

Cambridge University Library Donations Policy

The Library welcomes donations of books, manuscripts, and other cultural heritage material that complement and extend its collections. It is very grateful to those who have helped to strengthen its holdings in the past through their generous gifts.

Once a donation has been accepted, it is important that the Library is able to process and catalogue the material so that it can be incorporated into our collections and made available to readers. Due to limitations on staff resources and space, the Library must be selective in accepting donations of books and other material.

Offers of donations

Offers to donate individual books or fewer than 10 items to the Library should be made by emailing donations@lib.cam.ac.uk. Offers will be acknowledged at this stage. Please note that **unsolicited donations arriving in the Library will not normally be acknowledged.**

Potential donors of collections (more than 10 items) should contact the Library for a discussion with an appropriate specialist, also by emailing donations@lib.cam.ac.uk. We should be grateful if you would provide us with a list in advance giving a brief description of each item (author, title, publisher and date of publication).

Providing details in advance assists us by allowing specialist staff to check the Library catalogue for duplicate items and to assess whether the material is suitable for addition to the collections.

The Library reserves the right to decline offers of material.

Collecting policy

Donations are welcomed that have academic value and support research and teaching in the university.

The Library does not normally accept:

- UK publications that would usually be received through Legal Deposit
- Material that duplicates existing holdings
- Popular fiction and trade publications
- Textbooks
- Issues of periodicals or magazines (exceptions may be made for important academic titles not held by the Library or elsewhere in the University)

- Offprints
- Unpublished theses
- Items in poor physical condition or that would impose substantial conservation costs (exceptions may be made for rare or unique material)
- Electronic publications on handheld media (e.g. DVD, CD-Rom, tape) unless it is unique material and deposit has been discussed with specialist staff

Foreign-language material

The Library accepts material in French and German pertaining to a wide range of subjects but normally restricts donations in other languages to subjects relating to the country/countries and culture(s) the language represents.

Conditions of acceptance

Donations are accepted on the understanding that they become the property of Cambridge University Library on receipt and that the Library may make all necessary decisions as to their retention, local cataloguing, access and use. Unwanted or duplicate items may be disposed of ethically in line with Library policy. Due to space and other constraints we are unable to guarantee that donated items will be kept together or added to a particular part of the Library's collections.

Bookplates with brief details of the donor will normally be inserted at the discretion of the Library only where the material constitutes a substantial donation of exceptional academic relevance.

Rare and unique material

Donors wishing to give rare or unique material to the Library are encouraged to contact the Head of [Special Collections](#) or relevant specialist directly to discuss it, providing as much detail as possible on the extent and type of material being offered.

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