# History of Britain’s Chinese workers will be told

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Now a small army of volunteers will spend the next three years charting the role of Chinese workers in such a wide range of employment including seafaring, laundering and catering.

The Ming-Ai (London) Institute’s is planning to recruit up to 80 volunteers to research and document the impact of Britain’s fourth largest ethnic minority community on life in the capital and elsewhere in the country.

A series of road shows held at Chinese community centres across London will help to identify up to 90 people who will be interviewed and their stories recorded as part of the project. These will include seamen and their families, those involved in laundering, catering and traditional medicine as well as newer professions.

Once collated, the details plus images will be used to create an exciting new online centre so that information can be accessed using iPhone, iPad and Android apps. There will also be a series of exhibitions at ten London venues, including an outdoors display in Trafalgar Square. It is estimated that the public events will attract some 30,000 visitors over the three-year period.

Learning is at the heart of the project which is being supported by a grant of almost £300,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). It includes training for Ming-Ai staff, interns and volunteers to help run the project. An accredited Masters degree programme in heritage skills will be developed with help from Middlesex University. Online education materials will also be created for schools to use.

For the Heritage Lottery Fund Sue Bowers, Head of HLF London, said: “This impressive project will trace the heritage of the British Chinese workforce over a period of a century and a half underlining the considerable contribution they have made to London life.”

For the Ming-Ai (London) Institute the Dean, Chungwen Li, said: “We are privileged to have the chance to compile a full picture of the British Chinese workforce in London; the Chinese contribution to society could be shared and celebrated among the communities through the learning opportunities provided in the project.”

The project launch will take place on Tuesday 10 July 2012, 3pm at Regents College. The project team will explain the details of the project and its internships’ recruitment policy to the general public.

For more details about the project launch please visit the Ming-Ai (London) Institute website, email to projects@ming-ai.org.uk or call 02083 617 161.

**Further information**

For further information please contact Vicky Wilford, HLF press office, on 020 7591 6046 / 07973 401 937, email vickyw@hlf.org.uk or Phil Cooper, HLF press office, on 07889 949 173.

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