CONTENTS
Foreword 3
Research Projects Overview 4
Supporting Early Career Research 6
Doing Research: The Business of Women’s Words 10
New Projects 12
Strategic Partnerships 14
Doing Research: Planning the Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms Exhibition 16
Research in Practice 19
Engaging with Others 22
Looking Ahead 25
Appendices 26
Contacts 30
Welcome to the British Library’s second Research Report covering the academic year October 2017 to the end of September 2018. I recently took up my role at the Library, as Chief Librarian, and have been intrigued by the wealth of research that takes place within our organisation. Our staff, working with scholarly colleagues from the UK and across the globe, have once again had a productive time, working together on projects which range from traditional collection-based research, to digital humanities and data infrastructure, to analysis with significant learning and public engagement outputs.

The funding we receive is central to enabling wide access to our collections by diverse audiences

The Library’s role as an Independent Research Organisation (IRO) is central to our research identity, supporting a thriving research culture and enabling us to lead and partner on high level research. The funding we receive feeds into all aspects of our vision, supporting learning, custodianship, business and international partnerships, and is central to enabling wide access to our collection by diverse audiences. The crucial contribution that research makes to our public engagement - particularly through our major exhibitions and learning programme - is highlighted in this report in a section illuminating the depth of investigation that was essential to producing our recent major exhibition, *Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms: Art, Word, War*.

During the last year we have seen change and development both in the wider research landscape and within the British Library. We were delighted to host the launch event for UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) in the spring, which marks a significant change in how research excellence is delivered across the UK. At the Library, we have trialled and launched new programmes and opportunities, including two schemes to facilitate periods of in-depth research work by our staff. We highly value the chance to try new modes of research practice and the ability to offer staff a discrete period in which to apply themselves to their area of expertise has been especially gratifying.

This report focusses on the externally-funded research that we have worked on with our partners both nationally and internationally. It includes the voices of our students and fellows, as well as those of our colleagues and partners. We are particularly grateful to the funders who have supported us over the last year to deliver research that strongly supports our role as a leading research library. As well as the formalised outputs and developments of our funded research, we hope to provide some insight into the wider impact of our research, offering examples of our engagement and practice that aim to share new knowledge with the wider research community and the public. We hope that this report will bring to life and celebrate British Library research over the past year.

Left: Photo by Mike O’Dwyer
### Research Projects Overview

The British Library was involved in **50** research projects.

- **12** projects were led by the British Library (LRO)
- **4** projects were co-investigated by the British Library (Co-I)
- **34** were projects on which we were a project partner (PP)

### Other Funders

The remainder were funded by a wide range of UK and international funders, including the ESRC, Wellcome Trust, Paul Mellon Centre and British Sociological Association.

- **Total value of these grants**
  - c. **£49 million**
- **Value of the 12 grants led by the British Library**
  - c. **£6.6 million**

### Research partners on all live funded projects

- British Museum (2), British Sociological Association, Finnish Institute in London, Goethe University (Frankfurt am Main), King’s College London, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität (Munich), Queen Mary University of London (2), Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, Queen’s University Belfast, Science and Technology Facilities Council, School of Oriental and African Studies, University College London (3), Universitat Pompeu Fabra (Barcelona), University of Birmingham (2), University of Exeter, University of Kent, University of Lancaster, University of Leicester (2), University of Liverpool, University of Manchester, Università degli Studi di Napoli Federico II (Naples), University of New South Wales (Sydney), University of Oxford (2), University of Portsmouth, University of Southampton, University of Surrey, University of Sussex, University of Warwick, University of Westminster.

### MAIN FUNDERS

- 20 AHRC
- 8 various EU funding schemes
- 5 Leverhulme Trust
- 2 Andrew W. Mellon Foundation
- 2 BEIS
Supporting Early Career Research

We collaborate with universities, cultural heritage organisations and IROs to support early-career research and training on a national scale. Our ambitions in this regard continue to grow, with 31 collaborative PhD projects underway across the Library in the period covered by this report, enabling new research that is shaped by our collection and staff expertise. A further 33 doctoral students, from the UK and overseas, have collaborated with us on three-month research placements, taking time away from their own PhDs to explore how their knowledge and skills can be enhanced through bespoke, behind-the-scenes professional development projects.

Over the past 12 months, our participation in the AHRC Collaborative Doctoral Partnerships (CDP) consortium and our expanding links with Doctoral Training Partnerships (across academic disciplines) have once again underlined the value of working together to develop the next generation of research skills and talent, both in the UK and internationally.

Alongside these collaborative PhD programmes, we continue to deliver our ever-popular annual series of Doctoral Open Days.

CASE STUDY

"It was a fulfilling and grounding experience to be involved in the research, curation and outreach of the exhibition Windrush: Songs in a Strange Land. Being part of a collaborative team that included experts and activists, from within and outside of the British Library, allowed me to develop my thesis on Caribbean diaspora print activism in an open and critical environment. This revealed the value of collective processes in the cultural sector and academic endeavour."

Naomi Oppenheim AHRC Collaborative Doctoral Student (British Library and University College London)
CASE STUDY

“During my placement I explored representations of Captain James Cook in Australia during the 19th and 20th centuries. I researched newspapers, school text-books, film, historical re-enactments and other sources, resulting in a bibliography and contributions to the James Cook: The Voyages exhibition website. The project revealed the complex and competing ways that Cook has become central to Australia’s national identity, as well as the indigenous perspective – which tragically continues to be lost in the broader celebratory narrative of Cook’s arrival.”

Peter Hooker British Library PhD Research Placement Student (University of Newcastle, Australia)

CASE STUDY

“My PhD placement was on The Printed Books of Sir Hans Sloane (1660–1753) – part of one of the founding collections of the British Library. I felt such a collection was sure to have gems I could connect to my research on English travel writing. The placement turned out to be even more relevant than I expected. Exploring Sloane’s hand-written catalogue, I discovered a vast amount of literature related to travel! Sloane, who barely travelled beyond a stint in Jamaica, was an enthusiastic armchair traveller. This was an outcome that I did not anticipate and it truly enriched an already rewarding experience.”

Lubaaba Al-Azami British Library PhD Research Placement Student (University of Liverpool)
CASE STUDY

Over the past year I have been busy conducting life story interviews with government scientists about their experiences of organisational change. As part of the oral history team I am able to delve into the Library’s extensive sound collection, whilst my own interview recordings will be deposited in the Library’s Sound Archive upon completion of my thesis. I’ve also completed a hugely rewarding UKRI policy internship at the Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology, enjoying an insider’s view of Parliament.

Emmeline Ledgerwood AHRC Collaborative Doctoral Student (British Library and University of Leicester)
Doing Research: The Business of Women’s Words

Led by Professor Margaretta Jolly (University of Sussex) and Dr Lucy Delap (University of Cambridge) and funded by the Leverhulme Trust

Introduction

The Business of Women’s Words (BOWW) project examines the relationship between creative business activities and the second wave Women’s Liberation Movement. It particularly explores how capitalist business practices were harnessed to promote feminist aims – despite the hostility towards capitalism that sometimes existed within the movement. Dr Polly Russell is the British Library project partner, supporting access to the Virago Press and Spare Rib archives and working closely with Drs D-M Withers and Zoe Strimpel, the project research associates based at the Library. This section looks in-depth at how the idea for the project developed and how it is progressing since it began in January 2018.

CASE STUDY

“I am a Research Fellow on the Business of Women’s Words. I have been fascinated to learn about how Virago’s history converges in surprising ways with the personalities and forms of financial and political power that became influential in Thatcher’s Britain. Understanding these histories can help us analyse the transformative ways culture, finance and industry interacted in the late-20th and early-21st centuries while offering new insights about the history of feminism.”

Dr D-M Withers Research Fellow, The Business of Women’s Words

Project Outputs

- The Business of Women’s Words team have a number of publications in preparation including a significant contribution to Women: A Cultural Review.
- 2020 will see the first BOWW symposium take place at the University of Cambridge, and the following year the final project symposium will take place at the British Library.
- The project will work closely with the Learning Team at the British Library to produce a series of workshops for secondary schools, alongside online learning materials linked to the Discovering Literature pages.
- To help understand the spatial and temporal nature of the Women’s Liberation Movement, the project will work with the Library to create a digital interactive map of UK feminist activism and culture.
- Twelve new oral history recordings will be permanently archived at the Library, linked to existing collections (such as Sisterhood and After) and supported by transcriptions and portrait photographs.
- The project is making a significant contribution to the British Library’s upcoming major exhibition on women’s history and rights which will open in 2020.

“The Business of Women’s Words research project provides the British Library with a unique opportunity to work with researchers to utilise the Virago and Carmen Callil archives and to put them into conversation with editions of Spare Rib and the Library’s rich collection of oral histories.”

Dr Polly Russell Lead Curator Contemporary Archives and Manuscripts, Public and Political Life
Can you tell us how your professional paths crossed and where the idea for The Business of Women’s Words came from?

[MJ] I met Polly in 2008 when she came to speak at the Centre for Life History and Life Writing Research which I direct at Sussex. Realising we shared a fascination with the potential for deep interviewing methods to capture feminist experience, we cooperated to develop what became Sisterhood and After: The Women’s Liberation Oral History Project which was launched at the British Library in 2013. It paved the way for subsequent work by Polly with the movement’s main magazine, Spare Rib. This fed into and enabled our new collaboration, which will look deeply into the magazine’s back story, alongside the rich archives of Virago Press.

[LD] There has been lots of exciting new work on the history and development of capitalism, but as yet, there are few accounts of women’s entrepreneurialism. Feminist historians still tend to see capitalism as a dirty word, despite the many feminist businesses that emerged in the 1970s and 80s. This project’s founding intention was to foreground the diverse ways in which women have engaged with business, not just in traditional boardrooms but also in the innovative environments of small start-ups and politicised publishing.

The project is currently in its first year. What are your favourite moments so far?

[LD] The discovery of a large archive of letters between Spare Rib readers and editors was a thrilling moment. Spare Rib has become widely used as a historical resource and inspiration for today’s feminists, but no one has had much insight into how the editorial collective interacted with their readers and contributors, and how the magazine developed over time.

[MJ] It has been a privilege to explore the Virago and [Carmen] Callil papers at the British Library, both for their inspirational contents and to open up a wider discussion about corporate memory and how to document the great influence that businesses have in everyday life. Increasingly, we realise how important it is to find positive examples of socially responsible business at a time when so many are suffering from the consequences of unmanaged, unfair and poorly understood global capitalist models.

What are you looking forward to most in year two of the project?

[LD] Talking to historical actors is always one of the most exciting opportunities for any historian. My colleagues who work on earlier periods dream of being able to actually ask their characters about their lives – we get to do this. Of course, their answers sometimes surprise us, or make us change our interpretations, so interviews can be pretty disruptive at times. But it’s a huge privilege to be able to ‘share authority’ with our interviewees and let them guide our work.

[MJ] Connecting our research with British Library plans for a major exhibition on the history of women’s rights in 2020 is truly delicious. In particular, we are working on a digital map of women’s activism and initiative across the UK. We hope to unveil this at the exhibition, inviting public thoughts and contributions on the relationship between place, space and culture.
During the academic year 2017–18, 14 new research projects commenced on which the British Library leads or is a research partner. A particular strength of the Library is being able to support research across academic boundaries and within vastly different areas of human understanding. This year has seen projects begin on topics including voices of British art, publishing in Latin America, and decoding the Christian Bible in a Muslim context. We have received funding from international and national funders and have welcomed the opportunity to work with colleagues in Europe and worldwide.

**Voyaging Through History: the Meanings of the Mayflower**

In June 2018, early-career academics Drs Tom Hulme and Martha Vandrei received three years of funding from the AHRC to begin their work analysing the powerful draw of the Mayflower story in British culture. There have been periods of particular interest in the Mayflower, resulting in performances, story-telling, events, exhibitions, memorials and statues, amongst other representations, which have informed how this story is told and retold. The British Library’s Eccles Centre for American Studies, along with colleagues in North American and Western Heritage collections, will support the project’s research associate, Dr Ed Downey, to access relevant parts of our collection, as well as delivering events and workshops for the project. This project coincides with the 400th anniversary of the sailing of the Mayflower in 2020, and will support and inform local and national commemorations.

**Edison Fellowship**

Overseen by Jonathan Summers (Curator, Classical Music Recordings), the Edison Fellowship encourages scholarship devoted to recordings of classical music by funding short-term projects designed to support research for a higher degree. As part of this scheme, Evgeniya Kondrashina undertook research that contributes to her PhD study about Soviet music recordings available in the UK from the 1950s to the 1980s. Her work focussed on the UK partnership agreement between EMI and the USSR from the 1960s to the early 1980s, which allowed EMI to release over 200 Soviet LPs in the UK.

A second Edison Fellow, Magid El-Bushra worked on the Gerald Cavanagh Collection, comprising 302 reels of opera recordings made by Cavanagh of broadcasts of live opera performances. He began to catalogue the collection and was able to develop an understanding of the context in which the performances were consumed, as well as examining the cultural relations of power that determine ‘who gets to decide what we listen to?’.

**FREYA**

FREYA is an EU Horizon 2020-funded project, with international partners, to build and strengthen global research infrastructure with persistent identifiers. These identifiers provide stable, unique links to all parts of the research landscape: from articles to datasets, software, equipment and the researchers themselves. The British Library is supporting the research community in using persistent identifiers by building the FREYA Ambassador programme which now has 20 members. We are also scoping areas of research where new persistent identifiers are needed to enable discovery and re-use of data and other types of content, including physical cultural items. Our other major work in this area is the inclusion of identifiers to enhance our own research services.

**British Sociological Association Postdoctoral Fellowship for Sociology at the British Library**

Working with the British Sociological Association (BSA), we have developed a fellowship scheme designed to demonstrate the value of British Library collections for sociological research. Dr Andrew Rackley, our first Fellow, started in June
2017. He undertook a scoping study of the areas of our collection deemed to be of high value to sociologists, paying particular attention to the UK Web Archive, Broadcast News Service and the Library’s collection of ‘zines’. He worked closely with the sociological research community and British Library curators producing a report to help build our engagement with this group, a BSA conference paper, and an end of project workshop.

**Rutherford Fund: International Research on South Asian Audio-visual Heritage**

In 2018 the British Library’s World and Traditional Music team led an international knowledge exchange programme with the Archives and Research Center for Ethnomusicology (part of the American Institute of Indian Studies, New Delhi). Supported through a Rutherford Grant from the UK Government’s Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), this programme of fellowships and staff exchanges has enabled the development of a new platform for future collaboration around the custodianship of South Asian audio-visual heritage collections. This will help open up complementary collections across our two institutions to researchers around the world.

**NCRM Fellowship at the British Library**

In July, Jessica Ogden, a PhD candidate at the Web Science Centre for Doctoral Training (University of Southampton) became the ESRC National Centre for Research Methods Placement Fellow based in the British Library’s UK Web Archive (UKWA) team. Jessica’s placement investigated the types of information that social scientists require when using web archives for research. During her time at the Library she examined how access constraints surrounding the UKWA Legal Deposit collection present challenges for research engagement. She charted these challenges by contextualising the project within the wider landscape of data use in the social sciences. Her research with our Web Archiving team has produced recommendations for facilitating the use of web archives by social science researchers and has helped produce a conceptual framework for improved understanding of the use of web archives for research.

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**The British Library was involved in 14 new projects this year**

| Projects Led by British Library (LRO) | 3 |
| Projects Co-investigated by British Library (Co-I) | 1 |
| Project Partners with British Library | 10 |

**MAIN FUNDERS**

- 4 AHRC
- 1 ESRC
- 3 European Union (Horizon 2020)

Their overall combined value of these grants is c. £16 million
Strategic Partnerships

Working in partnership with other organisations enables us to achieve much more impact in both a national and international context. Here are some of the strategic partnerships that support our research ambitions for the future.

Chevening
Our three-year partnership with Chevening, the UK Government’s international awards scheme supported by the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office, has enabled us to host six Fellowships providing early-career professionals from across the globe with a unique career development opportunity. Projects have covered international engagement, policy, curation, cataloguing standards and a range of socio-historical research themes of contemporary relevance. In July 2018, we were pleased to renew this fruitful partnership for a further three years.

CASE STUDY

“I worked on the history of Nationalism and Partition in South Asia at the British Library, and came across not only the official history but also many untold little histories of common people, personal and intimate. The Library gave me opportunities to work across its various departments preserving South Asian histories in all possible forms: texts, audio, images, videos, newspapers, paintings, and objects. My interactions with archivists, researchers, and academics enriched me, and taught me to understand South Asia in multifarious ways.”

Parthasarathi Bhaumik Chevening Fellow (Jadavpur University, India)

UKRI
In May 2018, we were delighted to host the launch event for the newly formed UK Research and Innovation (UKRI). UKRI brings together the existing seven UK research councils, Research England and Innovate UK to maximise their impact. At the launch event, Sir Mark Walport (Chief Executive, UKRI) set out his vision to enable the UK to become the most innovative country in the world. He emphasised the digital, data and information challenges that face our society and economy, noting the relevance of these to the research of the Alan Turing Institute and the British Library.

Building on this vision, this year also saw the launch of Living with Machines, a large-scale collaborative research initiative with The Alan Turing Institute funded by UKRI.

CLOSER
The Library has been a partner on the Cohort and Longitudinal Studies Enhancement Resources (CLOSER) programme since 2012. Funded by the ESRC and the Medical Research Council (MRC), CLOSER aims to enhance discovery, access, training and engagement with the UK’s longitudinal studies. It brings together eight of the leading studies in the UK, which include participants born from 1931 to the early 21st century. The British Library’s involvement, led by Dr Allan Sudlow (Head of Research Development), supports the strategic, impact and engagement strands of CLOSER and in April 2018, the Library worked with them to host a public event on how we make decisions about the food we eat. The speaker panel included Professor Hazel Inskip, Co-ordinator of the Southampton Women’s Survey, who discussed the use of cohort research to investigate complex social, cultural, economic and psychological factors that play a role in our food choices.
Alan Turing Institute

In collaboration with researchers from a number of universities, the Alan Turing Institute and the British Library were awarded £9.2 million from the UKRI’s Strategic Priorities fund for Living with Machines, a major new project which spans the humanities and sciences. British Library partners Dr Adam Farquhar, Dr Mia Ridge and Maja Maricevic will work closely with the project organisers to deliver one of the most ambitious cross-disciplinary research initiatives ever to launch in the UK. Living with Machines will see data scientists working with curators, historians, geographers and computational linguists to produce new methods and tools in data science and artificial intelligence that can be applied to historical resources, analysing digitised collections at scale for the first time. The methods and tools developed as a result of the project will transform how researchers can access and understand digitised historic collections, creating new opportunities to support the use of content held at the British Library.

CASE STUDY

I’m excited about helping British Library staff and users of our collection understand the potential for AI, data science and machine learning technologies that this project creates. It should also help make some of our collection more easily findable as we apply text and data mining techniques. The project team will bring new skills and perspectives on digital scholarship, and I’m looking forward to sharing what we learn through the talks and workshops we organise as part of the Digital Scholarship Training Programme.

Dr Mia Ridge Digital Curator at the British Library and research partner on Living with Machines
Doing Research: Planning the Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms Exhibition

There is an intrinsic connection between research at the British Library and our cultural programme for the public, which includes the planning and development of our major exhibitions. Funded research not only supports the development of new knowledge which can be communicated through our exhibitions, but it also enables the digitisation of valuable items, ensuring access by wide and diverse public, learning and research audiences.

This section offers a case study of the long-term research work and planning that went into the development of British Library’s major exhibition *Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms: Art, Word, War*, which opened in October 2018. As this section shows, a combination of in-depth research projects with multiple partners – over a long lead-time – offers academic rigour and originality in our exhibition programme.

**Interview**

Dr Claire Breay, Head of Ancient, Medieval and Early Modern Manuscripts and Lead Curator of *Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms: Art, Word, War*

What roles have external academic colleagues played in researching the exhibition?

The development of the storyline and exhibit list for the exhibition was supported by an external advisory group comprising a mixture of leading academics, curators, and the broadcaster Michael Wood. This group also contributed essays for the exhibition catalogue. I co-edited the catalogue with Professor Joanna Story of the University of Leicester, with whom I have been co-supervising an AHRC doctoral candidate, Rebecca Lawton, whose research has focused on manuscripts from the early Anglo-Saxon and Frankish kingdoms.

Did you find out anything unexpected or new?

Multi-spectral imaging on the 9th century Bodmin Gospels revealed hitherto invisible documents recording the freeing of slaves in late Anglo-Saxon Cornwall. This manuscript has been in the national collection for 200 years, but the application of new technology has given us some completely new documentary source material. This discovery complements the recent archaeological discoveries in the exhibition, such as the Staffordshire Hoard, the Lichfield Angel and the Winfarthing pendant, all excavated in the last 15 years, and shows that there are still new discoveries to be made in well-known manuscripts, as well as by archaeologists and metal detectorists.

Could you share any personal or professional highlights from your work on the exhibition?

Bringing the catalogue to completion was a major highlight, as was the fortnight of the installation of the exhibition. Finally seeing all these incredible manuscripts and archaeological objects, including many great national treasures, coming together in the exhibition was one of the highlights of my life. Although the exhibition itself only lasts for four months, the catalogue will be there as a record of the show for ever.

Can you tell us when you began planning for this exhibition?

In 2012, the British Library announced the acquisition of the St Cuthbert Gospel, the earliest intact European book, which was made in Northumbria in the early 8th century. It was this acquisition - which followed a £9 million fundraising campaign - that prompted the idea of staging an exhibition on the written heritage of the whole Anglo-Saxon period from the eclipse of Roman Britain to the Norman Conquest of 1066. I proposed the exhibition in the autumn of 2013, so it was five years in the making.
Funded Research Projects

Multiple research projects supported the development of the Anglo-Saxons exhibition, involving Dr Claire Breay, her team and a network of collaborators led by Professor Joanna Story of the University of Leicester. Rebecca Lawton (see Case Study below), an AHRC-funded doctoral student, contributed to the exhibition catalogue and was also appointed to a six-month funded internship, during which she delivered talks to groups visiting the exhibition and played a leading role in organising the exhibition conference.

Emilia Henderson, also a collaborative PhD student funded by the AHRC, conducted research on Franco-Saxon Manuscripts in the 9th century. Emilia worked with Professor Joanna Story at the University of Leicester and Dr Kathleen Doyle, Lead Curator of Illuminated Manuscripts at the British Library, to deliver new research for the exhibition, which she communicated through the public engagement programme and the Medieval Manuscripts blog. The involvement of Claire and Joanne as Lead Investigators in the Leverhulme Trust network project Insular Manuscripts: Networks of Knowledge (2016–19) also set the research underpinning the exhibition in a wider international context, fostering future academic collaborations.

Digital Access

A key legacy of the exhibition is the digital access to medieval manuscripts and charters. With generous support from the Polonsky Foundation, we have now digitised almost all of our Anglo-Saxon manuscripts, making them available online alongside over 200 digitised Anglo-Saxon charters. A parallel project, England and France: Manuscripts from the British Library and the Bibliothèque nationale de France 700–1200, also supported by the Polonsky Foundation, has enabled digitisation from two of the largest collections of medieval manuscripts in the world. Our involvement in the Fragmentarium project has supported the use of multi-spectral imaging to make fragmentary Anglo-Saxon manuscripts legible and available digitally. Overall, this portfolio of work has opened up collections from across the world, making them available online for researchers and the public.

Engagement

To ensure wider engagement with the Anglo-Saxons exhibition, the Ancient, Medieval and Early Modern Manuscripts team have worked closely with the Learning Team and external partners, to produce a new Anglo-Saxons website and a Discovering Literature module on Medieval Literature. The Discovering Literature pages include articles by academics, such as Professor David Crystal, writing on the evolution of Old English, and Dr Mary Wellesley, writing on the experiences of women as writers and producers of text during the medieval period. The Medieval Manuscripts blog at the British Library has provided insights into the development of the Anglo-Saxons exhibition as well as telling some of the stories behind the intriguing items from the early medieval collection.

CASE STUDY

“During my time as an AHRC collaborative doctoral student, I was often able to feed outputs from my research into the planning and curation of Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms: Art, World, War. I used my specialist knowledge of certain manuscripts to advise on page openings and write entries for the exhibition catalogue. As part of the Ancient, Medieval and Early Modern Manuscripts section, I was also able to draw upon my research when writing articles and collection item descriptions for the Anglo-Saxons web space and many posts for the Medieval Manuscripts blog.”

Rebecca Lawton AHRC Collaborative Doctoral Student (British Library and University of Leicester)
I was very pleased to be involved in the Digital Preservation team’s Flashback project. The research allowed us to work out exactly how the British Library would approach the stabilisation and preservation of digital collections stored on physical media like floppy disks and compact discs. It has also helped inform the team’s approaches to other types of digital content in the Library’s collection. The project was a great opportunity for team collaboration, allowing us to make the best use of the different skill sets that we are able to bring to a given challenge.”

Michael Day Digital Collections Conservator
Much British Library research aligns closely with our practical day-to-day activities, delivering outputs that feed directly into our exhibitions and learning programmes, and supporting areas such as cataloguing, conservation, digital scholarship and preservation. We recognise the value of practice-based and practice-led research and actively support our staff in developing their research skills and profiles.

Digital Preservation
Cutting-edge research carried out by our Digital Preservation team was shortlisted in the Research and Innovation category of this year’s Digital Preservation Awards. The Flashback: Preservation of Legacy Digital Collections project attempts to preserve and provide access to the digital content stored on thousands of physical media items in the British Library’s collection, chiefly on floppy disk or CD. For the initial phases of the project, the Library tested a technical approach based on the capture of disk images for delivery in web browsers through emulation. (Read more about the Flashback project in Michael Day’s case study, opposite).

Exhibitions
British Library exhibitions blend rigorous research with intriguing, engaging narrative. Curated by our staff, the underpinning research is often developed in collaboration with academic partners and through collaborative PhD studentships and placements. The 2018 exhibition Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms: Art, Word, War is a major example of such a collective effort (read more on pages 16–17). Over the past year, AHRC collaborative PhD student Naomi Oppenheim (UCL) worked with her Library co-supervisor and curator Dr Beth Cooper on the Windrush: Songs in a Strange Land exhibition (read more about Naomi’s research on page 6).

A three-month PhD research placement at the Library with Dr Diana Siclovan provided Izzy Gibbin (UCL) with an opportunity to co-curate the Karl and Eleanor Marx: Life in the Reading Room Treasures Gallery display. Izzy and Diana’s research unearthed previously unknown facts about the Karl Marx-related items in the Library’s collection. The display set these findings in the context of the latest scholarly interpretations of Karl and Eleanor’s life and work for a public audience.

CASE STUDY

Every archive I’ve catalogued has thrown up material that cries out for further exploration – leads, hints, dots to be joined. My Coleridge Fellowship enabled me to research and publish an article on J.G Ballard’s Crash! A Science Theatre Presentation for the ICA (1968). When researching Crash, I was struck by the way the collections speak to each other: novelists J. G. Ballard and Will Self, poets Bob Cobbing and Lee Harwood, broadcaster Joan Bakewell and playwright Harold Pinter. Together, my cataloguing and research skills enable me to read and interpret the collection not only deeply but also laterally, travelling across contemporaneous materials in pursuit of the bigger picture."

Chris Beckett Manuscripts Cataloguer and Coleridge Research Fellow 2018

Coleridge Research Fellowships
In December 2017, we launched the Coleridge Research Fellowship. Generously funded by Professor Heather Jackson and her late husband Professor J R de J Jackson, this enables British Library staff to spend up to three months working on a research project of their own choice based on any area of the British Library’s collection. Fellows are required to produce at least one research output during the course of their research projects. Alongside journal articles and book chapters, other types of output are encouraged including web-based resources and catalogue records. The Coleridge Research Fellowship programme improves understanding of our collection and develops the research profile of our staff, whilst also enabling the staff member providing cover for the Fellow to develop their skills.
From Digital Delius to Discovering Music

Led by Professor Daniel Grimley and Dr Joanna Bullivant (University of Oxford), the AHRC funded Digital Delius project provided a catalyst for the development of the British Library’s new online learning resource Discovering Music. A rich treasure trove of music sources, Discovering Music can be enjoyed by anyone with an interest in classical music. It also contains content specifically designed to support the study of early 20th-century classical music at GCSE and A-Level.

The Digital Delius project team, which included Dr Amelie Roper (British Library Research Development Manager), worked with music teachers, the Delius Trust, the Villiers String Quartet and the Oxford e-Research Centre to develop articles, teaching resources and curate sound recordings for the site. At the end of the project, Amelie and Chris Scobie (Curator, Music Manuscripts) hosted a school workshop in which 16 - 18 year olds were given the opportunity to try out the newly-created web pages and engage with autograph music manuscripts.

Conservation

The British Library’s world-leading Centre for Conservation carries out a range of in-depth research, to better understand the properties and behaviours of collection items, investigate how they interact with their environments, and assess the impact of access and use. Recent research has investigated how best to create optimal storage conditions for historic newspapers and the philatelic collection.

In the past year, textile conservator Liz Rose hosted a PhD research placement student, Frances Casey, who assisted in identifying and preparing for treatment the numerous textile items in the Library’s collection.

Engaging the public with our work in this domain, conservation scientist Dr Paul Garside and book conservator Zoe Miller presented their research on the challenges of historic iron gall ink as part of our Feed the Mind event season.

Discovering Music: early 20th century – developed in partnership with the Digital Delius project.

Textile Conservator Liz Rose and PhD research placement student Frances Casey examine textile items from the British Library collection.
CASE STUDY

The main purpose of my residency is to raise the profile of translation within the Library and bring a translator's perspective to its collection and programming. My projects include a programme of events, a monthly blog where I approach a collection item through the lens of translation, and a project celebrating the many British Library staff who are translators themselves. As a former teacher, I'm particularly interested in involving young people in translation, and am planning to hold some workshops in collaboration with the Translators in Schools programme.

Rahul Bery
British Library Translator in Residence 2018–19

Automatic Transcription of Historical Handwritten Arabic Texts

Since 2012, and in partnership with The Qatar Foundation and Qatar National Library, the British Library has made over 950,000 images from its Arabic manuscript collections freely available on the Qatar Digital Library. To open up this rich content to researchers, Digital Curator Nora McGregor has been working with PhD student Daniel Wilson-Nunn (Alan Turing Institute), curators Bink Hallum and Daniel Lowe, and translators Mariam Abolezz and Julia Ihnatowicz, on the challenge of making this content fully searchable.

In March 2018, the British Library launched a Collaborative Transcription Pilot utilising the free and open-source platform From the Page. It allows anyone with an interest in historical Arabic manuscripts to share expertise in their transcription. This was complemented by an Arabic Scientific Manuscripts Transcription Workshop, where participants had the opportunity to meet curators, view a selection of original manuscripts, learn about the latest developments in Optical Character Recognition (OCR) for handwritten Arabic script and experiment with the new transcription platform. The transcriptions were turned into much-needed ‘ground truth resources’, a body of content which can be drawn upon to ensure this historical Arabic collection can benefit from future developments in handwritten text recognition.

Early 14th-century botanical illustration from Dioscorides’ De materia medica (British Library Arabic Manuscripts collection, Or 3366, folio 122r). Public Domain.
Engaging with Others

There are many different audiences with whom we share the outcomes of our research and partnerships, and engage around research practice. Both our programme of events and website allow us to share information and engage with the public, and it is becoming increasingly common for research to develop online communication tools that are innovative and fun to use.

New Online Tools
September 2018 saw the completion of the Delius Catalogue of Works. Stemming from the earlier AHRC-funded project Delius, Modernism and the Sound of Place, this innovative resource is the work of Professor Daniel Grimley and Dr Joanna Bullivant (Faculty of Music, University of Oxford), and Dr Kevin Page and David Lewis (Oxford e-Research Centre), in collaboration with the British Library, the Delius Trust, and the Royal Library of Denmark. It is the first digital thematic catalogue of the composer Frederick Delius’ works and is integrated with the British Library’s Explore Archives and Manuscripts Catalogue, thereby promoting the wealth of Delius material held at the British Library. It uses open source software and is encoded to facilitate searching of all content, including the musical examples.

Blogs
There are 19 British Library blogs covering different formats, geographical regions and time periods, ranging from Medieval Manuscripts, to Untold Lives and Sound and Vision. British Library staff, research partners and users of the Library contribute short blog pieces throughout the year opening up our collection, sharing knowledge and inspiring new research. Recent examples include Dr Alice Rudge’s blog which explores how she used wildlife recording in her anthropological research in Malaysia (see more from Alice above); and Beatrice Ashton-Lelliott, a PhD research placement student, who wrote about the kind of information that can be discovered on theatre playbills via the In the Spotlight project.

Supporting Our Staff
Staff Research Breaks
The ways in which the Research Development team support staff to be research active have continued to grow, with their varied portfolio expanding to include the Coleridge Research Fellowship (see Research in Practice, page 19) alongside the Staff Research Grant Development Breaks scheme, together with two funds to support research-related costs: the Staff Research Publications Fund and the Staff Research Development Fund.

Scholarly Communications and Skills Development
Over the year a number of sessions on the principles of open access were organised by the Library’s new Scholarly Communications Lead, Dimity Flanagan.

CASE STUDY

“For my PhD in anthropology, I worked with Batek hunting and gathering people in Malaysia, researching their singing, musical instrument playing, and speech practices. The Coleridge Research Fellowship allowed me to put this research in cross-cultural comparison, through the opportunity to research and catalogue the British Library’s Emmanuelle Olivier’s collection of music recorded with Ju/’hoansi people in Namibia. This has allowed me to write a paper addressing the relationship between music and peoples’ broader social orientations, with reference to these two egalitarian hunting and gathering groups. Receiving the Fellowship also allowed me to apply for external fieldwork funding and helped me to gain a further research fellowship at UCL.”

Dr Alice Rudge Audio Cataloguer and Coleridge Research Fellow 2018
In addition, Library staff can now keep up-to-date with developments in the world of scholarly communications by subscribing to a new Scholarly Communications e-newsletter. Support for practical research skills was also provided by Dr Barry Taylor (Curator, Romance Collections, and editor of the Electronic British Library Journal) who led a number of workshops for staff on writing skills under the enticing title of Don’t Forget to Write.

The Publishing Trap
As part of the British Library’s commitment to engage with scholarly communications and publishing, Stella Wisdom (Digital Curator) arranged two demonstrations of the Publishing Trap board game by its creators Jane Secker and Chris Morrison (UK Copyright Literary team). Staff and collaborative PhD students were given the opportunity to play the game, which is based around the lives of four characters at different stages of their academic careers. Through playing the game, they were able to explore the impact of scholarly communications choices in a way that was fun, engaging and empowering.

British Library Labs Award (BL Labs)
For the last five years, BL Labs, an Andrew W. Mellon foundation and British Library-funded initiative, has encouraged scholars, artists, entrepreneurs, educators and innovators to work with the Library’s digital collection through competitions, awards and other engagement activities.

At our annual symposium, we announce our BL Labs Awards to recognise exceptional projects in four categories: Research, Artistic, Commercial, and Teaching/Learning. In 2017, the Research Award winner was ‘A large-scale comparison of world music corpora with computational tools’ by Maria Panteli, Emmanouil Benetos, and Simon Dixon from the Centre for Digital Music at Queen Mary, University of London. The project aims to explore relationships of music similarity between different parts of the world. The runner-up for 2017 was Samtla (Search And Mining Tools for Labelling Archives) by Martyn Harris and Dell Zhang from Birkbeck University and Professors Mark Levene and Dan Levene from the University of Southampton.

Research Events
Over the last year our research relationships have continued to contribute to the Library’s wider public programme of over 300 events per year. The British Sociological Association and British Library’s series of Equality Lectures was in its seventh year and saw Professor Mary Evans deliver a sell-out lecture on The Persistence of Gender Inequality.

We worked with the Alan Turing Institute to offer two more lectures in our series of Data Debates, examining the topics A Freedom to Troll and Data and Inequality.

Our lunchtime series of public seminars, Feed the Mind, ran again in autumn 2017 and spring 2018. As might be expected, the topics were varied including talks on Vice in the East India Company’s Persian Factory; Memories, Music and Migration in South Asia; Karl Marx, Capital and the British Library; and Mobile Stories: New Kinds of Fiction.
Looking Ahead
Dr Allan Sudlow, Head of Research Development

Our research portfolio over this past year has continued to grow in terms of its scope, scale and global reach. This is only made possible through the intellectual ambition, unique expertise and collaborative working of our own staff, our many partners, and the continued support of research funders across all disciplines and sectors. And continued growth is a theme of this forward look.

After a decade of Doctoral Open Days, and an even longer programme of collaborative doctoral research, in the next academic year we aim to grow our early-career research programmes further, including through the new AHRC Innovation Placements scheme for recent PhD graduates.

Collaboration with researchers from outside the UK is an equally important growth area for the Library. The renewal of our partnership with Chevening remains an important enabler for this, and will sit alongside other international fellowships supported by the UK Government’s Rutherford Fund and the Sino-British Fellowship Trust, to name but two.

An additional strategic priority for the coming year is to increase understanding of the ways in which the theme of diversity can intersect with the use of our collections for research. Our joint Fellowship with the British Sociological Association will explore the collection through the lens of race and ethnicity, and work with partners to promote the Library to under-represented communities as a research resource for all. We also have several projects in development which aim to encourage greater inclusivity as part of our collaborative research endeavours.

In parallel, we hope to see the fruits of new research development opportunities for our own staff with the completion of the first round of staff research grant development breaks. And we are opening up our collection for digital research in a myriad of ways, including the growing partnership with the Alan Turing Institute, solidified with the launch of Living with Machines which is generously supported by UKRI.

Finally, I would like to thank my team for their hard work which supports our staff, students and fellows in growing our research capability as an Independent Research Organisation, enabling creation, transmission and enrichment of knowledge for the benefit of all our audiences, on a global scale.
Appendices

Hyperlink references

Pages 6 – 7
www.bl.uk/catalogues/sloane/

Pages 10 – 11
www.bl.uk/sisterhood/about-the-project
www.tandfonline.com/
www.bl.uk/spare-rib
www.bl.uk/20th-century-literature/themes/gender-and-sexuality
www.bl.uk/sisterhood

Pages 12 – 13
www.project-freya.eu/en
www.project-freya.eu/Plone/en/ambassadors/ambassador-programmereya
www.bl.uk/case-studies/andy-rackley
www.ncrm.ac.uk/

Pages 14 – 15
www.ukri.org/
www.closer.ac.uk/
www.turing.ac.uk/research/research-projects/living-machines

Pages 16 – 17
www2.le.ac.uk/projects/insularmss
https://blogs.bl.uk/digitisedmanuscripts/2018/07/anglosaxon-charters-online.html
www.bl.uk/medieval-english-french-manuscriptsfragmentarium.ms/
www.bl.uk/anglo-saxons
www.bl.uk/medieval-literature

Pages 18 – 21
www.bl.uk/projects/flashback
www.bl.uk/20th-century-music
www.qdl.qa/en
http://fromthepage.com/

Pages 22 – 23
http://delius.music.ox.ac.uk/catalogue/searcharchives.bl.uk
https://blogs.bl.uk/magnificentmaps/researchcollaboration/
www.project-freya.eu/en/ambassadors/ambas
dor-programmereya
www.bl.uk/case-studies/andy-rackley
www.ncrm.ac.uk/

http://vimeo.com/241144668
### All new projects that began in 2017–2018

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<th>Funding Body</th>
<th>Grant type</th>
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<th>Total Award</th>
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<td>Research Grant (Early Career)</td>
<td>Precarious Publishing in Latin America: Relations, Meaning and Community in Movement</td>
<td>University of Surrey</td>
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<td>The Nahrein Network: New Ancient History Research for Education in Iraq and its Neighbours</td>
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<td>AHRC</td>
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<td>Creating a Chronotopic Ground for the Mapping of Literary Texts: Innovative Data Visualisation and Spatial Interpretation in the Digital Medium</td>
<td>University of Lancaster</td>
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<td>BEIS</td>
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<td>International Fellowship in South Asian Audio-visual Heritage: Preservation, Research and Engagement</td>
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<td>Consumer Data Research Centre</td>
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<td>Location and Online Behaviour in the UK</td>
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<td>Cohort &amp; Longitudinal Studies Enhancement Resources (CLOSER) [follow-on funding]</td>
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<td>EU Horizon 2020</td>
<td>Research and Innovation Action</td>
<td>TROMPA (Towards Richer Online Music Public-domain Archives)</td>
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<td>FREYA (Connected Open Identifiers for Discovery, Access and Use of Research Resources)</td>
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<td>Marie Curie ITN</td>
<td>FATIGUE (Delayed Transformational Fatigue in Central and Eastern Europe)</td>
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<td>The Business of Women’s Words: Purpose and Profit in Feminist Publishing</td>
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<td>Paul Mellon Centre</td>
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<td>Voices of Art</td>
<td>National Life Stories at the British Library</td>
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<td>Swedish Research Council (Riksbankens Jubileumsfond)</td>
<td>Personal Research Award</td>
<td>The Christian Bible Decoded in a Muslim Context: A Neglected Legacy in Arabic Unveiled</td>
<td>Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität, Munich</td>
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## Collaborative PhD Students 2017–2018

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<tr>
<td>Alastair Horne</td>
<td>How Mobile Phones are Changing Storytelling</td>
<td>Bath Spa University</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alice Wickenden</td>
<td>Hans Sloane’s Books: An early Enlightenment Library and its Material Relationships</td>
<td>Queen Mary University of London</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carol Butler</td>
<td>Digital Publishing Technologies and the Reader</td>
<td>City, University of London</td>
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<td>Cherie Prosser</td>
<td>A Transnational Comparison of the Representation of Empire in Poster Propaganda from France and Britain 1914–1920</td>
<td>University of Sheffield</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deborah Dawkin</td>
<td>Literary Translation - Genre, Process and Collaboration</td>
<td>University College London</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dvora Liberman</td>
<td>Exploring the Social World of Crown Court Clerks from the 1970s Onwards</td>
<td>London School of Economics</td>
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<td>Emilia Henderson</td>
<td>Franco-Saxon Manuscripts in the 9th Century</td>
<td>University of Leicester</td>
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<td>Emmeline Ledgerwood</td>
<td>Re-evaluating the 1980s and 1990s Through Life Histories: Politics, Privatisation and the Culture of Government Research</td>
<td>University of Leicester</td>
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<td>Ewa Majczak</td>
<td>Senses of Self: Visual Self-fashioning Among Bamileke Women in Yaounde, Cameroon</td>
<td>University of Oxford</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hannah Connell</td>
<td>Studying Migration and Diaspora Through Russian Language Publishing</td>
<td>King’s College London</td>
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<td>Hannah Manktelow</td>
<td>Provincial Shakespeare Performance</td>
<td>University of Nottingham</td>
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<td>Hannah Silva</td>
<td>Black British Poetry in Performance</td>
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<td>James Ritzema</td>
<td>The Printing and Publication of Sacred Music in England, 1603–1649</td>
<td>Royal Holloway, University of London</td>
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<td>Jeremy Brown</td>
<td>Maps and the Italian Grand Tour, 1660–ca. 1824</td>
<td>Royal Holloway, University of London</td>
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<td>Jodie Collins</td>
<td>American Political Pamphlets 1920–1945</td>
<td>University of Sussex</td>
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<td>Joe Mulhern</td>
<td>Britain, the British and Slavery in Brazil, c.1822–1888</td>
<td>University of Durham</td>
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<td>Katie McElvanney</td>
<td>Women Reporting the Russian Revolution and Civil Wars: The Case Studies of Ariadna Tyrkova-Williams and Larisa Reisner</td>
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<td>Melissa Bennett</td>
<td>Picturing the West India Regiments in an Age of Unrest, Civil War and Tourism, c.1850–1914</td>
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<td>British Socialism and the Emotions of Revolution, 1884–1926</td>
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<td>Pardaad Chamsaz</td>
<td>The Secret of Creation: Stefan Zweig’s Writing Read Through his Manuscript Collection</td>
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<td>Andrew Booth</td>
<td>Developing Access to the Evolving English VoiceBank</td>
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<td>Anna Reeve</td>
<td>Promoting EThOS</td>
<td>University of Leeds</td>
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<td>Beatrice Ashton-Lelliott</td>
<td>Playbills in Context: Linked Open Data for Historical Playbills</td>
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<td>Ben Pollitt</td>
<td>The Representation and Interpretation of James Cook’s Voyages in the 19th and 20th Centuries</td>
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<td>Bridget Harrison</td>
<td>Telling the Stories of the Treasures of the British Library</td>
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<td>Eleanor Hill</td>
<td>Understanding the Network Power of the Living Knowledge Network</td>
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<td>Elizabeth Potter</td>
<td>William Blake at the British Library</td>
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<td>Erin McCloskey</td>
<td>Examining the Role of Internal Engagement and Communications in the British Library</td>
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<td>Evanthia Samaras</td>
<td>Virus Checking in Long-term Digital Collection Management and Digital Preservation</td>
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<td>Federica Micucci</td>
<td>Greek Papyri of Late Antique Egypt</td>
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<td>Frances Casey</td>
<td>Exploring and Recording Textiles in the British Library Collections</td>
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<td>Frances Morgan</td>
<td>Exploring Music Archives of 20th-century British Composers</td>
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**PhD and Early Career Research Placements 2017–2018**

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<td>Paul Naylor</td>
<td>Islamic Pluralism in the Political History of the Central Sahel: A Critical Study of Arabic Sources for West African History</td>
<td>University of Birmingham</td>
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<td>Pauline McGonagle</td>
<td>‘Disinheritance’ and Constructions of Identity in the Works of Ruth Prawer Jhabvala</td>
<td>University of Exeter</td>
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<td>Peter Good</td>
<td>‘Factories of Trade and Empire’: Basra, Baghdad and the East India Company c.1620–1822</td>
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<td>Rebecca Lawton</td>
<td>Anglo-Saxon Perceptions of the City of Rome: Correspondence and Exchange in the 7th and 8th Centuries</td>
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<td>Ruth Byrne</td>
<td>Attitudes to Immigrants in the 19th century: Using Very Large Historical Corpora for Socio-historical Research</td>
<td>University of Lancaster</td>
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<td>Sally Drew Gannon</td>
<td>The Decca Record Company of the 1960s and 1970s: The Legacy of Christopher Raeburn</td>
<td>University of Sheffield</td>
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<td>Sasha Valeri Millwood</td>
<td>The Music of Thea Musgrave: An Analysis Based on the Manuscript Sources</td>
<td>University of Glasgow</td>
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<td>Will Finley</td>
<td>The Printed Image 1750–1850: Towards a Digital History of Printed Book Illustration</td>
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<td>Frankie Perry</td>
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<td>Frederick Smith</td>
<td>Unlocking Charles I’s Vision of Rome</td>
<td>University of Cambridge</td>
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<td>Gemma Meek</td>
<td>Art, Poetry and Politics – Contemporary British Artists’ Books</td>
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<td>Jessica Ogden</td>
<td>The UK Web Archive: Methodologies for Social Science Research</td>
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<td>Huw Rowlands</td>
<td>The Representation and Interpretation of James Cook’s Voyages in the 19th and 20th Centuries</td>
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<td>Imogen Durant</td>
<td>Art, Poetry and Politics – Contemporary British Artists’ Books</td>
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<td>Izzy Gibbin</td>
<td>Karl Marx and the British Library</td>
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<td>Jennifer Waghorn</td>
<td>Charting the King’s Maritime Collection</td>
<td>University of Birmingham</td>
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<td>Joanne Pilcher</td>
<td>Contemporary Collecting from Australasia</td>
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<td>Laura Gallon</td>
<td>North American Migrant Narratives</td>
<td>University of Sussex</td>
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<td>Leila Nassereldein</td>
<td>Independent, D-I-Y, and Activist BAME Publishing, in Print and Online, in 21st-century Britain</td>
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<td>Lubaaba Al-Azami</td>
<td>The Printed Books of Sir Hans Sloane (1660–1753), Physician and Collector</td>
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<td>Marieke Bigg</td>
<td>Investigating Anne McLaren’s Notebooks</td>
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<td>Rowan Campbell</td>
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<td>Sarah Fitzgerald</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sarah Middle</td>
<td>Privy Council Appeal Cases</td>
<td>Open University</td>
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Contact us at
Research.Development@bl.uk

Research Development team

Dr Allan Sudlow
Head of Research Development

Dr Sarah Evans
Research Engagement Manager
(Social Sciences and Humanities)

Dr James Perkins
Research and Postgraduate Development Manager

Dr Amelie Roper
Research Development Manager

Dr Diana Siclovan
Research Information and Communications Officer

www.bl.uk/research-collaboration

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