

Participant Information FAQ/ Plain Language Statement

Study Title:	Assessing Accessibility and Representation in Digitized British Special Collections
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Course:	MSc Information Management and Preservation
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Invitation

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Feel free to ask if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take your time to decide if you wish to take part. Thank you for reading this.

What is the purpose of the study?

Heritage institutions historically underrepresent the lived experiences of marginalized communities. Disabled users in particular experience a lack of representation, both in physical access to archival spaces and in thematic content covered by these institutions. Digital collections do resolve some of the physical access barriers by making collections available online. However, they pose new challenges for users with varying access needs. The purpose of this study is to examine how accessibility factors into the strategies and practices of special collections archives. From 1 April to 9 August 2024, the researcher will evaluate the performance of various UK-based digitized collections against criteria that facilitate access for a variety of user needs. The study also includes a series of interviews that look at the different strategies, practices, and resources that contribute to the creation of online materials. The results will be submitted in partial fulfilment of the researcher's degree requirements. An amended version may be submitted for publication in an academic journal or presented to other academics or sector professionals.

The benefits of the project include the development of criteria so institutions can evaluate their own web performance to better serve disabled visitors. The study adds to the discourse around digital collections by looking at special collections, UK institutions, and access needs for visitors with cognitive disabilities alongside the visual and sensory disabilities that are more frequently examined. These three areas have little to no research individually, let alone in conjunction with one another. Finally, the research can help to highlight missing resources and create a roadmap for practitioners to develop a better service offering for their virtual visitors.

Why have I been chosen?

You have been chosen on the following basis:

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- You have a professional involvement in an area directly relevant to the research topic.
- You have answered a call for potential participants circulated on one of the following mailing lists: LIS-ACCESSIBILITY@JISCMail.AC.UK; ARCHIVES-NRA@JISCMail.AC.UK; DIGITAL-PRESERVATION@JISCMail.AC.UK; MASS-DIGITIZATION@JISCMail.AC.UK; have been recommended by a member of said mailing lists; or have been contacted as a result of the researcher's interview development process.
- You have led or participated in an initiative in the UK that is relevant to the research topic.

Do I have to take part?

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you decide to take part, then up until any cut-off date for the anonymisation of data, you are still free to withdraw without giving a reason.

What will happen to me if I take part?

You will be invited to take part in the following participant activity:

- An interview will last approximately 45-60 minutes. The participant answers a series of questions relating to their experience with implementing digitized collections. The interview will be conducted via Microsoft Teams. The interview will be audio recorded. No video recording shall be made.

Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential? What will happen to the project data and the results of the research study?

The data gathered for this project is for the purposes of a postgraduate research project. The project data will be securely kept. Interview contributions will either be anonymised, or you can choose to be cited by name/referred to by a pseudonym of your choosing. Transcribed data will be analyzed to identify patterns and trends. The data may possibly be cited and discussed in publications (online and in print), as well as in other public domain outputs typically associated with HE research contexts (e.g. conferences and other presentations). Please read the agreement form for detailed terms and conditions regarding the use of your contribution and the handling and processing of data.

- The data will be retained for at least ten years from the date of the interview. This applies whether the study is submitted to an academic journal or used in professional presentations, or if access is restricted to the researcher, their supervisor, and a second dissertation reviewer.
- Data collected as part of this project will be handled and protected in accordance with the provisions of UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR). Please note that the 'lawful basis' that applies for data processing in this case is **Public Task**. Under the selected basis, your data subject rights are limited to access and objection. Where necessary or requested, the researcher may agree to you withdrawing your contribution from the project, in which case this is in addition to your statutory rights. Anonymised data are exempt from data subject rights – unless you have grounds to believe that you remain identifiable from the data as presented.

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please note that assurances on confidentiality will be strictly adhered to unless evidence of wrongdoing or potential harm is uncovered. In such cases the University may be obliged to contact relevant statutory bodies/agencies. 	
Who is organising and funding the research? (If relevant)	
Not applicable	
Who has reviewed the study?	
Materials relating to the study have been examined and approved by the study's supervisor, a member of the University of Glasgow Information Studies Department. As the research deals with industry professionals, ethics approval has been acquired through the Class Ethics Approval procedure of the University of Glasgow College of Arts & Humanities.	
Application reference number: 100230177	Date of approval letter: 3 May 2024
How can I access information relating to me or complain if I suspect information has been misused/ used for purposes other than I agreed to?	
<p>You can contact the researcher or their supervisor in the first instance if you have any concerns. If you are not comfortable doing this, or if you have tried but don't get a response or if the person in question appears to have left the University, you can contact the College of Arts & Humanities Ethics Officer (email: arts-ethics@glasgow.ac.uk).</p> <p>Where there appear to have been problems, you can – and indeed may be advised to – submit an 'access request' or an objection to the use of data. As part of the University's obligations under UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), participants retain the rights to <u>access</u> and <u>objection</u> with regard to the use of non-anonymised data for research purposes.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Access requests and objections can be submitted via the UofG online proforma accessible at: https://www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/dpfooffice/gdpr/gdprrequests/#. Access requests and objection are formal procedures not because we mean to intimidate participants into not raising issues, but rather because the University is legally required to respond and address concerns. The system provides a clear point of contact, appropriate support and a clear set of responsibilities. Anyone who submits a request will need to provide proof of their identity. Again, this is not to deter inquiries, but rather reflects the University's duty to guard against fraudulent approaches that might result in data breaches. You also have the right to lodge a complaint against the University regarding data protection issues with the Information Commissioner's Office (https://ico.org.uk/concerns/). 	