewee #55 was the 55th person to respond to the Google Form survey.

¹¹ Interviewee #01

anticipated income within the profession as a problem, and many were only able to afford monthly payments on income-sensitive plans.

I think, based on the amount of money archivists make, the cost of the education is not in alignment with the pay. The typical archivist annual income is less than the total base tuition at one of only a few colleges/universities that offer the program in this area. I love being an archivist and wouldn't want to change that, but the cost is overly burdensome. It's ridiculous that people with Master's degrees are earning less than 75,000 - 100,000 per year. I can make more money as an uneducated bookkeeper.¹²

Compared to the alternative of not working in my dream job because I would never have been interviewed without the training that cost me all this money? I suppose it was worth it. Will I ever be out of debt? No.¹³

The archival profession is typical of many career paths in the United States in that wages have not kept pace with the rising cost of living, leaving many workers struggling to cover expenses even when working full time.¹⁴ Close to 40% of respondents essentially said that the education was not worth the cost. Of the 58 survey respondents that shared, the total debt from undergraduate education was over 1.13 million debt in student loans: That number more than doubled, for the 57 respondents that shared that their total debt for graduate student loans neared close to 2.38 million. And while 21% did not receive non-loan assistance for undergraduate schooling, closer to 45% did not receive non-loan assistance during graduate schooling. This points to the decreased access to sources to help offset the cost of graduate education that is often required for library and information and archival work.

While 35% of respondents said yes, the education was worth it, within in those answers included explanations such as "because I can do what I love." While close to 40% of respondents said that the cost was not worth it, others gave more qualifying answers such maybe, unsure, not yet, and sometimes.

Broadly, the question asked if the respondent thought the education was worth the cost. This question came after a series of questions about money and debt. Some expressed frustration and made the correlation between the (costly) tuition of earning a master's degree in comparison to the early career/underemployed earning potential:

My education was wonderful! But taking out that many loans was stupid, given my earning potential, despite how wonderful the experience was.

¹² Interviewee #69

¹³ Interviewee #34

¹⁴ Desilver, Drew. "For most workers, real wages have barely budged in decades." Pew Research Center (9 October 2014).

<http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2014/10/09/for-most-workers-real-wages-have-barely-budged-f-or-decades/>. Accessed 25 January 2017.

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I do not feel that my MLS was worth the cost, in part because I felt so little of the curriculum prepared me for the actual tasks associated with my job. However, I did not feel, especially in a competitive market like Boston, that I would have any chance of gainful employment without it.

I'm really torn on this question (which I ask myself all the time). I think ultimately I come down on the side of it being worth the debt, but if I wasn't partners with someone with much higher earning power, I think I'd probably say no. I realize how lucky I am in that regard, and I am embarrassed that I rely so heavily on my partner for financial support.¹⁵

Part IV: Employment History

The majority of the respondents (75.7%) described themselves as professional library/archives workers, with the remaining quarter of respondents indicating pre- or paraprofessional, student, or other. The length of time they had spent in the profession working and/or job-seeking since completing their formal education varied from several months to over ten years.

Almost half of all respondents had held a position outside the field since beginning their professional education, with the majority of those individuals holding those jobs in addition to archives work in order to pay the bills or working outside the field because they could not get a job in the field. Unsurprisingly, given the parameters of the study, 72.3% of the respondents had held multiple part-time positions after completing their formal education in order to make ends meet.

The survey allowed respondents to submit information on up to ten positions held; questions asked included position title and terms, institution type, typical hours per week, compensation and benefits, and reason for leaving. In all, respondents provided information on the work conditions of 283 positions. Tables 2 and 3 enumerate the type of positions in which respondents had worked and the types of institutions at which those positions had been held.

¹⁵ All of the comments are drawn from the responses to the survey question "Do you feel now, today, that your education was worth the overall cost?"

Table 2: What was the nature of your position? (check all that apply)

Project	Contract	Full-time	Part-time	Paraprofessional	Volunteer
68 (16.8%)	45 (11.1%)	88 (21.7%)	129 (31.9%)	41 (10.1%)	33 (8.1%)

[paragraph break intentional]

Table 2: Type of Institution

Public University	Private University	Historical Society	Law Library	Museum	State/Municipal Government
27 (9.5%)	105 (37.1%)	23 (8.1%)	1 (0.3%)	23 (8.1%)	9 (3.1%)
Federal Government	Public Library	Non-Profit	Consulting	Corporate	Other
14 (4.9%)	18 (6.3%)	20 (7.0%)	2 (0.6%)	14 (4.9%)	27 (9.5%)

We asked respondents whether or not they had been given a raise during their tenure in the position; of the 253 responses to this question 167 indicated they had been given no raise (62.5%) and 100 (37.4%) said they had been given a raise. In addition, 117 (41.3%) of those positions had offered various benefits in addition to salary/wages. Of the 41.3% of positions that included benefits, sick time (now mandated for most employers by the state of Massachusetts¹⁶) and vacation time being the most frequently offered followed by some level of health insurance. Table 4 (below) shows the full results.

Table 4: Benefits offered in addition to salary/wages.

Sick Time	Vacation/Personal Time	Health Insurance	Dental Insurance	Vision Insurance
103 (88.0%)	100 (85.4%)	97 (82.9%)	85 (72.6%)	60 (51.3%)
Retirement Plan	Tuition Remission	Childcare Support	Other	
80 (68.4%)	40 (34.1%)	11 (9.4%)	14 (11.9%)	

The research team did not require that respondents complete the survey in chronological order, thus the findings do not allow us to draw conclusions regarding contingent employees movement from insecure to more secure forms of employment over time. However, stories volunteered during follow-up interviews anecdotally suggest that for many (though not all) financially-insecure archivists, a period of insecure and financially unsustainable employment

¹⁶ Massachusetts Attorney General. "Earned Sick Time." <http://www.mass.gov/ago/doing-business-in-massachusetts/workplace-rights/leave-time/earned-sick-time.html>. Accessed 6 January 2017.

was followed by more security and better pay, either in a new position or through internal promotion or expansion of the position into which they were originally hired.

In the end, I bullied my way into a full time job out of one of my part time jobs. I mean bullied a little facetiously, but I advocated very strongly for why they needed to keep me on. Hearing "That's the way it is" when you're talking about working for free, or living off of student loans. It made me far less hopeful that I'd find a job with a living wage. I also don't agree that you work for free and then hope to get hired, that seems to be something exploitative that happens to students.¹⁷

Interviewer: so you're doing full-time work but in a paraprofessional position (for paraprofessional pay) right?

Interviewee: Yes. My position was converted from a para position and there "wasn't money in the budget line" to make it Professional. So they put the job out knowing full well a recent grad would take it. 2 and a half years later, my position is being converted to a Professional position - mostly due to the incoming union.¹⁸

Part VI: Job Search Experience

Almost half (44.3%) of respondents had found their most recent position in the archives/library science field by applying in response to a job announcement; 15.7% had found their current position through networking and 17.1% through internal promotion, suggesting that after entering the field personal relationships with colleagues are almost as important as applying widely in securing work.

Contingent Employment Experience: Survey Questions and Interviews

Part V: Contingent Employment Experience

Part V of the online survey posed four open-ended questions for respondents to answer:

- (1) "What aspects of your contingent employment experience(s) did you like?"
- (2) "Which aspects of your contingent employment experience(s) did you dislike?"
- (3) Did your contingent/part-time employee experience have any impact on your personal, family, or community life?
- (4) What, if anything, would have improved your experience as a contingent employee?

¹⁷ Interviewee #27

¹⁸ Interviewee #17. Chatzy transcript; Capitalization and punctuation have not been normalized.

In response to the first question, “What aspects of your contingent employment experience(s) did you like?” people pointed toward flexible scheduling and variety of work experience as a plus. Some contingent positions offered professional development opportunities or comparatively generous wages even if the position was short-term.

I liked the ability to make my own schedule. I like the ability to do things during the day (like read in the park).

Being able to work in different institutions and on different projects. This built diverse skills and allowed for broader networking.

Exposure to different management styles and different types of repositories.

Time at home, schedule flexibility, rewarding work, good networking opportunity, great professional development support.

Having the opportunity to work while a student. Sometimes the flexibility of being available to accomplish personal tasks (e.g. car maintenance) during business hours was nice when working part time after completing my degree.

Variety of tasks, degree of autonomy, ability to learn new skills and apply them in different environments.

Colleagues; type of work I was doing.

Schedule flexibility, could travel with husband, do projects when I wanted.

Having time for my kids; volunteering with kid related activities.

Control over my own time.¹⁹

Employment was, in most cases, preferable to joblessness so at bare minimum an income of any kind was considered a benefit of the position(s). “Having a job,” wrote one respondent succinctly. Multiple people indicated that there were very few or no aspects of contingent work they enjoyed.

None.

None!

¹⁹ All of the comments are drawn from the responses to the survey question “Which aspects of your contingent employment experience(s) did you like?”

Not starving or being homeless. Some positions were interesting.

nothing.

What the fuck kind of an asshole question is that?²⁰

In response to the second question, “Which aspects of your contingent employment experience(s) did you dislike?” respondents described in vivid terms the uncertainty and precarity they faced in such positions, the generally low pay and lack of benefits in addition to wages, being closed out of professional development and other workplace opportunities for career advancement (such as committee work). The inability to plan long-term, financially or otherwise, was a major drawback.

Suffering, precariousness, poverty, living in an unheated, uninsulated garret of a 5 bedroom house with 11 people in it. The people at the food stamps office. Sending endless job applications into the void to uniformly meet silence and rejection. Balancing my despair with the knowledge that my generation is fucked and this is not my fault.

I would like to be compensated more fairly for what I what I am doing. At one job it took a long time to get the sick time that was mandated by the state and it made me incredibly discouraged about my institution.

It is very stressful to not know if the job will continue, and I am not treated as a permanent staff member (i.e., my office keeps switching or being taken away, I do not receive a professional development budget, and I am not respected as a professional in the field by my colleagues).

The job insecurity, having to apply for jobs all the time. Unemployment.

The insecurity of term positions renewed every six months; not having the renewal paperwork in hands until days before the term expired; having a supervisor forget to do the renewal paperwork and being automatically terminated by Human Resources.

Difficulty in planning for the future and accurately managing finances -- including proper management of student loan debt, the risk of signing long-term agreements like apartment or car leases, etc. The feeling of my professional experiences being de-valued because my title/job description indicate the temporary nature of contingent employment. The unavoidable anger towards the archives industry -- I love being an

²⁰ Ibid.

archivist but seeing institutions put out calls for multiple part-time, non-benefited jobs, hiring volunteers/students etc is frustrating. It has also soured me against the MLS, as I feel many schools are being incredibly irresponsible with the amount of degrees they offer and the quality of education they provide.

After the third or fourth part time position, I found it hard to believe that I wasn't qualified for any of the entry-level positions that I applied for. I had little to no money, and I was very fortunate that my parents supported me financially. It was extremely stressful not knowing if I was going to be able to pay rent, and when I graduated from grad school I went on MassHealth and food stamps while I worked part time, volunteered, and spent all of my free time job-hunting for any full time job. The only places that ever called me back were way below my skill level and experience and I was fortunate that my current job promoted me to full time after working here for about 18 months.²¹

When asked in the third question how contingent employment impacted their personal, family, and community life, many added to the specific drawbacks of contingent employment by describing the ways in which employment instability put enormous stress on their health and relationships.

I was a ball of stress. I remember going on dates and talking about my employment status and feeling awkward about it - this led to me not trusting my feelings about the relationship and being more hurt about it when it ended than I ought have. It made me rely on community much more than I would have before or do now.

I moved several states away from my spouse for several years in order to have a job as an archivist, which was very difficult emotionally and financially. I hoped that the job would turn into a permanent position, but it has not.

I had no life.

[It was] hard to make friends and/or continue a relationship because I moved so often.

It meant my partner and I had to live with his parents for several years, which we were privileged and grateful to be able to do. We currently live on our own but the stress of contract expirations and last minute renewals when I know that we have car and rent payments have exacerbated my existing anxiety disorder.²²

²¹ All of the comments are drawn from the responses to the survey question "Which aspects of your contingent employment experience(s) did you dislike?"

²² All of the comments are drawn from the responses to the survey question "Did your contingent/part-time employee experience have any impact on your personal, family, or community life?"

Finally, when asked what, if anything, could have improved their experiences as contingent employees more than one respondent agreed with the person who wrote “Not being a contingent employee”! However, aside from not being contingently employed higher wages was overwhelmingly the top priority followed by more stability and other ancillary benefits such as health insurance or opportunities for professional development.

Higher wages, better insurance.

Affordable health insurance!

Having term positions renewed earlier in the term; having longer terms for non-project based work.

Being hired as a part-time employee rather than contractor (access to sick time and some benefits).

Health insurance would make all the difference. I would rather have coverage than a raise at this point.

More control over my scheduling.

Realistic work expectations, and better pay.

At least some professional support.²³

This is an area where NEA might consider issuing guidelines or best practices, advocating for better working conditions and compensation for part-time staff.

Some respondents wrote of being unhappy in positions yet being reluctant or unable to move to another position due to lack of offers and loss of income. Nearly three-quarters of survey respondents had not turned down a job offer during their most recent search for employment, indicating that this is still very much an employer’s marketplace. Although the fact that almost one quarter of respondents *had* turned a position down is perhaps encouraging!

Interviews

In the twenty-three (23) follow-up interviews conducted by our research team, we drew on the individual responses given to these questions to inform our conversations. In each conversation, we asked the interviewee to reflect on their experience in five broad areas:

²³ All of the comments are drawn from the responses to the survey question “What, if anything, would have improved your experience as a contingent employee?”

- (1) What did they believe the role of NEA could or should be in responding to contingent employment.
- (2) What examples (if any) they had experience of organizations, employers, or communities responding in a positive, constructive way to the realities of contingent employment.
- (3) What contingent employment experiences (if any) had helped them further their careers or reach particular goals in their lives.
- (4) Participants were asked to reflect back on their job search process
- (5) Participants were asked to think about what advice they would have now for either their past selves, considering graduate study in the field or just beginning their careers, or what advice they would have for someone today considering a career in archives.

Our research team then coded each interview for the five question areas and considered the aggregate responses to each question. The following sections summarize and reflect on the responses to each area of questioning.

i. What could or should NEA do in response to contingent employment conditions.

Interviewees had many concrete suggestions on what NEA's role could be. Many noted the ways in which NEA has already supported them. Participants frequently mentioned that they received great support from the NEA Mentoring Program in terms of advice, problem solving with colleagues, and networking. Several mentioned that they were doing the SAA Mentoring Program and were satisfied with it. Others mentioned their appreciation for REPS for offering networking opportunities and hosting events that were useful to them. Participants also lauded the listserv as well as low costs for memberships and workshops.

Several discussed how NEA could be an advocate for the values of archival work to an external, non-archival audience. One participant noted that it's often difficult to make the pitch to parent institutions for funding for full-time, permanent archivists. The NEA could potentially work on developing guidance (or gather and promote resources that already exist) that understaffed archives could use to advocate for permanent positions, or more staff in general. Another survey participant mentioned that NEA could actively pursue more partnerships with other professional organizations (outside, but closely linked to the archives world) in museum and public history sectors, which could potentially strengthen advocacy efforts. This participant mentioned that these related fields have "so much common ground that the more we strengthen our numbers and grow together, the more we may be able to effect the opinions of political leaders." One participant noted that reporting the issue of contingent employment in the archives -- as this study does -- is exactly what the NEA should be doing.

Most of the remaining recommendations related to how NEA could be an advocate for archivists themselves, for the quality and rights they should be afforded in their work life. Interviewees suggested a range of workshops that NEA could offer in the future: career planning, management, leadership, job hunting, how to network, resume building and learning to promote your work. One person mentioned that they liked NEA's more technical workshops, but wished there were ones offered at a more intermediate/upper level for professional development and new skills acquisition.

Outside of continuing education, and moving more towards support for those contingently employed, participants had numerous ideas. Ideas included building a pool of professional development funds specifically for contingent employees, starting a NEA Un/underemployed Roundtable, pointing people to resources/helplines for stress related to un/underemployment, and a special peer support group for people who are contingently employed.

Participants also noted that there should be guidance for those that employ contingently-employed archivists. One person suggested that NEA could provide employers with guidance/best practices on internships and guidance on how employers can support contingent employees in their long-term career goals. Additionally, a participant mentioned that there should be guidance for employers on how to write job descriptions suitable to specific positions to help standardize job descriptions and criteria across the profession. Another participant thought NEA could pursue a survey of archivists that have recently hired someone to determine what qualifications people are looking for and why. One person mentioned that NEA should take a firm stance against unpaid internships.

Others shared additional reflections and suggestions for NEA. Some felt that NEA is too narrowly focused on Boston activities, so they were unable to take advantage of NEA as a remote member. Perhaps NEA could push for (or market better) alternative ways for people to engage in remotely, or research mechanisms that would empower people to engage virtually in NEA conversations. Another matter that came up in several interviews was the issue of too many entrants into the job market being graduated from Simmons SLIS. NEA needs to actively engage with Simmons administration to talk about how they can work better to make sure that placement after graduation has a high percentage rate. Simmons needs to work on being clearer to incoming students about the prospect of underemployment.

ii. What examples, if any, did interviewees have of organizations, employers, or communities responding in a positive, constructive way to the realities of contingent employment?

All interviewees who were asked about mentorship said they received positive mentorship on some level. Most noted that many of their most positive mentors were their supervisors both past and present. Many are still in regular contact with former supervisors and freely exchange questions via e-mail. Interviewees mentioned that helpful aspects of mentorship included: asking them their careers goals and offering advice, sharing supervisors' own

professional concerns which was beneficial to one interviewee in thinking about their future career, encouraging participation in professional groups, networking at conferences, and by communicating that they have done great work.

All interviewees who were received mentoring from the NEA or SAA Mentoring Program mentioned that it was a positive experience. These relationships were beneficial for advice about issues with supervisors, applying to new jobs, tips on interviews, and technical questions. Several mentioned that their mentors were a great source of encouragement and motivation, helping enable interviewees seek out new resources and networking opportunities.

One person mentioned that Twitter was a great source for mentors. Two mentioned that professors were not very adequate at mentoring, and instead people turned to former or current supervisors for practical professional advice.

iii. What contingent employment experiences (if any) had helped interviewees further their careers or reach particular goals in their lives.

Positive experiences

Interviewee descriptions of positive experiences within contingent positions underscored the responses to the online survey. Most positive experiences centered on the flexibility of being able to try on many hats: working in different repositories and environment, solving a range of different problems, experiencing diverse collections, and developing a range of skills that were not taught as part of educational curricula (filling in the gaps). Several participants noted that it allowed them to explore different avenues within the archival field which helped them to determine where they'd like to develop professionally in their career. As one participant put it, "all of my experiences working part-time have allowed me to grow in some way that completes the bigger picture of my career objectives."²⁴

Even though contingent employment wasn't ideal in terms of security, several interviewees noted that their supervisors treated contingent employees as professionals and took their work and input seriously. Many were encouraged by their employers to develop skills that would further their eventual career goals. Several participants appreciated being included in staff department meetings and being treated as though they were permanent staff. One person mentioned that being an intern gave him a lot of perspective on how internships should be run, which prepared him as a professional to provide great internships for incoming students who intern at his organization. Several participants appreciated being included in staff department meetings, in turn being treated as though they were permanent staff.

²⁴ Interviewee #10

One participant noted the range of expertise within contingent positions, mentioning that she's been able to be strategic about developing professionally, even as a contract worker: "Each contract position was also followed by another one with more responsibility - so in that way, I feel like I'm slowly growing my professional ability."²⁵

Negative experiences

Negative experiences outweighed positive experiences during the qualitative interviews. Some participants noted that supervisors of contingent employment/contract positions were not vested in helping employees professionally develop because they were there to be a specific job with a specific skill set within an allotted time. One participant noted of this experience, "when you're boxed in like that, you can't be a leader. I left them with recommendations regarding the collection I had worked on when my contract was up, but I'm not sure if they took actually implemented any of them."²⁶ Some mentioned frustration about not being able to attend staff meetings because of their part-time status, which prohibited them from fully understanding what the archive's operations were. People used emotive words to describe their contingent employment experience: restricted, scared, expendable, annoying, frustrating, and exhausting.

Interviewees also highlighted the ways in which contingent employment affected them on a personal level. One participant mentioned that the lack of organizational support at her work didn't allow them to think about developing professionally: "When you're living hand-to-mouth you aren't planning or thinking long-term."²⁷ Another participant mentioned, "I feel like I can't plan anything and I need to constantly be working since I don't know when/how long my next job will be." Others mentioned struggling with no benefits and sick time. Low morale and self-esteem were also brought up in several interviews. One person mentioned the emotional task of living in a constant state of uncertainty. Another said of their juggling of simultaneous part-time jobs, "I really think I've lost perspective at this point. I am seriously teetering on the brink of exhaustion between the part-time project archivist job, a part-time reference job, working as an independent researcher for hire, and then continuing the job search and interview prep."²⁸

Many viewed the drawbacks of contingent employment as commonplace and accept it as a reality: if you do work that you love, you accept the personal and structural drawbacks that come with part-time work. One interviewee explained, "I stayed committed to taking jobs that involved the kind of work I wanted to be doing, and moving towards doing permanently, even if the jobs paid less, or were less stable than other, less interesting positions."²⁹ Many

²⁵ Interviewee #38

²⁶ Interviewee #11

²⁷ Interviewee #02

²⁸ Interviewee #30

²⁹ Interviewee #03

participants seem to have normalized the contingent employment experience in the archival field.

Several, however, questioned and probed this idea of normalization further. Several participants noted the cyclical effect that depending on unpaid/contingent employment has in the archival field. One interviewee mentioned that the general DIY mentality in the archival field, which has been largely adopted by necessity by a typically underfunded archival community, has the effect of depending on unpaid labor to get work done within archives and yet also “sustains that we're a perpetually underfunded profession.”³⁰

iv. Reflections on the job search process

Participants mentioned using a number of resources to gain insight about potential job opportunities. Many of the resources were either used or considered in compiling data about contingent job listings as part of this study. Some of the suspected resources mentioned included Simmons jobline, SAA, ALA, RBMS, NEA, INLJ, Archives Gig, Inside Higher Ed, code4lib.org, Indeed.com, and SimplyHired. Two unsuspecting sources a member expressed consulting include Global Museum and NY Council of Libraries. Respondents also mentioned utilizing professional connections networks to become aware of opportunities.

In searching for opportunities, respondents also mentioned employing tools such as use google alerts, RSS feeds, bookmarking web pages, and subscriptions when possible to automate the process of being informed.

A few respondents spoke to their reflections in being more selective about the positions to which they were applying to. They mentioned factors such as loan payments influencing the (self-identified) high volume of resumes and cover letters being crafted.

About 26% searched for jobs outside of libraries and archives in their most recent job search. In hindsight, an area that the survey could have explored is the feasibility or interest of folks pursuing opportunities outside of their current location. A few participants mentioned that the need to be flexible in job searching and some included location in that suggestion. With over 50% of participants partnered (not to mention other obligations as it relates to other relationships in a geographical space), I imagine that moving might not be a consideration for many of the participants.

v. What advice did interviewees have now for either their past selves, considering graduate study in the field or just beginning their careers, or for someone today considering a career in archives.

³⁰ Interviewee #27

When asked about what they might go back and do over, respondents were (perhaps understandably) very reluctant to question their past decisions. Interviewees framed their student debt in almost aggressively personal-choice terms, and solutions to the debt and employment challenges were typically also framed in terms of personal development strategies rather than an opportunity for collective action and/or industry-wide change. One respondent to the online survey wrote:

I just work all the time between school, my part-time jobs, and volunteer work. I have to and I always will have too. I am a first generation american, my parents didn't go to college so in some way working hard all the time seems very normal to me. I have to budget better. I made choices regarding taking out a lot of student loans, do I have to deal with that but that was my choice not others. I have a fairly positive outlook and I have been unemployed for a short period of time and so I can't help but be grateful to have a job at all.³¹

More than one interviewee suggested that people considering a career in the field be aware that job prospects are challenging, and that job seekers must be realistic, flexible, passionate, and active in professional organizations. Others suggestions included looking outside one's comfort zone, developing diverse skill sets, having support networks in place for difficult time. Cautionary advice such as "I don't know if I would advise someone to enter this field unless they were 100% sure"³² and anecdotes such as "I was planning up to a year to find my first [job] so budgeting for that is important" were also shared.³³ The importance of experience before school and during school, along with a diversity and distinguishing trajectories were also expressed. Even with such intentionality, one respondent spoken to external challenges that seemed unavoidable "because there was a job shortage, it was hard to be strategic about career choices."³⁴

Appendix 1: Research Instrument Online Survey

The team used Google Forms to create the survey, which was open for responses between 1 April 2016 and 31 July 2016. Below are the questions posed to survey respondents.

Question text is indicated by *.

Instructional text is indicated with *italics*.

³¹ Response to the survey question "Did your contingent/part-time employee experience have any impact on your personal, family, or community life?"

³² Interviewee #24

³³ Interviewee #05

³⁴ Interviewee #03

The nature of response requested is indicated in brackets: [multiple choice].

Online survey

Welcome

Thank you for your interest in the Contingent Employment Study!

Your responses will help New England Archivists (NEA) better support contingently-employed members in New England.

This survey should take thirty to forty (30-40) minutes to complete.

On the following page, please review and sign the research statement and consent form before beginning the survey.

THIS SURVEY WILL BE OPEN THROUGH 31 JULY 2016.

TECH NOTES:

This is a Google Form survey that may not be compatible with all browsers. If you are having trouble with the text entry fields, we recommend using the Chrome browser to complete the survey.

If you need to correct your responses while in the process of taking the survey, please be sure to use INTERNAL NAVIGATION rather than your browser's "back" button in order to ensure that your responses are not lost.

Research Statement

The purpose of this research study is to collect data and personal narratives that will help us better understand the condition of contingent employment among archivists/librarians in New England. At the end of the study, the research team will make recommendations to New England Archivists (NEA) regarding ways to better support those who are contingently employed in the field. The results of this study will also be made available to the public in a format to be determined.

You are eligible to participate in this study if:

1. You are working, have worked, or have sought/are seeking work in the archival/library science field within the last ten years (2005-Present).

2. During any part of that time you live(d) and/or work(ed) in New England (Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, or Vermont).

3. You are currently contingently employed, or have at any time in the past decade experienced contingent employment, as an archivist/librarian.

Contingent employment, for the purpose of this study, includes involuntary unemployment/job-seeking, temporary/term-limited positions, grant-funded positions, part-time positions, multiple part-time positions simultaneously, employment without benefits colleagues at the same institution enjoy (e.g. vacation time, health insurance, retirement contributions), paraprofessional work you were hired for after obtaining degree, and paraprofessional work you remained in after earning professional qualifications due to lack of professional opportunities.

Study participation consists of completing an online survey designed to gather demographic, educational, and employment data. If, at the end of the survey, you indicate a willingness to be contacted for a follow-up interview then a member of the research team will follow up to schedule an interview. In the interview, you will be asked questions about your experience of and opinions about contingent employment conditions in the archival/library science field.

Consent to Participant

PARTICIPATION IN THIS RESEARCH IS VOLUNTARY.

You are free to decline to participate or to withdraw your participation at any point, without penalty.

There are no risks associated with this study greater than those of day to day living. To the extent you share personal stories with us, there is a risk of loss of privacy. However, no names of people or institutions will be used in any published reports of this research. Only the research team will have full access to the research data.

The research data will be kept in a secure location. At the conclusion of the study, all identifying information will be removed and the anonymized data will be kept by the principal researcher (Anna Clutterbuck-Cook). Recordings of oral interviews will be destroyed at the end of the study.

There will be no direct benefits or compensation made to you for participating in this research.

There will be no financial cost to you for participating in this research.

If you have any further questions about this study, you may contact the principal researcher and NEA's Inclusion and Diversity Coordinator Anna Clutterbuck-Cook at diversity@newenglandarchivists.org or by phone at 617-646-0561.

You may print out this page for your records or email the principal researcher for a copy of the research statement and consent form at any time.

*By signing my name below, I accept this research statement and consent to participate in this research study. [text box provided]

PART I: Demographics

You will have an opportunity to provide your contact information on the final page of this survey if you are willing to be contacted for an interview. The questions below are designed to capture demographic information to help us understand your employment situation in social context.

*In which state do you currently live? [multiple choice]

- Connecticut
- Maine
- Massachusetts
- New Hampshire
- Rhode Island
- Vermont
- Outside of New England

*In which state do you currently work? [multiple choice]

- Connecticut
- Maine
- Massachusetts
- New Hampshire
- Rhode Island
- Vermont
- Outside of New England

*How long is your current commute (one way, in minutes)? [text box provided]

*How do you most often get to work? [multiple choice]

- Bicycling
- Driving
- Public Transit
- Walking

Other [text box provided]

*What is your age? [multiple choice]

18-22

23-29

30-39

40-49

50-59

60-69

70+

*What is your race/ethnicity? [multiple choice]

Asian

Black or African American

Native American

Pacific Islander

White/Caucasian

Prefer not to say

Other [text box provided]

*Are you Hispanic, Latino/a, or Spanish in origin? [Yes/No]

*What is your gender identity? [multiple choice]

Female

Male

Other [text box provided]

*Do you identify as LGBT+? [Yes/No]

[if yes] *You indicated that you identify as LGBT+ on the last screen. If you would like to specify further, please tell us what language you use to self-identify. [text box provided]

*Do you identify as dis/abled and/or as someone with chronic mental or physical health concerns. [Yes/No]

[if yes] *You indicated that you identify as dis/abled and/or as someone with chronic mental or physical health concerns on the last screen. If you would like to specify further, please tell us what language you use to self-identify. [text box provided]

*What is your current housing situation?

Dormitory housing

Home-owner

Homeless
Living in the home of a relative
Renting, living alone
Renting, living with others,
Other [text box provided]

*Do you have another adult or adult(s) with whom you share significant material resources?
Please indicate yes if you are in ANY form of relationship in which you are financially, socially, and/or legally responsible for one another -- for example sharing a bank account, helping to cover student loan payments, if you are co-owners of a home, or co-parenting a child or children. [Yes/No]

[if yes] *You indicated in the last question that you share material resources with another adult or adults. What is your relationship with this person or persons? [multiple choice]
Partnered (not legally married), cohabiting
Partnered (not legally married), living separately
Married, cohabiting
Married, living separately
Other [text box provided]

*Is there anyone for whom you are partially or fully financially responsible? [Yes/No]
This may be a legal dependent or someone with whom you share financial resources more equitably. Indicate "Yes" if your current financial responsibilities are disproportionately higher than the other person(s).

[if yes] *In the last question you indicated you are partially or fully financially responsible for another individual. Are they your (check all that apply):
Parent(s)
Children
Spouse/partner(s)
Other relative(s)
Roommate(s)
Other [text box provided]

*Are there any other life experiences you feel have bearing on your experience as a worker that you would like us to be aware of for this research? [text box provided]

Part II: Education

In this section, please provide us information about your educational background.

*What is the highest level of education you have attained?

Some high school
High school graduate
Some undergraduate study
B.A./B.S.
Some postgraduate study
M.A./M.S.
PhD
Other [text box provided]

*Are you currently enrolled in a degree program? [Yes/No]

[if yes] *What degree are you working toward? (e.g. M.L.S. in Archives Management, Ph.D. in Russian History) [text box provided]

*Are you currently pursuing (non-degree granting) continuing education relevant to your work? [Yes/No]

[if yes] *What further credentials or skills are you working toward? [text box provided]

*Please list ALL of your majors/minors/areas of concentration/subjects in which you have received formal educational training, including undergraduate, graduate, and any other certifications (e.g. Biology, French, Library Science, Law) [text box provided]

Part III: Paying for Your Education

In this section please help us understand how you financed your education.

*Did you work for pay while completing your degrees (check all that apply)? [multiple choice]

Yes, part time as a high school
No, I did not work as a high school student
Yes, part time as an undergraduate
Yes, full time as an undergraduate
No, I did not work as an undergraduate
Yes, part time while in graduate school
Yes, full time while in graduate school
No, I did not work while in graduate school

*Did you receive non-loan assistance for your UNDERGRADUATE schooling? [Yes/No]

[if yes] *In the last question you indicated that you received non-loan assistance for your UNDERGRADUATE schooling. Please indicate who assisted you with tuition or living expenses (check all that apply): [multiple choice]

- Parent
- Non-parental family member
- Spouse
- Employer
- Grants/scholarships
- Other [text box provided]

*Did you receive non-loan assistance for your GRADUATE schooling? [Yes/No]

[if yes] *In the last question you indicated that you received non-loan assistance for your GRADUATE schooling. Please indicate who assisted you with tuition or living expenses (check all that apply): [multiple choice]

- Parent
- Non-parental family member
- Spouse
- Employer
- Grants/scholarships
- Other [text box provided]

*Did you receive non-loan assistance for any ADDITIONAL schooling? [Yes/No]

[if yes] *In the last question you indicated that you received non-loan assistance for your ADDITIONAL schooling. Please indicate who assisted you with tuition or living expenses (check all that apply): [multiple choice]

- Parent
- Non-parental family member
- Spouse
- Employer
- Grants/scholarships
- Other [text box provided]

*Did you take out student loans for your higher education? [Yes/No]

[if yes] *In the previous section you indicated that you took out student loans for your undergraduate and/or graduate education. Please give us an idea of how much debt you took on in order to earn your degrees.*

*Please indicate in numbers rounded to the nearest 100 (e.g. 40,500) how much you took out in student loans to complete your UNDERGRADUATE degree. [text box provided]

*Please indicate in numbers rounded to the nearest 100 (e.g. 40,500) how much you took out in student loans to complete your GRADUATE degree. [text box provided]

*Please indicate in numbers rounded to the nearest 100 (e.g. 40,500) how much you took out in student loans to complete your ADDITIONAL/OTHER schooling. [text box provided]

*Please indicate the CURRENT TOTAL (including interest) in student loans you are carrying rounded to the nearest 100 (e.g. 120,000) [text box provided]

*What are your current TOTAL monthly payments on your student loan debt, rounded to the nearest 1.00 (e.g. 317) [text box provided]

*What type of payment plan are you currently on? [multiple choice]

Standard

Graduated

Income-based

Income-contingent

Pay as you earn

Other [text box provided]

*Are you partially or fully responsible for any other person's student loan debt (e.g. spouse, child)? [Yes/No]

*[if yes] What is the outstanding amount of that additional student loan debt, rounded to the nearest 100 (e.g. 80,500)? [text box provided]

*[if yes] What are the TOTAL monthly payments on that additional student loan debt, rounded to the nearest 1.00 (e.g. 317)? [text box provided]

*Are your TOTAL monthly student loan payments affordable? (Including your own loans and any other person's you are financially responsible for.) [text box provided]

*Do you feel now, today, that your education was worth the overall cost? [text box provided]

*Is there anything else you wish to share about your experience of paying for your education? [text box provided]

PART IV: Employment History

*As a library/archives worker do you consider yourself [multiple choice]

Student

Pre-professional

Paraprofessional
Professional
Other [text box provided]

*For how long have you been working or job-seeking since completing your formal education? (Please provide the TOTAL length of time, rounding up to the nearest month)
[text box provided]

*Have you held jobs outside of the archives/library science field since beginning your education in archives/library science? [Yes/No]

[if yes] *In the last question you indicated that you had held jobs outside of the archives/library science field since beginning your education in archives/library science. Why did you take the position(s)? (check all that apply) [multiple choice]

I held the non-library/archives position(s) in addition to work in my chosen field in order to pay the bills.

I remained in a position I held prior to my decision to pursue library science/archives work.

I was unable to find a position in my chosen field.

The position paid better than positions in my chosen field.

The work was intrinsically interesting to me.

Other [text box provided]

*Have you, at any time since completing your formal education, held multiple positions simultaneously to make ends meet? [Yes/No]

[if yes] *In the previous question you indicated that you have, at some point, held multiple jobs to make ends meet. Answer this question thinking of the time you have held the highest number of positions at one time. How many jobs did you work during that time and roughly how many total hours per week? [text box provided]

Work History

[respondents were able to complete up to TEN job profiles with the following questions]

For each position you have either worked or volunteered for in the archives/library science field, please answer the following questions. Please include both part- and full-time employment and unpaid volunteer positions. DO NOT include internships that were required for your course of study and for which you received academic credit.

*Position title [text box provided]

*Type of institution [multiple choice]

- Consulting
- Corporate
- Federal government
- Historical society
- Law library
- Museum
- No-profit
- Private university
- Public library
- Public university
- State/municipal government
- Other [text box provided]

*What was the nature of your position? (check all that apply) [multiple choice]

- Contract
- Full-time staff
- Paraprofessional
- Part-time
- Project
- Volunteer

*Typical hours per week [text box provided]

*Length of time in the position (be specific: total years and months) [text box]

*If this was a paid position, please indicate how much you earned when hired (e.g. 30,000 - please do not include decimals or dollar signs) *If salaried, provide your annual salary upon hire. If hourly, provide hourly wage upon hire.* [text box provided]

*Did you receive any raise during your time in this position? [Yes/No]

*Did you receive any benefits from your employer apart from salary/wages? [Yes/No]

*If yes, please select below (check all that apply) [multiple choice]

- Health
- Dental
- Vision
- Tuition remission
- Retirement contributions

Sick time
Vacation/personal time
Childcare discounts
Other [text box provided]

*Reason for leaving (check all that apply) [multiple choice]

To seek/offered a new position
Outgrew the position
Work not sustainable
Financially not sustainable
Funding for the position ran out
Geographic relocation
Position eliminated by employer
Employment terminated
Still employed
Promoted within organization

*Have you held any additional positions? [Yes/No]

PART V: Contingent Employment Experience

In this section, please answer the questions by considering only your experience in CONTINGENT employment situations. As a reminder, the definition of contingent employment for the purposes of this research includes:

- *Involuntary unemployment/job-seeking*
- *Temporary/term-limited positions*
- *Grant-funded positions*
- *Part-time positions*
- *Multiple part-time positions simultaneously*
- *Employment without benefits colleagues at the same institution enjoy (e.g. vacation time, health insurance, retirement contributions)*
- *Paraprofessional work you were hired for after obtaining your professional degree*
- *Paraprofessional work you remained in after earning professional qualifications due to lack of professional opportunities.*

*Which aspects of your contingent employment experience(s) did you like? [text box provided]

*Which aspects of your contingent employment experience(s) did you dislike? [text box provided]

*Did your contingent/part-time employee experience have any impact on your personal, family, or community life? [text box provided]

*What, if anything, would have improved your experience as a contingent employee? [text box provided]

PART VI: Experience Job Searching

In this section, please share your experience job searching in the archives/library science field.

NOTE: This survey only asks about your most recent job search. Additional job search experiences can be discussed in the follow-up interview.

*How did you find your current (or most recent if not currently employed) job in the archives/library science field? [multiple choice]

Internal promotion

Job announcement

Networking

Recruited by employer

Temp agency

Other [text box provided]

*If you are currently job seeking, for how many months have you been applying for positions? [text box provided]

*If you are currently employed, think back to your MOST RECENT job search. How many months were you applying for positions? [text box provided]

*During what year(s) was this job search conducted? [text box provided]

*During your current/most recent job search period, how many applications did you submit? [text box provided]

*During your current/most recent job search period, how many interviews were you granted? [text box provided]

*Were you offered any positions during your job search that you turned down? [Yes/No]

[if yes] *In the last question you indicated that you turned down a job offer. For what reason(s) did you turn down the job offer? [text box provided]

*During your current/most recent job search have you or did you apply for positions outside of the archives/library science field? [Yes/No]

[if yes] *In the last question you indicated that you sought work outside the library science/archives field. In what field(s) did you seek employment?

PART VII: Interested in Being Interviewed?

Thank you for taking the time to complete this written survey! Your responses will assist the Contingent Employment Study research team build a picture of contingent employment in the archives/library science field across New England. Would you be interested in having one of our research team members contact you for a follow-up interview.

The interview will most likely be conducted via Chatzy, a private and anonymous chat hosting service. If you would prefer to meet in person or conduct your interview via telephone or Skype, our team can also make arrangements to follow-up using those methods.

*[Yes/No]

[if yes] *Please provide contact information below. This contact information will not be shared beyond the survey team.*

*Name

*Preferred pronouns

*Preferred method of contact (We will use your preferred method of contact to follow-up and how and when you would like to be interviewed.)

*Email

*Telephone

You're Done! Thank you!

Thank you for completing our survey!

Please pass this survey along to friends and colleagues: [URL provided].

If you indicated that you are interested in participating in a follow-up interview, a member of our research team will be in contact within 15 business days.

If you declined to participate in a follow-up interview, THANK YOU again for completing this survey. Your responses will help us understand how to better support the contingently-employed members of our profession.

The research findings will be analyzed and the final report made available publicly through NEA outlets, likely at some point in 2017.

If you have any follow-up questions, you are welcome to contact principal researcher Anna Clutterbuck-Cook at diversity@newenglandarchivists.org at any time.

Please press "SUBMIT" below and have a great day!

Appendix 2: Research Instrument

Semi-structured Interview Questions

This was a semi-structured interview, during which we allowed the interviewee to follow their thoughts and reflections on the following five areas of experience:

- What role could or should NEA play in responding to contingent employment?
- What examples (if any) do you have of organizations, employers, or communities responding in a positive, constructive way to the realities of contingent employment?
- What contingent employment experiences (if any) helped you further your career or reach particular goals?
- What was your job search process like and how might it have been improved?
- What advice do you have now for your past self, considering graduate study in the field or just beginning your career, or what advice would you have for someone today considering a career in archives?

The following interview instructions were prepared by the principle researcher for the team interviewers:

When a Chatzy session commences, please begin with some opening statements reminding interviewees of the parameters of the interview and their rights as interviewees. Below is some boilerplate to cut and paste.

I recommend cutting and pasting paragraph by paragraph so the participant has time to read the text rather than being given a single giant wall of information :).

Welcome!

Thank you for completing our survey and for your willingness to participate in this follow-up interview for NEA's contingent employment study. Before I ask the first question, I need to provide you with some information about the interview and give you the opportunity to raise any questions or concerns you have about the process.

Participation in this interview is voluntary. You are free to decline to answer any question or to end the interview at any point, without penalty.

There are no risks associated with this study greater than those of day to day living. To the extent you share personal stories with us, there is a risk of loss of privacy. However, no names of people or institutions will be used in any published reports of this research. Only the research team will have full access to the research data.

Only you and I have access to this Chatzy room. At the end of this chat session, I will save the text of the chat to our cloud storage and clear the chat history from the Chatzy room.

The research data will be kept in a secure location. At the conclusion of the study, all identifying information will be removed and the anonymized data will be kept by the principal researcher (Anna Clutterbuck-Cook).

There will be no direct benefits or compensation made to you for participating in this research. There will be no financial cost to you for participating in this research.

If you have any questions now or during our interview, please ask them at any time. If you have questions about this study after we have completed this session you may contact the principal researcher and NEA's Inclusion and Diversity Coordinator Anna Clutterbuck-Cook at diversity@newenglandarchivists.org or by phone at 617-646-0561.

Please confirm that you are comfortable participating in this interview at this time, or let me know if you have questions or concerns before we proceed.

[obtain consent to the interview from the participant]

Thank you!

[ask first question...]

At the end of the interview, please be sure to thank the person again for their time.