

NCRM Placement Fellowship

“Research challenges for using the archived web for social research”

What do researchers need to know about web archive collections? A case study to demonstrate methodological challenges and create innovative solutions for future researchers

(British Library)

Placement Specification

Background

The NCRM Placement Fellowships aim to place academic social scientists in non-academic research organisations (e.g. central, local or devolved government department, or third sector organisation) to work on well-defined methodological research problems identified by the non-academic organisation for periods lasting between three and six months. The Placement scheme will run between July 2017 and June 2019.

NCRM are working with the policy units at Southampton, Manchester, and Edinburgh universities and in conjunction with non-academic partner organisations to develop *pre-specified placements*. These placements are defined around a problem area, set out a person specification and specify expected outputs and timetable.

Details of the placement opportunity

The UK Web Archive (UKWA), based at The British Library but working on behalf of all six UK Legal Deposit Libraries, aims to collect all UK websites, preserve them and give access to researchers. Each year millions of websites (and billions of individual assets) are captured under the Non-Print Legal Deposit legislation and are made available to researchers in the Reading Rooms. This rapidly expanding collection has considerable potential for social science research, since not only does it capture UK websites, but it shows how they change and develop over time.

The British Library is looking to develop a case study of innovative research, which will serve to highlight challenges and best practice in documenting web archive collections. Using one of the UK Web Archive Special Collections, this project will investigate what information about the UK Web Archive social science researchers require.

The placement fellow is expected to draw on their advanced knowledge of the use of the internet for social science research, to provide new knowledge about the information which the UKWA needs to make available to researchers. The Fellow will draw on their own advanced understanding of the methods which social science researchers do/will apply to web archived content to support the UKWA in developing its content. The Fellow will be based within the Contemporary British Publications team

at the British Library, working directly with the Web Archive Engagement Manager, the Lead Curator for Web Archiving and the Web Archiving Technician.

Start date and duration

The approximate start date for this placement is spring – summer 2018. This is a three-month full-time or six-month part-time placement.

Eligibility

The placement is open to post-doctoral academic staff from Early Career Researchers through to senior Professors. Academics from any University in the UK are eligible under this scheme.

Eligible Costs

Funds provided under the placement scheme will cover directly incurred (DI) replacement salary costs and reasonable travel costs (at 80% Full Economic Costs) only.

Reporting

The successful applicant will be required to prepare a final report highlighting the outcomes of their placement, including an expenditure statement no later than three months after the end of the placement. Any publications or promotional material must acknowledge the support of NCRM.

Review

Applications will be reviewed by the NCRM Research Directorate and representatives of the British Library, and will be assessed against the following criteria:

- The applicant has relevant experience and is a good fit with the person specification
- The budget requested is fully justified and reasonable.

How to apply

Applicants should refer to the [Role and Person Specification](#) before submitting an application.

Applicants for this placement opportunity should complete the [Application Form](#) and send it, along with the supporting documentation requested, to Penny White, Research Co-ordinator at NCRM (P.C.White@southampton.ac.uk). Applications must be submitted by **16:00 on 21 February 2018**.

Queries can be directed to either Alexandra Frosch, Centre Manager at NCRM (A.S.Frosch@soton.ac.uk) or Gavin Costigan, Director, Public Policy | Southampton (G.Costigan@soton.ac.uk). For an informal discussion with the British Library, please contact jason.webber@bl.uk.