

Tuan Nguyen

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Career overview

Tuan Nguyen is a museum researcher and professional. In his doctoral research, he has investigated the inclusion of LGBTIQ communities in museum management approaches, collections, exhibitions and collaborations. The results of this project have been published in high-rank journals and presented at national and international conferences. At the same time, he has developed his skills in museum practice in both front- and back-of-house capacities. He has exceptional experience working with collections through object handling and installation, documentation and digitisation at Sydney University Museums, the Australian Museum and Fairfield City Museum and Gallery. He also has been committed to facilitating exceptional engagements with students and the public as tutor at the University of Sydney and gallery attendant at the Australian Centre for Photography. Across his research and practice, Tuan has been driven to assist diverse audiences and communities to access empowering museum experiences.

Qualifications and training

Doctor of Philosophy (Museum Studies)

Feb 2014 – 2018

The University of Sydney

- Undertook primary research using archives and conducted 25 interviews in museum and community contexts.
- Presented at several state, national and international conferences.
- Published in a peer-reviewed journal ranked ‘A’ in Excellence in Research (ERA) tables.
- Completed professional development through the Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences Teaching Development Programme.
- Successfully applied for four competitive scholarships and grants.
- Helped to facilitate the 2017 International Conference on the Inclusive Museum, receiving an Emerging Scholar Award.
- Consulted on developments in Australia from the Swedish Exhibition Agency.

Master of Museum Studies

Jul 2012 – Jun 2013

The University of Sydney

- Obtained high distinctions for all subjects, including two internships (one focussing on Indigenous artefacts at the Australian Museum, the other involving collection management at the Fairfield City Museum & Gallery).
- Completed a dissertation receiving a high distinction mark of 92%; examiners’ reports stated that it ‘[raised] a clarion call to the profession for museums to be queer allies.’

Bachelor of Arts (Gender Studies and Digital Cultures)

Jul 2008 – Jun 2012

The University of Sydney

- Maintained a high distinction average.
- Placed on the Dean’s List of Excellence in Academic Performance (2010) and awarded the Walter Reid Memorial Prize (2009 & 2010).

Other

- St John first aid certificate (December 2017).
- Working with Children Check (valid till 13/12/2022).
- NSW Responsible Service of Alcohol (RSA) competency card (December 2017).

Employment history

Gallery attendant (volunteer)

Dec 2017 – present

Australian Centre for Photography

Responsibilities: Supervised a small gallery, provided excellent service as the first-contact for the organisation, and encouraged sales of courses and merchandise.

Key results:

- Performed relief duties for other volunteers, and assisted with member and special events, when required.
- Engaged with patrons through knowledge of specialist subject matter, promoting sales of the organisation's paid courses and merchandise.

Tutor (gender studies)

Feb – Jun 2015

The University of Sydney,
The Department of Gender and Cultural Studies

Responsibilities: For 50 students, prepared class plans, marked essays and liaised with tutors and coordinators on teaching strategies.

Key results:

- Achieved anonymous reports statistically measuring that 100% of students agreed or strongly agreed that I came to class prepared, gave helpful feedback and motivated students to learn.
- Success in providing tailored engagement with students including international students, and those who were especially motivated to learn beyond the assigned material.

Copyeditor

Nov 2014 – Apr 2015

Sykes Peer Review

Sykes Peer Review is a consultant for government organisations and NGOs. It supports activities including community engagement, project peer review and organisational growth.

Key results:

- Maintained a rapid turnaround in the copyediting of reports, requiring working outside of business hours.
- Produced well-structured and clear prose which involved consulting with the employer, and quickly grasping new policy and regulatory frameworks outside my area of specialisation.

Collection assistant (volunteer)

Feb 2014 – Jun 2016

Sydney University Museums

Responsibilities: Assisted with the movement, documentation and installation of museum collection items.

Key results:

- Finalised the documentation of an infrequently used collection, allowing it to be loaned out.
- Contributed to making the collection more accessible by writing succinct artist biographies that were uploaded onto the online collection database.
- Assisted in the timely installation of artworks while maintaining professional standards regarding installation and documentation.

Research assistant

Jun – Aug 2013

The University of Sydney, Dr Chiara O'Reilly

Responsibilities: Produced a literature review of museums and communities, liaised with chief investigators, assisted with the running of a symposium and travelled to museums to inspect their exhibition archives.

Key results:

- Read, annotated and developed a database of over 100 references, contributing the publication of a scholarly journal article.
- Helped to deliver a successful symposium attended by interstate and international delegates.

Collection assistant (internship)

Mar – May 2013

Fairfield City Museum & Gallery

Responsibilities: Used best practice in regard to collection care to conserve and interpret the historical collection.

Key results:

- Undertook a deaccession audit of the collection, identifying duplicates and items with no provenance or little significance. This was subsequently used by the museum to develop its collection.
- Produced a statement of significance for a collection item, using the *Significance 2.0* methodology, which was added to the MOSAiC database.

Repatriation assistant (internship)

Sep 2012 – Jan 2013

Australian Museum

Responsibilities: Supported the repatriation efforts of the Australian Museum through online communication and updating catalogue information.

Key results:

- Drawing on archival sources, produced three case studies on the museum's repatriation efforts. These were published online and made available to a broad audience.
- Through auditing and cross-referencing catalogue cards and the EMu database, corrected inconsistencies in information relating to the secret / sacred / ancestral remains collection.

Digitiser (volunteer)

Jun 2011 – Oct 2013

Australian Museum

Responsibilities: Digitised the natural history collection and associated archival information to make it more accessible to scientists and the public.

Key results:

- Digitised fragile archival registers following conservation, file naming and data entry protocols.
- Performed a smooth workflow between object handling, Access databases, camera controlling software (Canon EOS Utility) and photo managing software (Digital Photo Professional, Adobe Acrobat Pro and Adobe Lightroom).

Skill summary

- Demonstrated excellence at undertaking research in an interdisciplinary area involving museum professionals, community members and academics.
- Ability to design and manage complex projects, and work independently towards their completion.
- Skills to communicate to diverse audiences including students, academics and museum professionals through scholarly publications, teaching and consultation.
- Competence at promoting projects in order to attract funding.
- Capacity to synthesise large amounts of data in order to craft arguments, including from interview data, material from comprehensive literature reviews, policy documents and archival records.
- Adeptness at navigating ethical terrain with a diverse range of stakeholders, all within a formalised ethics framework.
- Experience with object handling and collection management systems including EMu, MOSAiC, Access and eHive.
- Cash handling and electronic funds transfer experience.

Selected publications and conference presentations

- Nguyen, V. T. (2018). Co-existence and Collaboration: Australian AIDS Quilts in Public Museums and Community Collections. *Museum and Society*.
- Nguyen, V. T. (2017, September 15-17). *Museums as Queer Allies*. Paper presented at the International Conference on the Inclusive Museum.
- Nguyen, V. T. (2016). Mediating Queer Controversy in Australian Museum Exhibitions. *Historic Environment*, 28(3), 36-48.
- Nguyen, V. T. (2014, May 16-19). *How Can Museums Become Queer Allies?* Paper presented at the Museums Galleries Australia National Conference, Launceston.
- Nguyen, V. T. (2012). Case Study: La Perouse 2002. *Australian Museum*. <https://australianmuseum.net.au/case-study-la-perouse-2002>
- Nguyen, V. T. (2012). Case Study: Larrakia 1996 / 2002. *Australian Museum*. <https://australianmuseum.net.au/case-study-larrakia-1996-2002>
- Nguyen, V. T. (2012). Case Study: Western Australian Museum 2005. *Australian Museum*. <https://australianmuseum.net.au/case-study-western-australian-museum-2005>

Professional memberships

- Museums Galleries Australia (2013 – present)

Referees

Available upon request.