



Mural by Bal Krishna Banmala, at Camp Hub, a community-based art project on post-earthquake recovery. Bhaktapur, Nepal 2015.
Photo: Christiane Brosius

‘Urban Heritage Mining’: An International Summer School Introducing Documentation and Archiving of Heritage in Nepal

Heritage as Placemaking: The Politics of Solidarity and Erasure in South Asia, a joint research project of Heidelberg University, South Asian University (Delhi), Social Science Baha (Kathmandu) and SOAS University of London; funded by the Swedish Riksbankens Jubileumsfond is organising an International Summer School, supported by funding from Heidelberg University’s Flagship Initiative ‘Transforming Cultural Heritage’, in collaboration with the DAAD-funded partnership ‘Urban Transformation and Placemaking: Learning from South Asia and Germany’ (Kathmandu University, School of Planning and Architecture Delhi, Heidelberg University).

What: In-person summer school taking place in the Kathmandu Valley, Nepal

When: 22nd–29th of September 2022

Application deadline: 8th July, 2022

The goal of the Summer School is to offer on-site training in the critical practice of ‘urban heritage mining’, a dynamic, multidisciplinary approach to collecting, interpreting, and working with intangible and built heritage in the Kathmandu Valley. With an international teaching team, we will work closely with participants to identify their requirements to train individual academic or professional skills. The Summer School is suitable for graduate students, PhD students in social sciences and other fields of study that use qualitative approaches (including heritage studies, archival and museum studies, sociology and anthropology, cultural studies, art history, history, and development studies, among others), as well as heritage professionals and activists. All researchers who have an interest in learning more about ‘urban heritage mining methods’ are invited to send in their applications.

What is the ‘Summer School: Urban Heritage Mining’ about?

‘Urban mining’ is the process of recovering rare materials through treatment, upcycling, or extracting what has been termed waste material. In an analogy to ‘urban mining’, the Summer School ‘Urban Heritage Mining’ is concerned with rare materials engaging with various forms of heritage in the Kathmandu Valley. We recognise that, in dealing with the past, we are assembling and exploring limited resources. We understand that documentation is a form of upcycling, a way of making formerly undervalued and unrecognised information available for ‘extraction’. Join us to critically engage with technical, ethical, and historical questions of heritage documentation and archiving, wonder and marvel in the wealth of the past and discover the many ways of researching, communicating, and displaying heritage. Heritage is the engagement with place, text, people, and things across time. The summer school ‘Urban Heritage Mining’ explores the city’s rare materials and its archival treasures theoretically and

practically. The summer school is partly research-based, with field visits of heritage sites and archives in the Kathmandu Valley, guided and self-curated heritage walks, and opportunities to learn how to mine intangible heritage to create legacy.

Urban Mining is a process, an active engagement with sources of the past. The summer school introduces participants to:

- Principles of Critical Heritage research
- Qualitative data collection techniques
- Digital heritage approaches
- Principles of data management (archival organisation and metadata design)

The summer school can provide students with certificates of participation but does not offer the option of earning university credits.

Places in the summer school are limited. There is a tuition fee of Euro 1,200 for working professionals. The tuition for the summer school is free to all applicants from Nepal and for MA and PhD students. (Nepali and international). Additionally, applicants can be considered for travel stipends and funding to cover the costs of accommodation in the Kathmandu Valley. Please note your travel and accommodation needs in your application (see #5, below). Please note that the tuition fee and/or travel stipends do not cover costs for meals.

The Summer School 'Urban Heritage Mining' especially encourages graduate students, early career professionals, as well as community archivists and activists, faculty, and independent researchers to submit their proposal. Students from underrepresented minorities and low-income groups are particularly welcome to apply.

Deadline for applications: 8th July 2022

The final selection of participants will be communicated by the **11th of July 2022**.

To apply, please **email Dr. Stefanie Lotter (sl70@soas.ac.uk) with the following:**

1. Name, email address, telephone number, address
2. Academic/Organisational Affiliation:
Include: Name of Institution (if applicable), Role and Title, Department, and Supervisor/Line Manager/Advisor (including their email)
3. Statement of Interest (300 words maximum):
The Statement of Interest must include...
 - Why are you interested in the topic of 'urban heritage mining'? What would you like to learn by taking part in the Summer School?
 - What prior experience do you have (a) with archives and heritage documentation and (b) with urban heritage studies?
4. Research Agenda (200 words maximum)
The Research Agenda must include...
 - Are you currently working on a related topic? How does the Summer School 'Urban Heritage Mining' support your current interest/work/research?
 - How does the Summer School align with your future professional goals?
5. If you wish to be considered for a travel and accommodation stipend:
 - What types of transportation would you require to reach the summer school (flights, train, bus)? Do you require a place to stay in the Kathmandu Valley for the duration of the summer school? Please note that we cannot confirm funding to everyone selected.

Vision, Objectives, and Learning Outcomes

The International Summer School aims to explore 'archival waste material' through extraction, treatment, and upcycling. We imagine 'archival waste material' as data wasting away in archives, items that have not yet been mined to their full potential due to a lack of cataloguing, metadata, or archival access. We see 'urban heritage mining' as a process of revelation, in contrast to the cumulative process of collecting. Rejecting the notion of archival research as a purely cerebral activity, we embrace aspects of physical labour that the notion of 'mining' suggests. Approaching the archive as researchers and

'urban heritage miners' in a collaborative way, we question collection policies and management to discuss what constitutes 'authentic' and 'rare materials' as well as 'archival waste'. We ask how documentation shapes communities, their sense of belonging, and their collective memories. Sourcing, assembling, and sharing data is by no means understood as a neutral tool, but as part of the larger process that links communal identification and placemaking. It is here that we see the future of archiving urban heritage as an opening. Community archives, crowdsourced documentation initiatives, and widening access policies have the capacity to transform and democratise heritage and its interpretation.

Participating students will expand their knowledge of qualitative methods of studying urban heritage, engaging with different categories of archives. They will learn directly from practitioners (e.g. architects, urban designers, heritage conservation experts) who will introduce them to a wide range of heritage methodologies. Completing the summer school and working through its practical tasks will enable students to apply an enhanced methodological toolkit to their future research and archival work.

Objectives

1. To explore the city's past through its archives (interpret text, sound, image, objects, built environs).
2. To engage with heritage sector professions, institutions, and projects (understand professionalism in the sector).
3. To relate individual and collective memory to archival materiality (connect places and people).
4. To practically engage with 'urban heritage mining' (through archives, communal collections, performance and heritage walks, storytelling and everyday heritage practices).

Learning Outcomes

1. Understand and be able to communicate the role and value of 'urban heritage mining' and public history as components of cultural heritage making.
2. Develop an understanding of the relationships of memory, politics, public debate, and social discourse in light of public access to heritage.
3. Increase the awareness of how to communicate with audiences and crowdsource knowledge effectively.
4. Show awareness of ethical, legal, and social implications of archival research and the work with public history.
5. Gain an enhanced awareness of the wider relationship between identity formation, communal heritage, and social inclusion.



The International Summer School 'Urban Heritage Mining' is part of the 'Heritage as Placemaking' project, a collaboration between the Social Science Baha (Kathmandu), South Asian University (Delhi), SOAS, University of London and the HTCS (Heidelberg University). It is organised by Prof. Dr. Christiane Brosius (Heidelberg), Dr. Stefanie Lotter (London), and Dr. Sabin Ninglekhu (Kathmandu).



The Summer School is jointly funded by the Riksbankens Jubileumsfond, the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and the Flagship Initiative 'Transforming Cultural Heritage' at Heidelberg University.