

Project Proposal Application

To be completed by the lead proposed supervisor,
with input from the non-HE Partner Organisation(s).



Arts and
Humanities
Research Council

SECTION 1: PROJECT SUMMARY AND APPLICANT DETAILS			
Proposed Project Title:		Outsourcing State Censorship: The Stationers' Company and the privatisation of press regulation in Restoration England	
Project Summary: <i>(Maximum 100 words)</i>		This project investigates the full apparatus of pre-publication licensing in Restoration England. The government's reliance on the Stationers' Company to conduct press regulation shows an early modern state outsourcing its security to a private guild. How did the Company recruit its spies and censors, and locate and shut down forbidden printing? To what extent did this represent a state appropriation of the traditional regulatory function of the Company? The project uncovers for the first time how this policing functioned, the opportunities - and pitfalls - it presented, the impact of this alliance on the book trade and on the Company.	
Host University:		Newcastle University	
Name of Non-HE Partner Organisation(s): <i>(Add more lines if needed)</i>			
1. Stationer's Company (Worshipful Company of Stationers and Newspaper makers), Ave Maria Lane, London, EC4M 7DD			
2.			
Contact(s) at Non-HE Partner Organisation(s): <i>(Add more lines if needed)</i>			
Name:	Ruth Frendo (Archivist)	Email:	archivist@stationers.org
Name:		Email:	

<p>Primary AHRC Subject Area: <i>Select one subject area from the list here. Do not add or amend subjects - there will not be a corresponding Subject Area panel to assess the application.</i></p>	History	
Does the project include a Creative Practice component?	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Do you consider the project to be interdisciplinary?	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>If you consider the project to be interdisciplinary, please state why: <i>(Maximum 100 words. Note, all applications will be assessed by the appropriate primary subject area cross-institutional panel.)</i></p>		

SECTION 2: PROJECT PROPOSAL AND CASE FOR SUPPORT

Please provide full details of the proposal and make your case for support below:

(Maximum 750 words)

Censorship of the press was a fact of life in Restoration England. In 1662 the passage of the Printing Act established a system of pre-publication licensing that lasted (with a temporary lapse between 1679 and 1685) until 1695. Much work has been done on this censorship regime: at the level of policy and legal history, in intellectual history (Kemp; Barber, 2022), and in literary studies (Patterson; Love; Dzelzainis 2017; Keymer 2019), considering the impact of press regulation on authorial strategies of innuendo, misdirection, and clandestine satire. However, this existing work is for the most part abstracted from the everyday realities of how censorship was enacted on the ground: not through legislation, prosecution, or trials, but through surveillance, harassment, and arbitrary search and seizure. For the most part, these activities were undertaken not by agents of the state but by functionaries of the Stationers' Company, the guild that held sway over early modern London's book trade. State censorship of the press was thus outsourced to a private corporation.

Where previous work has focused on the political and literary impact of press regulation, this project will be the first to explore personnel and procedure: Who enacted censorship in Restoration England? And what, precisely, did they do? The Company arranged the composition of search parties and insisted that senior members of the Company be present. The Company consequently possesses a rich untapped seam of archival material that enables those questions to be answered with unprecedented clarity: receipts, expense reports, affidavits, policy papers, confiscated sheets, and other materials generated by searches, which enable us to retrace the steps of figures such as Robert Stephens, a salaried factotum of the Company, as he patrolled the streets and printing houses of London searching for seditious, blasphemous, and treasonous pamphlets. The project will investigate the entire apparatus of censorship wielded by the Company, including the recruitment of trade insiders as agents and informers, the hired thugs who knocked down doors and smashed presses on Company orders, and the keepers of off-books safehouses where malefactors could be detained without charge.

The innovations of this project are fivefold. (1) By using Stationers' Company documents alongside the better-known State Papers in the National Archives, it will illuminate for the first time how the Restoration government effectively privatised censorship of the press and, through the Company's internal structures, made the book trade complicit in its own regulation. (2) It will integrate the Company's policing of the underground press with its enforcement of copyright, itself a crucial factor in the history of intellectual property. (3) While the project will focus on the high-water-mark of press censorship between 1662 and 1695, it will also chart the pre-history of the Printing Act and how it codified pre-existing arrangements within the Stationers' Company. It will establish (4) a 'chronology' of surveillance intensity,

identifying the peaks and troughs in such activity, which are likely to track events in political life, and (5) how many men like Stephens were on the Company payroll.

The student will use the business records of the Stationers' Company, which offer crucial and underexamined insight into both the politics and execution of press censorship in Restoration England. These are all digitised but currently not well linked together and the student will work between the images and the physical archive to fully grasp the extent and connectedness of the materials. Immersion in these records will be augmented by the digitised holdings of *State Papers Online*, the *Old Bailey Online*, and the *British Book Trade Index*. The Stationers' catalogue of its physical material will be augmented in significant ways through the student's six-month placement. The student will create meaningful and durable metadata links between the existing catalogue information and the digital images of the complete early modern archive owned by the Stationers, using knowledge-transfer between the sector-leading expertise of Robinson Library Special Collections and the uniquely significant archival resources of the Stationers to create a twenty-first century catalogue.

Provide details of any resources and facilities, including equipment, fieldwork, training, etc., that will be required to complete the project successfully. NBC has limited Research Training Support Grant funding, which may affect the feasibility of high-cost projects. Please note where you might also secure additional funding, (e.g. partner organisations; department or school). Include estimated costs:

(Maximum 200 words)

The student will receive bibliographical training through the annual 'Studying Material Texts' workshops, convened by Dr Joseph Hone and Sam Bailey. These include a session on palaeography led by Geraldine Hunwick, senior archivist at the Robinson Library special collections. Further palaeographical training is usually made available through annual sessions led by Hunwick for the Doctoral College and through training provided by Nafde on SELLL's MA module 'Manuscript, Print, Digital', which the student may audit. The student will work directly, in both hands-on and observational roles, with the Special Collections digital team in their second year to explore metadata generation, including HTR (handwritten-text recognition), and applications for surfacing images via IIIF (International Image Interoperability Framework) with a view to identifying the most effective processes and standards for the Company's descriptive metadata and extensible sharing.

Outline the arrangements for communication between the non-HE partner organisation and the academic host institution in regard to project management and monitoring academic progress:

(Maximum 200 words)

The two Schools have a well-established working relationship with the Stationers' Company including the placement of PhD students at the Company and clear lines of communication are now well established.

Academic: There will be a meeting with the whole project team every three months to update on progress and findings (outside the regular supervisory meetings). These will be virtual meetings to ensure Frendo can attend. These meetings and a brief student-created summary of discussions will be recorded on Newcastle University's NU Reflect platform and confirmed and signed-off by supervisor(s).

Placement: This is envisaged for the third year when the student has a confident knowledge of the archive and completed their sessions with Johnson. Three whole team meetings for the start and finish and half-way through the process will set out and monitor progress. The placement will be led by Frendo and advised by Johnson, Frendo will co-ordinate catalogue project planning with the student. The student will provide a written account of placement meetings and milestones on Newcastle University's Placement e-platform; the whole team including external advisors have automatic access to materials posted. More informal contact about day-to-day queries will be maintained via email and regular Zoom meetings.

What benefits will there be for the candidate and the non-HE partner organisation as a result of your collaboration?

(Maximum 300 words)

- A) The student will acquire significant information management skills: cataloguing protocols; technical implementation; metadata creation; project management; teamwork skills; communication skills.
- B) The student will bring to the Company cutting-edge knowledge and expertise acquired from their own research in the archive and through working with Johnson and his team at Special Collections. By supporting the Company's work to connect its main catalogue to the digital surrogates of its early modern records in a historically nuanced and technically informed way and by helping to create the processes and workflows to support it, the student will co-develop a catalogue that makes these complex and interconnected records accessible, navigable and publicly and freely available to all scholars. The creation of a catalogue of this kind and enabling this access for scholars to its records is a key strategic goal for the Company and the Archive.

State what financial (if any) or in-kind contribution the non-HE partner organisation will be making over the duration of the award:

*(Maximum 100 words. A financial contribution is **not** a requirement. However, the AHRC expect that **non-HE partners based overseas** will make a financial contribution to the costs of the student's return travel and accommodation when visiting.)*

The student will be provided with suitable workspace and IT access and be directly supervised and guided by the Company archivist, Dr. Ruth Frendo.

Describe the nature of the collaborative arrangement and the activities the candidate will be undertaking with the non-HE partner organisation:

(Maximum 300 words)

Frendo will introduce the student to the key archival materials (including the Court minute books, bills and receipts for searching illegal presses, bills and receipts for individuals involved in conducting searches, the Clerk's memorandum books), and instruct them in the interpretation and use of the Stationers' records in the first year of the project and arrange for access to all materials including any digitised material not included in available databases.

The placement will see the student work with Frendo for six months in Year 3 to train in the relevant cataloguing standards including familiarisation with CALM archive management software. Using the processes studied with Johnson, and their own in-depth knowledge of the archive, the student will work with Frendo to generate the metadata required to link the existing online catalogue to the digitised images of the early modern archive to create an accessible archive that gives users full access to, and a clear understanding of, the digitised records.

SECTION 3: SUPERVISION AND EXTERNAL ADVISORS**Primary (or Co-) Supervisor:** Professor Rachel Hammersley

School or Department:	History, Classics and Archaeology, NCL	Email Address:	rachel.hammersley@ncl.ac.uk
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Secondary (or Co-) Supervisor: Dr Joseph Hone

School or Department:	English Literature, Language and Linguistics, NCL	Email Address:	joseph.hone@ncl.ac.uk
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Secondary (or Co-) Supervisor: Dr Alex Barber

School or Department:	History, Durham	Email address:	a.w.barber@durham.ac.uk
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Name of the Advisor based at the Non-HE Partner Organisation: Dr Ruth Frendo

Organisation/Institution:	Stationers' Company	Email Address:	archivist@stationers.org
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Name of Additional Internal or External Advisors or Academic Supervisors, if any: Mr Ian Johnson

Ian Johnson	Special Collections, Robinson Library, Newcastle University.	Email Address	ian.johnson@ncl.ac.uk
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Explain how the expertise of the supervisory team and external advisor(s) will allow them to support the proposed project and the selected candidate:*(Maximum 500 words)*

[Professor Rachel Hammersley](#) (History, Newcastle) has supervised three PhDs to completion (two AHRC-funded, one as lead supervisor) and is currently supervising five further students, three of whom are AHRC-funded. She has expertise in the intellectual, cultural, and political history of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. She has published several books on early modern republicanism including an intellectual biography of James Harrington and is the PI on the AHRC project '[Experiencing Political Texts](#)' which convenes an interdisciplinary network of experts in the material cultures of early modern political writing.

[Dr Joseph Hone](#) (English, Newcastle) has expertise in the book trade, censorship, and political writing of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. He is the author of four books and some two dozen chapters and articles published in journals across history, literary studies, and bibliography. He is currently writing a history of the eighteenth-century clandestine book trade for Princeton University Press. He won the 2022 Philip Leverhulme Prize for Languages and Literatures and holds an AHRC Research, Development and Engagement Fellowship. He is currently lead supervisor for a NUAAct-funded PhD student in English.

[Dr Alex Barber](#) (History, Durham) has supervised four PhD students to completion (one of whom was AHRC funded). He is currently supervising three further students, one of whom is AHRC funded. He has also mentored two Leverhulme post-doctoral researchers. He has also been head of the seventeenth-century centre at Durham which helped several PhD students to organise relevant conferences. Dr Barber brings his training in intellectual history – and a wider commitment to manuscript and book studies – to this project. His book, *Restraint of the Press* (2022) concerned with the nature of the press in the Restoration period, discusses the consequences to political and religious culture of the lapse of licensing in 1695 and he has published articles concerned with the power of the Stationers' Company.

Dr Ruth Frenco has a PhD in Literature and is the principal archivist for the Stationers' Company. She has considerable experience of working with academic researchers, and of wider public engagement acquired in archival posts at the London School of Economics, the Courtauld Institute, Shakespeare's Globe, the Institute for Advanced Legal Studies, and the Garden Museum. She is the co-supervisor of an AHRC Northern Bridge funded PhD on apprenticeship in the Company. Her current work focuses on expanding the Company's digital platform.

Ian Johnson is Head of Special Collections at Newcastle University and a Co-I on the [AHRC funded Evolving Hands](#) project. He has overseen or led numerous Special Collections projects focussed on metadata, images and cataloguing including the AHRC-funded [Poetics of the Archive](#) and the [Gertrude Bell archive](#). His team specialise in digitisation and the application of digital scholarship methodologies such as handwritten text recognition, text encoding, and geo-spatial techniques.

SECTION 4: RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT

Please provide details about the research environment the selected candidate will be joining and its suitability:
(Maximum 500 words)

Newcastle University and the Stationers' Company are the natural homes for this project. The student will enter a research environment distinguished by its intellectual breadth and critical innovation. Newcastle University's research profile in print studies stretches from the late medieval to the postcolonial period. It has specific strengths in early modern print studies and intellectual history. In the School of History, both are pursued by Morton, East, Mills and Hammersley. Boulton (now emeritus) continues to research the urban history of early modern London.

In the School of English, ranked first for English Language and Literature in REF 2021, early

modern print studies is researched by Nafde, de Rycker, Connolly, Hone (who has a specific interest in eighteenth-century clandestine and illegal printing in London) and Grenby. Their expertise in these disciplines covers the fields of scholarly editing and descriptive bibliography; historical book trade research; the analysis of printed images and material ephemera. The AHRC-funded network '[Experiencing Political Texts](#)', led by Hammersley, seeks to bring the insights of literary and book history to bear on early modern political texts. It brings together a network of academics and librarians to explore the communication of political ideas, examining the ways in which genre and materiality contributed to the political arguments of early modern texts. Hone currently holds an AHRC Research, Development and Engagement Fellowship on the history of forgery and deceptive printing in the book trade, from the early modern period to the present day.

The student's training in cataloguing and metadata will benefit from the experience and knowledge of Special Collections' experience of developing [large digitised archives](#) and their interest in how [digital tools can be productively used](#) in archival curation.

The student will join a PG cohort pursuing projects on early modern print and intellectual history: eighteenth-century erotic books (Bailey), apprenticeship and the seventeenth-century Stationers' Company (de Bold), reconstructing the libraries of James VI and I (Plane), early modern Biblicism (Hayton), the Newcastle Literary and Philosophical Society (Gray), and early modern Quaker women's print (Gove). Plane and De Bold are also trained cataloguers employing this knowledge in their doctoral research. All these scholars are convened together through the Medieval and Early Modern Research Group (MEMS) work-in-progress roundtables which run from November to June. Barber will facilitate connections to Durham's MEMSA, where the student will have opportunities to network with Durham PG researchers and through IMEMS, to work with the wider early modern group at Durham.

SECTION 5: RECRUITMENT INFORMATION

In the event that your project is successful it will be advertised on the Northern Bridge Consortium website to aid recruitment: <http://www.northernbridge.ac.uk/applyforstudentship/cda/>

Please therefore complete the following Applicant Criteria so that advertising can begin immediately following the outcome of the competition:

<i>For further information about this Collaborative Doctoral Award and to submit an Expression of Interest, please contact:</i>	
Lead Supervisor (or Alternative Contact):	Professor Rachel Hammersley
Email:	rachel.hammersley@ncl.ac.uk
Expressions of Interest must be received no later than:	28 February 2024
Expressions of Interest must take the following format:	
<i>Please use this space to state the preferred format and any required accompanying documentation, e.g.</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a 500 word personal statement; • 2-page CV • 2 x references, etc... 	
Interviews for shortlisted candidates are expected to take place:	Week commencing 4 March 2024

APPLICANT CRITERIA

Candidates must also meet the criteria for acceptance on a doctoral programme as set out by the host institution's Postgraduate Admissions Service. The successful candidate will be required to submit a postgraduate application to their host institution following notification that they are to be awarded a conditional CDA studentship, and meet the conditions of the offer of a place on the doctoral programme.

Education and Professional Qualifications	Essential Criteria	A UG degree in History, Literature or cognate subject.
	Desirable Criteria	A PG qualification (pending or in hand) or equivalent professional experience
Research and Impact Experience and Training	Essential Criteria	Experience of reading and analysing early modern texts and books
	Desirable Criteria	Experience of using archival material in research
Professional Practice and Job-related Experience	Essential Criteria	Evidence of ability to manage and meet project deadlines.
	Desirable Criteria	Experience of working in archives or special collections. Interest in digital tools and interfaces
Interpersonal Skills	Essential Criteria	Demonstrable ability to work independently and in a small team
	Desirable Criteria	

Other Factors	Essential Criteria	
	Desirable Criteria	