

Public policy development at the British Library: Soft Power and international working

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Supervisor	Lilian Barratt, Public Policy Officer
Department, Location	Corporate Affairs – St Pancras, London
Start date/timeframe	Ideally from the beginning of May to the end of July 2019, though there is some flexibility.
Duration	3 months (or part-time equivalent). For a part-time placement, the student would be required to spend a minimum of 3 days/week on site at the Library.
Remote-working	An element of remote working would be possible for this placement and this can be arranged with the candidate.
Context for placement	
<p>The Public Policy team is responsible for engaging with politicians and policymakers to maintain and enhance the reputation of the British Library, advocating on behalf of the organisation across multiple policy areas including culture and heritage, research, public libraries and cultural diplomacy. We support the goals of the Library's Living Knowledge vision, by communicating effectively with political and other stakeholders in local and national government and Parliament.</p> <p>Cultural institutions are key to advancing international dialogue and enhancing the UK's global reputation and relationships. The Library's International purpose articulates our intention to increase engagement in regions of the world whose cultures and histories are reflected most strongly in our collections. With the UK's current position as Number 1 in the Soft Power Index and the Government's development of a new Soft Power strategy (due to be published early in 2019), it is important that the Library is able to articulate its value on the global stage.</p> <p>The aim of this placement will be to help communicate how the British Library is uniquely placed, as one of the world's foremost cultural institutions and research organisations, to deliver Soft Power objectives.</p>	
Expected tasks and outcomes	
<p>The placement will, with the help of the Public Policy and International teams, identify some of the Library's key international projects and create detailed case studies of their activities and impact. The placement will involve working closely with colleagues across Policy, International Office, Culture and Learning and Collections in order to compile detailed case studies.</p> <p>The desk based research portion of the placement will focus on a top level literature review of existing Soft Power research/ theory (the Policy team will identify some key publications to focus on in the first instance), researching government priorities and target countries and mapping these alongside the Library's key areas of engagement.</p> <p>The placement will involve interviewing and networking with a variety of stakeholders (with the support of the Public Policy Officer and other Library colleagues) to gain an understanding of Government priorities for international working and the development of the Soft Power strategy. This could include meeting with individuals in the DCMS Cultural Diplomacy team and FCO desk officers of key countries.</p> <p>The placement will also undertake benchmarking and research with peer institutions, interviewing them on best practice for cultural exchange and international working, and gathering insights to feed into the final report. Depending on the interests of the student, there could be scope to arrange an informal roundtable event at the Library with relevant institutions on a topic related to Soft Power policy.</p>	

The research and case studies will be compiled into a final report and presented to a group of relevant Library staff.

Training and experience expected to be gained by student through the placement

The placement student will receive an initial induction to the British Library and a briefing on the Library's current *Living Knowledge* strategic positioning across different areas of public policy. The student will also be asked about their development priorities in their first week so that appropriate activities, introductions and meetings can be arranged throughout the duration of the placement.

The placement will be under the supervision of the Public Policy Officer, with introductions to relevant colleagues in the International and Corporate Affairs teams. The Public Policy Officer will attend internal and external meetings with the student in the first few weeks and will continue to do so where required by the student. The format and structure of the outputs and their audience would be discussed at the start of the placement, and the student will be given the opportunity to shape the placement as a whole. The student would be encouraged to participate in external policy and networking events and job-shadowing opportunities within other British Library teams could be arranged if of interest.

Overall, the placement provides an opportunity for a PhD student to gain valuable experience of translating research into policy positioning, and to learn first-hand and in a supportive environment from British Library colleagues involved in various aspects of policy development. This brings the chance to develop and enhance key transferable skills in stakeholder relations, networking, influencing and writing for different audiences. The placement will provide an insight into how the Library and other cultural institutions manage their reputation and engage with stakeholders, in particular with Government.

Depending on the timing of the placement, the student will also be able to benefit from the regular programme of staff training events, talks and workshops offered at the Library.

Required knowledge and skills

- Strong research, analytical, communication and writing skills
- We welcome applications from PhD candidates from any disciplinary background and are keen to hear from anyone who might offer new perspectives on our work. Relevant specialisms could include an interest in international relations, politics or arts and culture.
- A broad understanding of UK Government and politics and geopolitics would be desirable.

This is a training and development opportunity open to current PhD students only. It is not intended to lead to a permanent post at the Library. Please note that the Library is unable to provide a stipend for PhD research placements. Applicants must obtain the support of their PhD supervisor in advance and, as part of their process, consult their HEI to ascertain what funding is available to support them.

Application deadline: 5pm on Monday, **18 February 2019**. Information on how to apply is available on our website: <https://www.bl.uk/news/2019/january/phd-research-placements-2019>