

## Citizen Science as Public History?

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Lecture

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Luxembourg

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Public History, Contemporary History, Cultural History / Studies, Digital Humanities, Historic Preservation

Keynote speech by Dr Mia Ridge, the British Library's Digital Curator for Western Heritage Collections.

### **Abstract**

How does public history intersect with citizen science on crowdsourcing platforms like Zooniverse? This talk will use examples drawn from the Living with Machines project, a collaboration between The Alan Turing Institute and British Library with partner universities, to consider this question. Living with Machines is developing digital history and data science methods to explore vast digitised corpora of historical collections from the long 19th century. Crowdsourcing was built into the project from the very beginning, both as a form of public engagement and a method for data collection. Participants comments and survey results provide insights into their experiences reading and annotating historical newspaper articles.

### **Biography**

**Dr Mia Ridge** is the British Library's Digital Curator for Western Heritage Collections. As part of the Library's Digital Scholarship team, she helps enable innovative research based on the British Library's digital collections, offering support, training and guidance on applying computational research methods to historical collections. Current projects involve crowdsourcing the transcription of historical playbills, and experimenting with machine learning-based methods with library collections. In January 2020 she was awarded funding by the Arts and Humanities Research Council for 'Collective Wisdom', a project that will capture the state of the art in crowdsourcing and digital participation in cultural heritage in 2020-21.

She is a Co-Investigator on the Living with Machines project, where she leads public engagement with digital scholarship and heritage collections through crowdsourcing. Living with Machines is a major inter-disciplinary historical and data science research project analysing digitised sources at scale to provide new insights into mechanisation in the industrial revolution.

She is a member of several project advisory boards in the fields of digital humanities and digital cultural heritage, and has undertaken peer review for a range of journals and conference programmes. Mia has supervised undergraduate and postgraduate research projects applying digital

scholarship methods to the Library's collections.

Mia has published, taught and presented widely on her key areas of interest including user experience design and human-computer interaction, open cultural data, digital history, and audience engagement and participation in the cultural heritage sector. Her edited volume, 'Crowdsourcing our Cultural Heritage' (Ashgate) was published in October 2014.

Her PhD in digital humanities (Department of History, Open University) was titled 'Making digital history: The impact of digitality on public participation and scholarly practices in historical research'.

**This keynote speech is part of the online symposium ['When publics co-produce history in museums: skills, methodologies and impact of participation'](#).**

**Tuesday, 6 December 2022**

**18.00 - 19.15 CET**

**Online**

Please [register](#) to receive the Webex link.

Contact Email:

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URL:

<https://www.c2dh.uni.lu/events/citizen-science-public-history>