

Transnational Histories of Voluntary Action Network

The Voluntary Action History Society is seeking expressions of interest for a proposed networking programme on the theme of 'transnational histories of voluntary action' in all periods of history, including:

- comparative study of voluntary action in different countries/regions;
- history of international organisations;
- study of transnational movements or networks of people, ideas and funds.

Historians are increasingly realising that 'history must be understood, not simply as a sum of national histories or a chronicle of inter-state affairs, but also as a story of transnational connections and circulations, by people, goods, capital, ideas and tastes' (*The Palgrave Dictionary of Transnational History*, ed., Pierre-Yves Saunier and Akira Iriye, 2009). The history of voluntary action is a particularly rich field for transnational and comparative history, from eighteenth-century hurricane relief funds and transatlantic anti-slavery campaigns to the work of development NGOs and international volunteering programmes after the Second World War.

Voluntary Action includes the study of all activity taking place outside the sphere of governments or the private/for-profit sectors, including but not only: charities, philanthropic or civil society associations; humanitarianism and benevolence; religious organisations and missionary societies; mutual aid and friendly societies; non-governmental organisations (NGOs); sports, leisure and social clubs and societies; cultural and educational associations, museums and galleries; voluntary medical, social or community work; campaigning, fundraising and volunteering.

We are looking to find partners both inside and outside the UK. Activities may include:

- Formation of an international research network
- Organisation of workshops or conferences in the UK and outside the UK
- Publication of a book or books on the topic
- Applications to fund collaborative work, for example Leverhulme Trust International Networks

About the Voluntary Action History Society

The Voluntary Action History Society is the UK's leading organisation promoting the historical study of charity, voluntary associations and volunteering. It was established in 1991 and is run by a committee of established academic and postgraduate researchers based at institutions across the UK. We host a monthly seminar at the Institute of Historical Research, University of London, put on regular postgraduate training workshops and organise international conferences. 2011 saw the publication of two books resulting from recent VAHS conferences:

Melanie Oppenheimer and Nicholas Deakin (eds.) *Beveridge and Voluntary Action in Britain and the Wider British World* (Manchester University Press, 2011)

Colin Rochester, George Campbell Gosling, Alison Penn and Meta Zimmeck (eds.) *Understanding the Roots of Voluntary Action: Historical Perspectives on Current Social Policy* (Sussex Academic Press, 2011)

If you are interested, please contact us by 19 November 2011

Georgina Brewis (Institute of Education, University of London, UK) g.brewis@ioe.ac.uk

George Campbell Gosling (Oxford Brookes University, UK) gcgosling@brookes.ac.uk

Peter Grant (City University, UK) p.grant@city.ac.uk

Melanie Oppenheimer (University of New England, Australia) moppenhe@une.edu.au



www.vahs.org.uk

www.facebook.com/VoluntaryActionHistorySociety

Follow us on Twitter @vahs_uk