

Sam Dodd

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Personal Profile

I specialise in creative community engagement projects, community history preservation and promotion, and project/office management for small arts and literacy organisations. Recent graduate of a Library Science Masters degree (Distinction).

Interests: public libraries; grassroots archiving; creative writing; community history & engagement; amplifying marginalised voices; oral history; information ethics, access & inclusion; information history; dis/misinformation, participatory research; autoethnographical practice.

Education

MSc Library Science (Distinction): City, University of London (2019-2021)

BA (Hons) Creative & Professional Writing (2:1): University of East London (2011-2014)

Publications

Masserano, E., Dodd, S., Maddison, S. & McWatt, T. (2021) 'Stories of COVID-19: Social Pasts & Futures in the CityLife Project,' *The Sociological Observer*, 3(1). Available at: <https://www.sociology.ie/publications.html> (Issue 3)

McWatt, T., Dodd, S. and Maddison, S. (2015) (eds.) *EastLife: An Anthology of Life Writing*. London: University of East London ([PDF](#) format, [.epub](#) format, [.mobi](#) format)

Employment History

Arkbound Foundation, Power of the Pen Creative Writing Programme – October 2021 to present

Therapeutic Writing Programme Mentor

The Arkbound Foundation is a charity that aims to widen access to literature and improve diversity within publishing, running projects that empower people from disadvantaged backgrounds and deprived communities to get their voices heard whilst seeking to build resilience for the most excluded communities through the power of literature and journalism. The Power of the Pen programme is aimed at those experiencing worsened mental health as a result of the pandemic. I prepare the curriculum weekly and facilitate the group sessions.

CityLife Creative Writing Community Project, University of East Anglia – October 2014 to present
Co-Founder, Project Manager, Editor & Research Assistant (part-time)

CityLife is a community engagement, creative writing and research project based at UEA, gathering life stories from older urban community members by pairing volunteer student creative writers with them for conversational sessions, from which they produce biographical stories. CityLife immortalises the history, vibrancy, diversity and ever-changing landscape of the East End and wider London, and platforms unheard voices for a new way of storytelling and holding meaningful exchanges. I have contributed to research design, methodology and field work in the project over its four different phases, the latest of which is through the British Academy; project development, writer training and the ethical framework; participant safeguarding and effective collaboration with our community partner organisations; field research including sourcing information on marginalised groups and their support services and networks; and establishing a network of partners for the project that includes centres and establishments such as Age UK, Toynbee Hall, Aging Well Dagenham, Pepper Pot Day Centre, Cody Dock and Stones End Day Centre. I have coordinated and been involved in the editing and production of ca.100 stories from the communities we work in, and I am a co-editor of our first publication, *EastLife*. I manage all contact with writers and community elders. In the latest phase, COVID: Lockdown Stories, I trained new writers, met with community leaders and participants in the project, and coordinated

the storytelling sessions - which for the first time in CityLife history, took place remotely due to COVID. I am currently co-authoring an academic article for publication in Autumn 2021.

The Poetry Society, Covent Garden, London – September 2017 to December 2018

Executive Assistant (temporary contract; extended twice)

In this role at a small charity, I looked after the administration on our two quarterly publications, the running of the office, the Director's schedule, governance and board administration, supplier management, Health & Safety, central admin and team coordination, H.R., database management, troubleshooting of I.T. issues, the generic mailbox, incoming/outgoing mail, and phone lines.

First Story, Caledonian Road, London – March 2017 to August 2017

Executive Assistant (six-month contract)

For this small arts and literacy outreach charity, I looked after the administration on National Writing Day, office management, database management, the Director's schedule, governance and board administration, and central admin and team coordination.

English PEN, Farringdon, London - October 2015 to November 2016

Memberships & Office Administrator (part-time)

In this role at a small arts and human rights charity, I took care of memberships and office administration, database management, and events assistance. I also assisted with reconciliation processes, organised board meetings, and assisted with the meeting of governance deadlines.

Campaign Bootcamp, Bethnal Green, London – January 2015 to February 2017

Database Manager & Outreach Coordinator (freelance; part-time)

For this activist training organisation, I rebuilt their existing database to better suit their needs as they grew, managing the transfer to a new platform and ensuring data integrity and usability. I also worked on outreach for Bootcamp applications, and helped with candidate screening.

Prison Reading Groups, Roehampton University, London – January 2015 to January 2016

Project Manager (part-time; one-year contract)

PRG is a small charity that supplies books to over 40 reading groups within UK prisons. Duties were: administration; finances; events organisation; reporting; liaison with publishers & funders; liaison with prison librarians; and volunteer logistics

Free Word, Farringdon, London – October 2014 to April 2015

Programme Producer (part-time; six-month contract)

Funded by the EU and Arts Council England, Free Word was an arts charity working for literature, literacy and freedom of expression. I was part of a small core team. Duties were: leading a global literary project, Weather Stations, bringing together five countries, authors and schools to tackle the subject of climate change creatively; events organisation, writing itineraries, booking travel and speakers, and managing a team of volunteers.

Volunteering & Awards

March 2020-June 2021: Distributor of Dope, a solidarity newspaper for homeless people.

March 2020-May 2021: Telephone befriender for Toynbee Hall, social welfare charity.

September 2019-May 2020: Student Representative for MSc degree programme.

January 2016-January 2017: Running the book corner for Family Days at HMP Wandsworth, coordinating the delivery of a free book and activities for each visiting child, with Give a Book.

September 2015: Completed charity trustee training course with Volunteer Centre Tower Hamlets.

April 2015: Fully funded Trust for London scholarship to attend Campaign Bootcamp 2015.

November 2014: 'Dean's Prize for Outstanding Contribution to the UEL Community'.

May 2013: Founded UEL English PEN, a student-led sub-group of English PEN.

May 2012: Event Coordinator for Book Slam, organising a large-scale event in a derelict building.

September 2011 to May 2014: Student Representative for BA (Hons) degree programme.

I have also been Editor and Copywriter for several creative writing and poetry anthologies / zines.