

# Museums and Collections Projects Program 2021

## University of Melbourne

### Harry Brookes Allen Museum of Anatomy and Pathology

#### Project Description

##### Collection Management – Cataloguing, Documenting and Storing, Comparative Anatomy Collection

#### The Project

This project offers the opportunity to become involved in the organisation, documentation and rehousing of a collection of zoology and comparative anatomy specimens that date from the early 20th century. The project contributes to the accessibility, long-term preservation, storage and appreciation of the collection.

#### Background

The [Harry Brookes Allen Museum of Anatomy and Pathology](#) has one of the largest collections of anatomical and pathological specimens and teaching models in Australia and serves as an educational facility for students studying medicine and related scientific disciplines. The majority of the 12,000 objects within the collection are dissected human remains (organs, systems or regions), some of which date back to the time of Sir Harry Brookes Allen (1854–1926). Most of the museum is arranged according to anatomical regions and systems of the human body, with corresponding pathologies. The Harry Brookes Allen Museum's collection also includes a significant collection of historical plaster, papier-mâché and wax anatomical models imported from Europe in the 19th and 20th centuries, historical death masks, a wax dermatological moulage collection, and an extensive comparative anatomy collection.

The Comparative Anatomy Collection comprises over 300 specimens that have recently been identified in the HBA Museum collections. These include a varied collection of animal bones and skulls, and skeletal preparations, which were used for teaching in the early 20th century. Much of the collection can be attributed to anatomy professor, Frederic Wood Jones, however further research is necessary to determine the exact provenance and history of this collection.

#### Details

Under the guidance of the Curator, the student will assist with documenting, cataloguing, and organising the storage of the Comparative Anatomy Collection. The information generated will be incorporated into Vernon, the museum's electronic database. Once documented, the comparative anatomy collections will be organised and placed into the museum's storerooms. The student will ideally have a basic understanding of collection management principles specific to the documentation of museum objects (or study discipline in a related area), good organisation and communication skills, and the ability to work independently. Knowledge of the correct procedures for the safe handling of museum objects is desirable, as this position requires the close inspection of vulnerable collection items. An interest in comparative anatomy/zoology would be ideal.

#### Benefits

Opportunity to work at close hand with one of the University of Melbourne's extensive cultural collections and for professional development through experience in collection management procedures and practice. Satisfaction gained from documenting the collection and seeing it rehoused. The application of collection management principles to the University's cultural collections enhances our long-term understanding, management and appreciation of the collections.

#### Supervisor

Rohan Long, Curator, Harry Brookes Allen Museum of Anatomy and Pathology

