

Sam Dodd

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Personal Profile

I specialise in creative community engagement projects, editing, writing mentorship, and project management for small arts and literacy organisations.

Interests: radical and marginalised histories; public and prison libraries; creative writing and writer development; information access and inclusion; community engagement; spatial justice; city farms; counter-mapping; psychogeography; participatory research; and autoethnography.

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I am a Writer-in-Residence at [House of Annetta](#) and Trustee at [Spread the Word](#) writer's agency.

Education

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

- Recipient of the Catherine Hamilton Prize for Outstanding LIS Dissertation.

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

- Recipient of the Dean's Prize for Outstanding Contribution to the UEL Community.

Guest Lectures, Conferences & Publications

Stories, Communities, and Public Libraries presentation to OLive, UEL. Guest Lecturer, April 2022.

Reimagining Voices and Identities in Uncertain Times: Social Transformation, Fragmentation and Post-Pandemic Futures conference, Sociological Association of Ireland. Co-contributor, March 2022. As part of CityLife.

Futures of Creative Writing conference, 'Community Voices' roundtable, University of East Anglia. Speaker and co-contributor, May 2021. As part of CityLife.

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).

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

Spitalfields City Farm, Spitalfields, London – March 2022 to present

Project Worker – Community Wellbeing Club (part-time)

The Wellbeing Club is a community engagement project funded by the Mayors COVID Loneliness Recovery Fund identifying and working with local community members who experience higher levels of isolation as a result of pandemic measures and ill-health from long-COVID. The project engages people in ecotherapy and horticulture tasks once-weekly as volunteers, then offers monthly art therapy and mindful movement classes. Monthly cook-ups also run as part of this project, creating and eating dishes made from food grown on the farm. Partner referrers include Tower Hamlets Libraries, Tower Hamlets Recovery College, Reset Recovery, Spitalfields Crypt Trust, Linkage Plus, NHS CHMT's, GP surgeries (social prescribing), hospital community disability services, refugee services, and carer services.

CityLife Community Life Writing Project, University of East Anglia – October 2014 to present

Co-Founder, Project Manager, Editor & Research Assistant (part-time)

CityLife is an intergenerational community engagement, life 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 Toynbee Hall, Age UK, 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.

Arkbound Foundation, Power of the Pen Writing Programme – October 2021 to March 2022

Therapeutic Writing Mentor (part-time)

The Arkbound Foundation is a charity that aims to widen access to literature and improve diversity within publishing, running projects that empower writers from disadvantaged backgrounds and deprived communities. The Power of the Pen programme was aimed at those experiencing worsened mental health as a result of the pandemic. I prepared the curriculum weekly and facilitated the group sessions.

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

Executive Assistant (temporary contract; extended twice)

In this role at a small literature charity, I looked after the admin on two quarterly publications, office and database management, the Director's schedule, governance/board administration, Health & Safety, centralised team coordination, troubleshooting I.T. issues, and H.R. administration.

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

Executive Assistant (six-month contract)

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

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

Memberships & Office Administrator (part-time)

In this role at a small literature and human rights charity, I took care of memberships and events administration, and office and database management. I also assisted with reconciliation processes and governance/board administration.

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 reading groups in prisons. My duties were: administration; events; reporting; liaison with publishers, funders, and prison librarians; volunteer management.

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

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

Free Word was a literature and freedom of expression arts charity. My duties were: leading Weather Stations, a global literary project bringing together five countries, authors and schools to tackle the subject of climate change: events, itineraries, publishing and volunteer management.

Volunteering

March 2021-present: gardening and farmyard volunteer at Spitalfields City Farm.

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.

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

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.