



PlaceME@SMI 2021: Using quantitative analysis to bridge divides with the Ditchley Foundation

Project Leader / Supervisor	Dr. Martin C. Smith
Department / Organisation	The Ditchley Foundation
Project title	Using Quantitative Analysis To Bridge Divides With The Ditchley Foundation
Project reference	PMS-06-2021
Location of placement	Remote
Summary of research project	
<p>The renewal of democratic societies, states, markets and alliances is an urgent priority and action to protect our planet is needed from us all. The Ditchley Foundation aims to build new common ground so that we can move toward solutions to complex problems. We believe that change is driven, and managed, by personal relationships, not reports or declarations. We engage local and global communities over time rather than chase headlines. We are not tied to the agenda of any government, political party or commercial interest.</p> <p>In recent years, Ditchley has invested significantly in its work on research, technology and networks. In addition to our gold-standard conferences, which have taken place since the 1960s and have regularly engaged decision-makers across government, finance, technology, academia and civil society, we regularly engage individuals across political stripes, expertise, generations and geographies in a series of small to medium-scale discussions. Approximately 4,500 individuals have participated in Ditchley discussions over the last three years, and we are constantly working to build meaningful connection within this community and with other individuals and organisations. Post-graduates and young professionals are an important part of this engagement, with our annual Festival of Ideas engaging approximately 200 exceptional emerging individuals every year.</p> <p>The Foundation is looking to recruit a number of interns to help up achieve these aims. For Ditchley to be successful, it needs a deep understanding of the networks around a given theme, both from within its own network and the world outside. This project revolves around the understanding of people and their networks across areas such as education, climate and politics. You will be expected to perform research on a list of individuals, learning about their attributes and background, as well as the communities of which they are a part. In some cases you may be asked to determine the list of individuals yourself, given a particular thematic direction.</p> <p>This project provides a great opportunity for enthusiastic researchers to become immersed in the ethos of Ditchley and to contribute to its goals, developing skills that will prove valuable across a range of future career paths. The successful student(s) will be able to attend some of our events, witnessing the important work that the Foundation undertakes.</p>	



The
University
Of
Sheffield.



A step-change in
quantitative social
science skills

Funded by the
Nuffield Foundation,
ESRC and HEFCE



Tasks to be performed during the placement

The interns will be expected to perform open-source research on a list of individuals, learning about their attributes and background, as well as the communities of which they are a part. In some cases they may be asked to determine the list of individuals themselves, given a particular thematic direction. All of this information will be managed using a network-analysis tool that will allow them to visualise and reflect on the person's network, so that they can understand how they fit into the overall network of all individuals. Detailed statistics will be produced showcasing the strengths and weakness of this network. The interns will be given a detailed set of guidelines setting out what we are looking for and we will provide constant supervision as they and their team-mates undertake this research.

Project's outputs

- A rich database providing information of influential people on a particular theme
- A report containing a statistical analysis of this network

Person specification

We are looking for applicants with a curious mind who are eager to immerse themselves in the ethos of the Foundation. For this project applicants must have competent quantitative skills, but these could be demonstrated in various ways, for example in coding ability (e.g. Python or R), experience with statistical software (e.g. SPSS), or simply having advanced analytic skills with spreadsheets. Note that we do not expect all of the above - these just give a flavour of the type of skills that would be beneficial.

Terms and conditions

The placement will take place at The Ditchley Foundation, for 35 hours a week over a period of 6 weeks between 12th July and 20th August (this may be flexible to some extent). The successful candidate will be awarded a £2012 bursary by SMI.

Students who will be awarded the placement are expected to write two blog posts (x 300 words) for SMI about their experiences.

How to apply?

Candidates should send a CV and a motivation letter in PDF formats by 19 April 2021 to Abigail Tazzyman a.tazzyman@sheffield.ac.uk in an email entitled 'PlaceME@SMI – The Ditchley Foundation'.

Shortlisted candidates will be interviewed by The Ditchley Foundation by the end of May 2021.

Contact details

martin@ditchley.com



The
University
Of
Sheffield.



A step-change in
quantitative social
science skills

Funded by the
Nuffield Foundation,
ESRC and HEFCE