

## **Call for Applications (CfA)**

### **Remote Access to the Arolsen Archives from Minsk: Researching Nazi Persecution, Forced Labour and Displaced Persons**

Minsk, 2 March – 4 March 2020

The Arolsen Archives – International Center on Nazi Persecution (formerly the International Tracing Service, ITS) – hold the world's most comprehensive archive on the victims and survivors of National Socialism. Part of the institution's mission is to continually improve access to its collections, which are made up of well over 30 million documents pertaining to the Holocaust, Nazi concentration camps, forced labour during World War II, and the registration and care of Displaced Persons (DPs) in the post-war period. Furthermore, the archive holds more than three million post-war case files documenting the fates of individual Nazi victims (mainly correspondence with enquirers). By now, over 85 per cent of the records have been digitised. Users can access a growing number of documents (albeit not the collections in their entirety) in a new online archive that the Arolsen Archives launched in May 2019.

For more information about the institution and its holdings, please refer to the website of the Arolsen Archives at <https://arolsen-archives.org/en/>.

One of the few surviving houses of the former Jewish ghetto in Minsk houses the Historic Workshop „Leonid Lewin“, created by joint efforts of the IBB Dortmund, IBB Minsk and the Union of Belarusian Jewish Public Associations and Communities. The Historic Workshop engages in the assistance of victims and contemporary witnesses of the Holocaust and World War II at the historic site. By preserving their memory in the context of a European culture of remembrance, its goal is to impart it to the next generations. The Historic Workshop is a place that commemorates the ghetto, the deportation of Jewish nationals from the territory of the Reich to Minsk, and their annihilation in the ghetto and extermination site Malyj Trostenc. The building, in which Jewish families hid, and thus, survived during the German occupation, is now used by specialists to study various historic issues with attraction of eyewitnesses and stakeholders, and is the venue for cooperation between international historians. For more information about the institution, please refer to the website of the Historic Workshop „Leonid Lewin“ at <http://www.gwminsk.com/de>.

As part of a broader strategy to enable and improve access to the entire digital collections, the Arolsen Archives and the Historic Workshop „Leonid Lewin“ are co-organising an international three-day research seminar for scholars from Belarus and neighbouring countries. The event will take place at the Historic Workshop in Minsk from 2 March through 4 March 2020. At its core, the seminar will enable participants to carry out their own research in the entire digital collections of the Arolsen Archives through a recently established “remote access” solution. By using remote access, researchers are virtually sitting in the reading room of the Arolsen Archives and have the same access to the archive as if they travelled to Bad Arolsen, Germany. Competent staff on site will provide guidance in exploring the depths of the digital archive. For this, participants will have to bring along their personal (portable) computers. Please note that remote access will only be possible on devices running Microsoft Windows. Participants will be able to save selected documents of interest free of charge.

Over the course of the event, there will be room for joint discussions about the pros and cons of working with the documents in their current digital environment. Participants are also encouraged to exchange ideas on both methodological approaches in general as well as their individual research projects. How can varying scholarly needs – for instance with regard to research on individual persons, but also larger groups, places, or specific thematic aspects of Nazi persecution – be met through the current structure of and search engine navigating the digital collections of the Arolsen Archives? Where do their limitations lie? And which future activities in processing the collections (e.g. through specific metadata indexing) have the potential to enhance researchers' experience and enable them to engage in innovative methods and topics?

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# Arolsen Archives

International Center  
on Nazi Persecution



Гістарычная  
майстэрня

## Practical Information

The seminar will take place at the Historic Workshop “Leonid Lewin” in Minsk, 2 March through 4 March 2020. The event language will be English. Participants will arrive in Minsk on 1 March 2020.

Interested candidates from Belarus and neighbouring countries are encouraged to send their application via e-mail to [requests-rs@arolsen-archives.org](mailto:requests-rs@arolsen-archives.org). The workshop is open to professionals as well as people researching the history of Nazi concentrations camps, forced labour or Displaced Persons after WWII in their free time or on a voluntary basis. We encourage candidates already working on a project related to the collection of the Arolsen Archives to apply. However, the workshop is also open to participants who are only starting their research. Applications should consist of a short letter of motivation, a brief biographical note, and an overview of the project for which you intend to explore the digital collections of the Arolsen Archives (1-2 pages in total). The deadline for applications is 29 January 2020. Participants will be chosen and notified by 4 February 2020.

The organisers will cover the costs of accommodation (three nights at a hotel in Minsk), organise the hotel bookings, and provide some of the meals. Participants, on the other hand, will have to pay for and book their own transportation to and from Minsk. There are limited travel funds to partially support candidates from abroad. If this applies to you and you are interested in a grant, please indicate this in your letter of application.

If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact us at [requests-rs@arolsen-archives.org](mailto:requests-rs@arolsen-archives.org). We look forward to many interesting applications!