

The Times and Sunday Times

Investigative Data Journalism

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Within my first week of my Data Fellowship my data analysis reached the front page, as I helped creating a timeline of all Boris Johnson's scandals as PM, due to his resignation in July 2022.

Overview of the Data Fellowship

For my internship I was working in The Times and Sunday Times data and digital storytelling team, who work across both titles on data-led investigations on everything from politics, to sports, to the environment. Central to the role was to actively find and develop news stories out of different datasets as well as assisting other journalists from all sections of the two publications to find, analyse and visually present data for articles.

Data Analysis

I got to learn how to use the data visualisation software Datawrapper, which I used to create all sorts of charts, tables and maps out of the data I had collected and analysed. I also got to advance my Excel and Google Sheets usage skills, as well as learning how to best find and collect public data for journalistic purposes. The data analysis often involved navigating unfamiliar datasets, cleaning messy data, merging multiple sources, analysing patterns and trends, and then finally create neat and engaging visualisations out of the findings.

Results

The research and stories I were involved in could be anything from finding and analysing data related to the drought and heat records in Europe during this summer's heatwave, to investigating all sorts of data related to Boris Johnson's resignation as PM, to looking into data on knife-crimes in the UK. One of my proudest moments of this internships was when I was assisting the Central and Northern Europe correspondent with angles and ideas for data to be used in The Times' big piece about the Swedish general election, putting my in-depth knowledge of my native country's politics to use.

Key Skills Learnt and Conclusion

This internship has not only allowed me to put my quantitative data skills into practice, but it has also helped me to improve other softer journalistic skills, such as developing an eye for seeking out engaging, news-worthy, stories and as well as allowing me to practice my journalistic writing ability. Gaining deeper insights into the operations of a newspaper and the process behind the stories was something I found particularly interesting, especially the aspects of how to find viable stories and how to effectively pitch them in and ultimately get them published.

Apart from improving my Google Sheets, Excel and Datawrapper skills, this internship has trained me in working efficiently under pressure within a high-tempo newsroom. My time management skills for data collection, analysis and visualisation has definitely been improved during the course of this internship. I was very fortunate to be supported by a team who were always happy to help me out or teach me something new, making this a very beneficial and enjoyable internship.



One of my team's big stories during the time of my Data Fellowship was our piece on climate change related to the record-breaking European heatwave of summer 2022.