

The ‘long tail’ of UK born-digital publications: What can we learn from legal deposit data?

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Supervisor	Ian Cooke, Head of Contemporary British Publications
Department, Location	Contemporary British Collections. This placement could take place either at St Pancras (London) or Boston Spa (West Yorkshire), and we would expect the placement student to spend some time at both sites.
Start date/timeframe	Any time from April 2019.
Duration	3 months (or part-time equivalent). For a part-time placement, the student would be required to spend a minimum of 2 days/week on site at the Library.
Remote-working	If required, the placement could be undertaken working from home for 2 days per week (or part-time equivalent).
Context for placement	
<p>Contemporary British Publications is responsible for the Library’s collections of 21st century UK published works. Legal Deposit provides the mechanism and regulation for how these collections are grown, and this lies at the heart of the British Library’s collections. Since 2013, changes to regulations have allowed and mandated the Library to collect digital publications, including publications that are published as digital-only.</p> <p>The Library uses a mix of technologies and methods for collecting digital publications, including web archiving, and these technologies and methods are evolving. For small publishers (defined as producing fewer than 50 publications per year) the Library has a ‘Publisher Submission Portal’, which provides a simple method for the deposit of digital-only works. As of November 2018, we have nearly 800 publishers registered to use the portal and nearly 30,000 books deposited.</p> <p>We would like to know more about the usage of the Publisher Portal and what the data relating to deposit can tell us about small publishers in the UK digital space. What types of publication are deposited, and how representative is this of the total digital activity of small publishers? We are also interested in the pattern of use of the Publisher Portal. For example, how many publications are deposited on average in a year? What is the frequency of deposit? What proportion of publishers are actively depositing?</p>	
Expected tasks and outcomes	
<p>The Placement student will be asked to identify a thematic area that they would like to investigate. This might be by broad subject of publisher interest (e.g. UK politics) or by type of publisher (e.g. Think Tanks). The student will then work with colleagues in Contemporary British Publications and Collection Development Implementation to define a method and requirements for data analysis, and to survey publications on the web.</p> <p>We would expect outcomes to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A report on publisher activity using the Portal • A report on activity on the UK web, comparing to publications received via the Portal • Recommendations for further action • Blog posts on the project and progress <p>Reports should include anonymised data, and will be presented to the Collections Development and Acquisitions group representing all six UK Legal Deposit Libraries (British Library, National Library of Scotland, National Library of Wales, Trinity College Dublin, Cambridge University Library, Bodleian Library Oxford).</p>	
Training and experience expected to be gained by student through the placement	
<p>This placement will provide experience in the development and implementation of policy at scale within the context of a National Library. It will offer an opportunity to apply analytical skills in a</p>	

focused project that directly impacts on policy development.

The student will be part of the Contemporary British Publications team for the duration of the placement. They will be encouraged to participate in team meetings, meet with colleagues in other parts of the Library, and contribute to the activities of the Contemporary British Publications team as a whole.

The student will have the opportunity to develop their communication skills through report writing, presenting their work to key stakeholders, as well as communicating it to broader audiences through blogging.

The student will be encouraged to take advantage of Library-wide staff training opportunities available during the placement, for example seminars and training as part of the 21st Century Curators and Digital Scholarship programme.

The student will also work with colleagues in Collection Development Implementation. Depending on timing of the placement, the student may also be able to meet colleagues in related roles at other UK Legal Deposit Libraries.

The placement is especially likely to appeal to someone interested in gaining an insight into careers around publishing, librarianship and digital technologies.

Required knowledge and skills

- Strong Excel skills (it is expected that the analysis will be using Excel, but we are interested in applications that suggest the use of other tools, as long as project outputs can be interpreted using Excel)
- A strong interest in an area of UK publishing that will form the basis of a case study for the project
- Formal training in statistical methods or tools and methodologies for quantitative analysis are not a requirement for this placement, but both would be an advantage

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>