
Internships at the Manuscriptorium Digital Library

Internships at the Manuscriptorium Digital Library

The European Office of Charles University has a long standing cooperation with the National Library of the Czech Republic. CU Erasmus students have the opportunity to join the library for internships that not only provide assistance to the community, but also enhance their career prospects and help them to gain vital experience.

The unpaid internship, which sees 10-30 Erasmus students participate each term, involves the preparation of digital full text versions of historical texts, which are then published in the Manuscriptorium Digital Library. All students are given friendly guidance throughout their time with the library and are taught how to use essential programs such as an XML Editor with their primary focus being enabling public access to historical



documents.

During their time with the library, students can choose which texts they wish to work on and, depending on their skills, may work on more challenging texts. The positions are also flexible – meaning if students only want to undertake the internship for a short time, they can, while still providing the library valuable assistance.

While the internship remains flexible with no particular deadlines to meet, this type of work demands hard work over plenty of hours even for those who are most experienced in this field of work. However, while working and gaining experience, students should feel comfortable knowing they are working towards helping not only the general public, but also scholars such as historians who may use the digital texts. Furthermore, other students may also benefit from such material being available to them.

The internship is particularly popular among students with interests in history, archive and library science, IT or literature and languages. During their time working, students are able to learn from one another, viewing how those from different subjects use the programs in order to gain more of an understanding themselves. In the past, for example, humanities students have been able to learn from IT students and vice versa.

Tomáš Klimek, researcher for the Digital Library Department of the National Library, said: “The students who participate in the internship help us massively with developing digital texts and enhancing the digital library. In return, they learn new skills, open new possibilities of research and topics, and the opportunity to work on something real with real outputs and real, visible results.”

Tomáš Klimek also said that ‘many historians are still unable to use digital tools’ and while this is true, the ever-changing world of technology means that history must also move forward, and Erasmus students can help with this by participating in this unique and great opportunity that is certainly not to be missed.

Luke Cowley is an English second-year Journalism student at De Montfort University in Leicester. He enjoys travelling, meeting new people and a wide range of sports, predominately football. As well as this, Luke likes writing and computing which have both led to his interest in journalism and technology. Luke is keen to write for iForum magazine to experience

how news differentiates between different countries and cultures, gain vital experience as well as to meet other aspiring journalists.