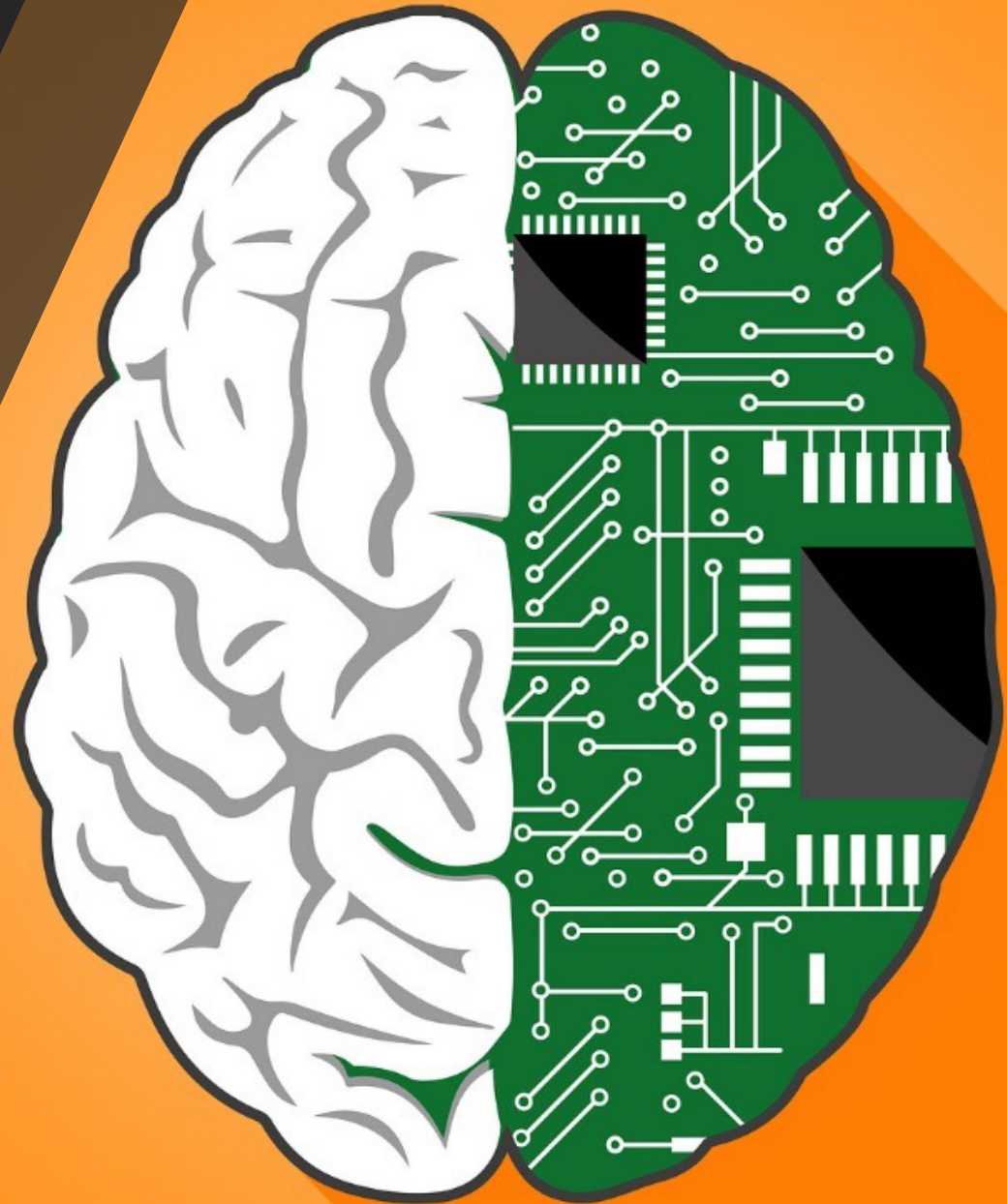


Providers, Partners, and Collaborators: Libraries as Contributors to DH Research

Panel: Libraries as Hubs? The Role of Libraries in Building Digital Humanities

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Introduction – Librarian / DHer...

Librarian:

- Senior Lecturer in Information Studies;
- Professional experience gained as a Librarian in a broadcast media environment;

DH Researcher/Educator:

- Doctorate UCL Centre for Digital Humanities 2010-2014 – studied the impact and use of Large-Scale Digitised Newspaper Collections;
- Associate Editor: *Digital Scholarship in the Humanities*;
- Postdoc at University of East Anglia – founded the UEA DH Incubator;
- Co-convoked several DH Winter Schools, teaching at UG and PG level.

The background of the slide is a blurred photograph of a library. On the left, there are wooden bookshelves filled with books. The right side of the image is dominated by a bokeh effect of warm, yellow and orange lights, suggesting a cozy, well-lit interior space. The overall tone is soft and academic.

Providers

Libraries as Providers of Content and Services

The Common Starting Point: DH as Library Service

- “A model of DH support common to many fledgling DH programs, in which a scholar (usually a faculty member) conceives an idea for a DH project and approaches the library for help in accomplishing it” ([Posner 2012](#) in [Posner 2013](#)).
- “Digital Humanities isn’t a service and libraries will be more successful at generating engagement with digital humanities if they focus on helping librarians lead their own DH initiatives and projects” (Muñoz 2012).
- “Libraries need to provide infrastructure... to support digital humanities work, but they need thoughtful, skilled, knowledgeable humanists to actually work on it” ([Posner 2013](#)).

Where are we now?

- Move towards greater involvement of libraries in DH research ([Wilms, 2021](#)).
- Recognition of role of librarians in research – experimentation with specific funding calls:
 - [AHRC/RLUK Professional Practice Fellowship Scheme](#): enable library colleagues to “set research agendas, be active participants and leaders of multidisciplinary research, and to provide intellectual leadership in their own disciplines and beyond.”
- In UK – several large DH-specific funding calls, with cultural heritage partners integral:
 - [Towards a National Collection](#): aims to open up UK cultural heritage collections to researchers and public.
 - UK/US New Directions for Digital Scholarship in Cultural Institutions ([networks](#) and [research projects](#)).

A man and a woman are standing in a modern office, looking at several orange sticky notes attached to a glass wall. The woman is on the left, holding one sticky note, and the man is on the right, looking at the notes. The background shows a blurred office environment with plants and a computer monitor.

Partners

Libraries Supporting and Influencing Research

Partners: the AHRC Definition

- “A third party person who is not employed on the grant, or a third party organisation, who provides specific contributions either in cash or in kind, to the project” ([AHRC Funding Guide, 2022](#)).
- Eligible for “minor Directly Incurred” costs – project-specific and identifiable as arising from the conduct of the research.



The *Digital Library Futures Project*

- Two year AHRC-funded project to investigate the impact of e-Legal Deposit on UK Academic Deposit libraries (white paper available: [*Towards User-Centric Evaluation of UK Non-Print Legal Deposit*](#)):
 - Case study partners: Bodleian Libraries & Cambridge University Library.
- Focus on academic deposit libraries:
 - Shift focus away from national libraries and towards the specific problems faced within academic libraries.
- First ever public user-centric study of the impact of e-legal deposit:
 - Normally focused on technical, preservation, and long-term aspects of these collections, not contemporary usage.
- Researcher-led – but benefited in several ways from “partner” involvement:
 - Access to staff, knowledge of user base, understanding of collections, insights into practice.

A top-down view of several people's hands stacked in a circle, symbolizing collaboration and teamwork. The hands are of various skin tones and are wearing different colored sleeves (white, grey, blue, pink). The background is a soft, out-of-focus indoor setting.

Collaborators

Libraries Collaborating in, and leading, Digital Humanities research

Research Networking: AEOLIAN Network (2021-2023)

- Designed to investigate the role that Artificial Intelligence can play to make born-digital and digitised records more accessible to users.
- Focused heavily on knowledge exchange:
 - Series of 6 workshops on varied topics;
 - Case studies and reports – co-authored by academics and library/archival practitioners;
 - Forthcoming special issue in Journal on Computing and Cultural Heritage (deadline 30th November) – CFP available online at <https://bit.ly/3hvvnEh> .
- Ongoing! Workshop 5 on 29/30th November, hosted by HathiTrust. Workshop 6 in early 2023, hosted by University of Glasgow.

Collaborative PhD Supervision

- UKRI provides majority of PhD funding in UK.
- Information Studies at UofG - two relevant research councils:
 - Arts and Humanities Research Council = Scottish Graduate School for Arts & Humanities;
 - Economic and Social Research Council = Scottish Graduate School for Social Sciences;
- SGSAH our primary source of funding – humanistic-focused Information Studies (DH topics especially).
- Collaborative Doctoral Awards (CDAs) and Advanced Research Collaboration Studentships (ARCS) – different model for UK PhDs.



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Sgoil Ceumnachaidh na h-Alba airson
Ealain agus Daonnachdan

Current UKRI-funded PhD Students

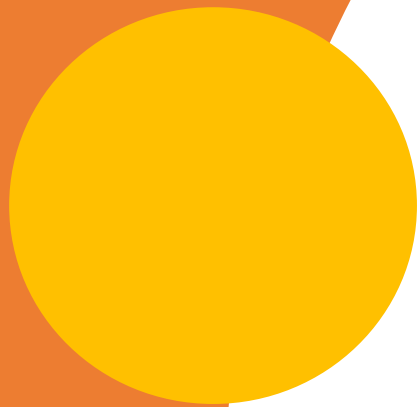
- “Collaborative Doctoral Awards”
 - Joseph Nockels (University of Edinburgh) – impact of Handwritten Text Recognition on Historians:
 - Supervisors: Prof. Melissa Terras (Edinburgh); Me (University of Glasgow); Dr. Sarah Ames (National Library of Scotland)
 - Joy Nam (University of Glasgow) – Researcher Mental Models for Digital Library Catalogues:
 - Supervisors: Me (Glasgow); Prof. Lorna Hughes (Glasgow); Dr. Frankie Wilson (Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford).
- “Advanced Research Collaborative Studentships”:
 - Rhonda Rathburn (University of Glasgow) – Models for Evaluating Neglected User Communities:
 - Supervisors: Me (Glasgow); Dr. David Brazier (Edinburgh Napier); Amina Shah (National Library of Scotland).

My Learning Outcomes: Partnership → Collaboration

- Nurturing relationships is key – leads to deeper forms of collaboration over time:
 - Frankie Wilson (Bodleian) key partner in *Digital Library Futures* – now PhD co-supervisor.
 - National Library of Scotland provided access to staff during *Digital Library Futures* – relationship led to further research & two PhD studentships.
- This presentation is probably missing a “leaders” category that already exists:
 - Librarians leading research, addressing problems arising within and about libraries, with the assistance of academics.
 - (Already occurs, but...) a huge space to improve support for librarians to lead DH research – what barriers are there?

Challenges and Barriers

- Understanding of research landscape:
 - What schemes are libraries eligible for?
 - UK – problem with eligibility as “Independent Research Organisations.”
 - Many libraries ineligible to lead or act as Co-Investigators – creates an implicit research hierarchy.
- Reward Structures:
 - Academic promotions – things that lead to academic progression not necessarily so relevant to librarians.
 - Research into practice – “impact” agenda makes this relevant, but not directly part of academic work.
- Resourcing:
 - Interest among academics in e.g. collaborative PhDs:
 - Staff time / Placements / Desk Space / £500 p/a mobility allowance.
 - Limits to what researchers can write into grant bids – reliance/expectation of “contributions in kind.”



Thanks for listening!

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