

Case study – Virtual Internship with Silk Road Rising, Chicago, USA

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Julia undertook a Literary Liaison Virtual Internship with Silk Road Rising; a Chicago based non-profit theatre and video company. Her main was to promote a key play *Mosque Alert* to theatre companies in the UK, US, and Canada, and to English-speaking theatre companies in continental Europe. *Mosque Alert* explores the intersections of Islamophobia, public policy, and zoning.

What are the key skills you've developed from the virtual internship?

I developed the following skills during the virtual internship:

- Ability to work independently and act on my own initiative, particularly in researching and understanding the script submissions process and identifying and targeting suitable theatre companies and publishers.
- Marketing skills, for example researching author bios and adapting wording to appeal to specific theatre/publishing sectors
- Communication and writing skills – weekly reports and communicating virtually/on-line), writing appealing content within specified word limits, for example, synopsis in 250 words.

What did you most enjoy about the virtual internship?

I enjoyed the cultural exchanges I experienced working with Silk Road and learned a lot about the social and political structures of a large US city (Chicago). My supervisor, Jamil, was a constant source of support and intellectual inspiration. I benefitted from working in a collaborative way and felt that the project was truly a joint venture.

A virtual internship is a great opportunity for students who would find it difficult to do regular days or hours. The ability to fit the hours around my existing commitments was very useful.

Has the virtual internship helped with your career path?

One of the reasons why I applied for this internship was that I had realized I would not be continuing in HE to do a PhD after my Masters, and was looking to develop some new skills for my CV. While working on the internship, a marketing and communications role was advertised where I had been working in a different role part time. I was able to use my internship experience to refresh my CV, and as a talking point in interview. I was successful in securing the position, and am really enjoying my new role.