



University of Edinburgh

David Laing Book Collecting Prize

Entry Guidelines

1. The prize is offered by the University of Edinburgh Library Centre for Research Collections. Its purpose is to encourage students of the University of Edinburgh to build their own coherent collections of books and other printed, manuscript or photographic material.
2. The prize will be offered to an undergraduate or graduate student of the University of Edinburgh in good standing. It will be in two parts: the first consisting of a payment of £500 to the winner and the second of an allowance of £250 for the purchase (within six months of the date of the award) of a book for the University Library's collections to be selected by the winner in co-operation with the Special Collections curatorial team in the Centre for Research Collections.

The Friends of Edinburgh University Library offer a year's free membership to the prize winner.

The winner will automatically be entered for the national Student Book Collecting Prize, sponsored by the Antiquarian Booksellers Association, which is open only to the winners of individual university prizes. The winner may choose not to have their name put forward.

3. The collection must be owned and collected solely by the entrant. The collection must consist of not less than ten items comprising printed books or ephemera or other printed or handwritten items, or a combination of any of these, with a common theme. Other media may supplement the collection but the central theme must involve material with writing on it in some way.
4. The prize will be awarded at the judges' discretion, having regard to the purpose of the prize. The award will be based on the interest, originality, thoughtfulness and creativity of the collection and vision and persistence of the collector. Age, size and monetary value of the collection will not be relevant criteria. The quality of the essay and other materials submitted by the entrant, as described in paragraph 5, will be taken into account. The judges' decision on any matter is final.
5. Entrants should submit an essay of not more than 2,500 words which includes the following information:
 - a. An introduction to the collection in general terms, describing what is collected, the main theme of the content and the scope of the collection – what boundaries there are as to what is included and excluded.

- b. An explanation of the inspiration behind the collection: how did it start? Why is it personally important? What is it that provides the enthusiasm to continue with it?
- c. A description of any challenges which have been faced in assembling the collection, and what response has been made to them.
- d. A list of five items which it is desired to add to the collection, with a brief explanation of how these would improve it.

Images of the collection may also be submitted in support of the application.

6. In addition, every entry must be accompanied by a descriptive list of the items in the collection. Essays not accompanied by an entry form and a list of at least ten items in the collection will not be considered by the judges.
7. Entries should be accompanied by the entry form, and submitted either in hard copy to: Head of Special Collections, Centre for Research Collections, Edinburgh University Library EH8 9LJ, or by email, to Heritagecollections@ed.ac.uk with the subject line "David Laing Book Collecting Prize submission FAO Head of Special Collections".
8. Entries received after the closing date will not be considered.
9. The Prize will be judged by a panel drawn from specialists from the Centre for Research Collections, academic staff, members of the private book collecting community, and the Friends of Edinburgh University Library.
10. The entry submissions may be retained by the Edinburgh University Library which will be entitled to reproduce them in any form it considers appropriate. By submitting entry materials, the entrant agrees that the Library may reproduce any part of the entry materials in connection with the prize or future prizes. This includes images of any of the collection's items.
11. It is expected that entrants will be invited to meet the judges and to make a brief presentation of their collection, alone or with other contestants.
12. The application process for each year's competition, with the rules and entry form is advertised <https://library.ed.ac.uk/heritage-collections/about/david-laing-prize>