



**Leeds Doctoral College  
University of Leeds**

**Title: {The Impact of Digital Transformation on Performance and the Cultural Industry: Challenges and Opportunities}**

**PhD research proposal**

By Heider Jeffer  
June 20, 2024

Supervisor(s): ----

Submitted for the Faculty of Art Humanities and Cultures

**Keywords:** Digital Transformation, Cultural Industry, Operational Efficiency, Performance Metrics, Cultural Heritage, Digital Technologies, Artificial Intelligence, Big Data, Internet of Things (IoT), New Business Models, Revenue Generation, Audience Engagement, Digital Literacy, Data Interoperability, Strategic Policies, Ethical Implications, Preservation, Accessibility, User Experience (UX), Collaboration, Thematic Analysis

# Introduction

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This document is enhanced to better reflect the detailed research process, methodology, and significance of digital transformation in the cultural industry. It emphasizes the need for comprehensive analysis and offers a clear structure to guide the reader through the study's objectives, challenges, and expected outcomes.

The cultural industry, encompassing arts, entertainment, and heritage sectors, has undergone significant changes due to digital transformation. The infusion of digital technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), big data, and the Internet of Things (IoT) has reshaped how cultural products are created, distributed, and consumed. This study focuses on evaluating the impact of digital transformation on performance within the cultural industry, identifying associated challenges, and exploring emerging opportunities.

## Problem Statement

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While the potential benefits of digital transformation in the cultural industry are substantial, understanding its full impact on performance remains underexplored. This research addresses the problem of assessing how digital technologies affect the efficiency, effectiveness, and overall performance of cultural organizations. The challenge lies in quantifying these impacts and understanding the nuanced ways in which digital transformation influences cultural production and consumption.

## Research questions

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Research questions for the title "The Impact of Digital Transformation on Performance and the Cultural Industry: Challenges and Opportunities" could include:

### **RQ1: Performance**

- What digital transformation factors enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of cultural institutions?
- What types of performance are impacted by digital transformation in the cultural industry?

### **RQ2: Challenges:**

- What are the key challenges faced by cultural institutions in adopting digital transformation?

### **RQ3: Opportunities:**

- What digital transformation factors enhance diversity and equal opportunity in the cultural industry?

These research questions aim to explore how digital transformation is reshaping the cultural industry, focusing on performance metrics, challenges, and opportunities arising from technological advancements. Our study will include well-known companies like YouTube, Flickr, Pinterest, and Twitter, as well as prominent universities.

To address these research questions, we employed a systematic research process. We developed a comprehensive model and utilized gray literature to gather online materials as secondary data. This approach will enable us to analyze key performance indicators, identify challenges, and uncover opportunities that impact digital transformation within the cultural industries.

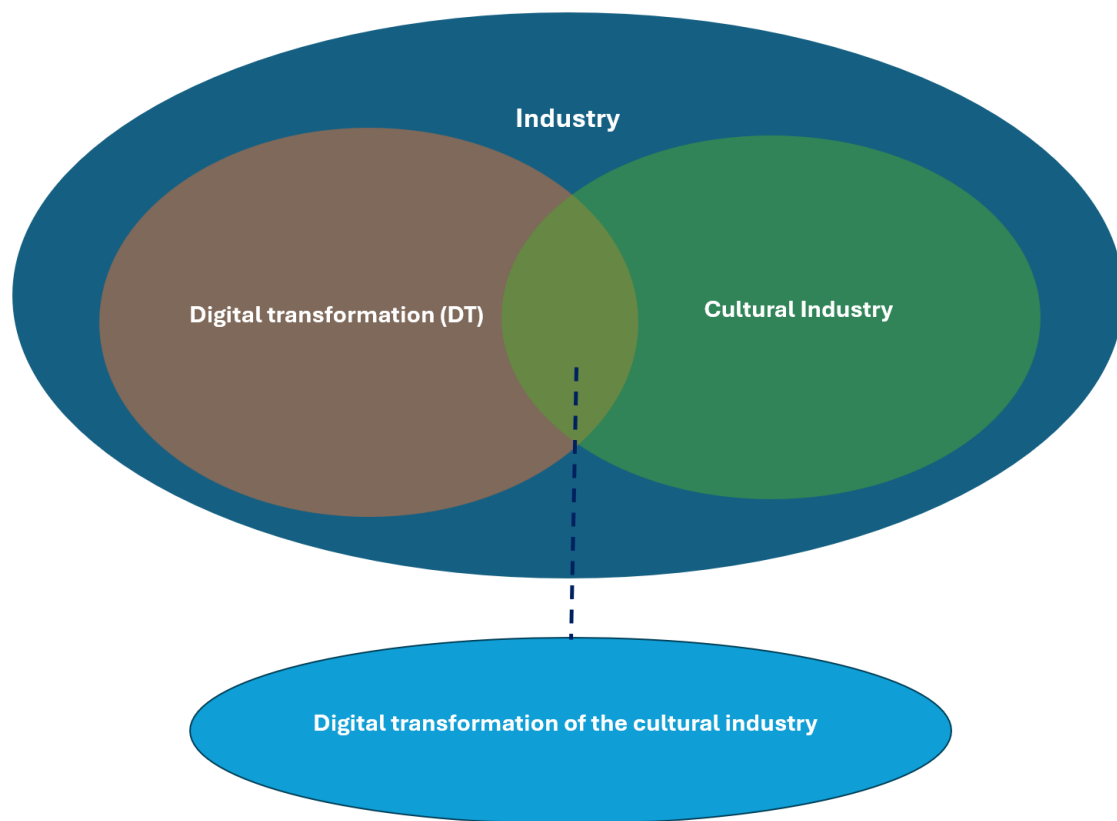
# Review of the Related Work

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## What is Digital transformation?

- **The cultural industry:** also known as the creative industry, encompasses businesses and activities that produce, create, distribute, and commercialize creative content and cultural products (Gershuny *et al.*, 2011) (European Commission, 2010) (Hesmondhalgh and Pratt, 2005).
- **Digital transformation (DT):** is the process by which an organization adopts and implements digital technology to create new or modify existing products, services, and operations by converting business processes into a digital format (Reischauer, 2022) (Vial, 2019) (Warner and Wäger, 2019).

Figure 1 Diagram for the digital transformation of the cultural industry



- **Digital transformation cultural industry** is a cultural industry involves the process by which organizations in this sector adopt and implement digital technology to create new or modify existing products, services, and operations by converting business processes into a digital format [J. Heider 2024]. We will use this definition in our qualitative data analysis to identify cases relevant to the study.

## Previous Studies on Digital Transformation

Digital transformation has become a significant topic of interest across various industries, including the financial service industry, oil and gas sector, automotive industry, and food retail industry.

- Study 1: (Dehnert, 2020) highlights the importance of understanding how digital transformation dimensions are connected to firm performance, with contradictory findings in existing research.
- Study 2: (Affonso *et al.*, 2020) emphasize the need for innovation in the oil and gas industry, pointing out the risk-averse approach of traditional project management as a hindrance to progress.
- Study 3: (Llopis-Albert, Rubio and Valero, 2021) utilize fuzzy-set qualitative comparative analysis to analyze the impact of digital transformation on business performance models in the automotive industry.
- Study 4: In the context of the banking sector, (Naimi-Sadigh, Asgari and Rabiei, 2022) discuss the implementation of digital transformation to respond to disruptions and drive innovation in banking services.
- Study 5: (Manjula, Balaji and Deepa, 2021) focus on digital technologies in the food retail industry, identifying challenges and opportunities in the digital transformation process.
- Study 6: (Imran *et al.*, 2021) explore digital transformation in industrial organizations, aiming to identify key enablers and performance outcomes through data collected from leading industrial organizations.
- Study 7: (Kumar *et al.*, 2022) propose a framework for assessing the social acceptability of Industry 4.0 technologies in digital manufacturing, highlighting the importance of considering social dimensions in technological advancements.
- Study 8: (Ren, Li and Liang, 2023) shed light on the impact of digital transformation on renewable energy companies' performance in China, emphasizing the role of digital transformation in advancing the development of renewable energy enterprises.
- Study 9: (Zhao *et al.*, 2023) analyze the relationship between digital transformation strategy and ESG performance in large manufacturing enterprises, focusing on the mediating role of green innovation and sustainable development goals.
- Study 10: (Sartal *et al.*, 2020). Overall, the literature review indicates a growing interest in understanding the impact of digital transformation on performance across various industries, highlighting both challenges and opportunities that come with embracing digital technologies.

The need for innovation, strategic alignment, and the identification of key enablers in the digital transformation process are recurring themes in the literature, emphasizing the importance of leveraging digital technologies to drive organizational success.

# Locating case studies within cultural industries

These examples illustrate the diversity and richness of cultural industries, highlighting their economic and cultural significance.

1. **Music Industry** (Negus, 1999):
  - Involves the production, distribution, and consumption of music. This includes recording, live performances, and music publishing.
  - Example: Major record labels like Universal Music Group and independent artists producing and distributing their music through digital platforms like Spotify.
2. **Film and Television Industry** (Hesmondhalgh, 2013):
  - Includes the production and distribution of films, TV shows, and other video content.
  - Example: Hollywood studios such as Warner Bros. and streaming platforms like Netflix and Hulu.
3. **Publishing Industry** (Hjarvard, 2011):
  - Encompasses the production and distribution of books, magazines, newspapers, and digital publications.
  - Example: Major publishing houses like Penguin Random House and digital self-publishing platforms like Amazon Kindle Direct Publishing.
4. **Fashion Industry** (Crane, 2012):
  - Involves the design, production, marketing, and retail of clothing, footwear, and accessories.
  - Example: High fashion brands like Gucci and fast fashion retailers like Zara.
5. **Video Game Industry** (Kerr, 2006):
  - Encompasses the development, marketing, and sales of video games and gaming consoles.
  - Example: Major game developers like Electronic Arts (EA) and indie game developers distributing through platforms like Steam.
6. **Advertising Industry** (McFall, 2004):
  - Involves the creation and dissemination of advertisements and marketing campaigns.
  - Example: Global advertising agencies like WPP and digital marketing firms specializing in social media and online advertising.
7. **Art and Antiques Market** (Velthuis, 2005):
  - Includes the creation, exhibition, and sale of visual arts, crafts, and antiques.
  - Example: Art galleries like Gagosian Gallery and auction houses like Sotheby's.
8. **Architecture and Design** (Jencks, 2000):
  - Encompasses the design of buildings, interior spaces, and urban environments.
  - Example: Renowned architecture firms like Foster + Partners and freelance interior designers.
9. **Performing Arts** (Collins and Nisbet, 2010):
  - Involves live performances of drama, dance, opera, and music.
  - Example: Prestigious venues like the Royal Opera House and Broadway theaters.
10. **Crafts and Handmade Goods** (Luckman, 2015):
  - Encompasses the creation and sale of handmade items such as pottery, jewelry, and textiles.
  - Example: Online marketplaces like Etsy and local craft fairs.

## Gap in Literature

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The current literature lacks a holistic analysis of the relationship between digital transformation and performance metrics in the cultural industry. Most studies focus on individual aspects such as technology adoption or economic impacts, but few provide an integrated view that includes challenges and opportunities across the sector.

## Significance

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Addressing this gap is crucial for policymakers, cultural managers, and stakeholders to make informed decisions that foster sustainable growth in the cultural sector. Understanding the impact of digital transformation on performance can guide strategic investments, enhance cultural policy frameworks, and support the development of adaptive strategies for cultural organizations.

## Methodology Preview

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This research utilizes a mixed-methods approach, integrating quantitative analysis of performance data from cultural organizations with qualitative case studies and expert interviews. Data will be sourced from industry reports, financial records, and surveys, drawing on gray literature to offer a comprehensive overview.

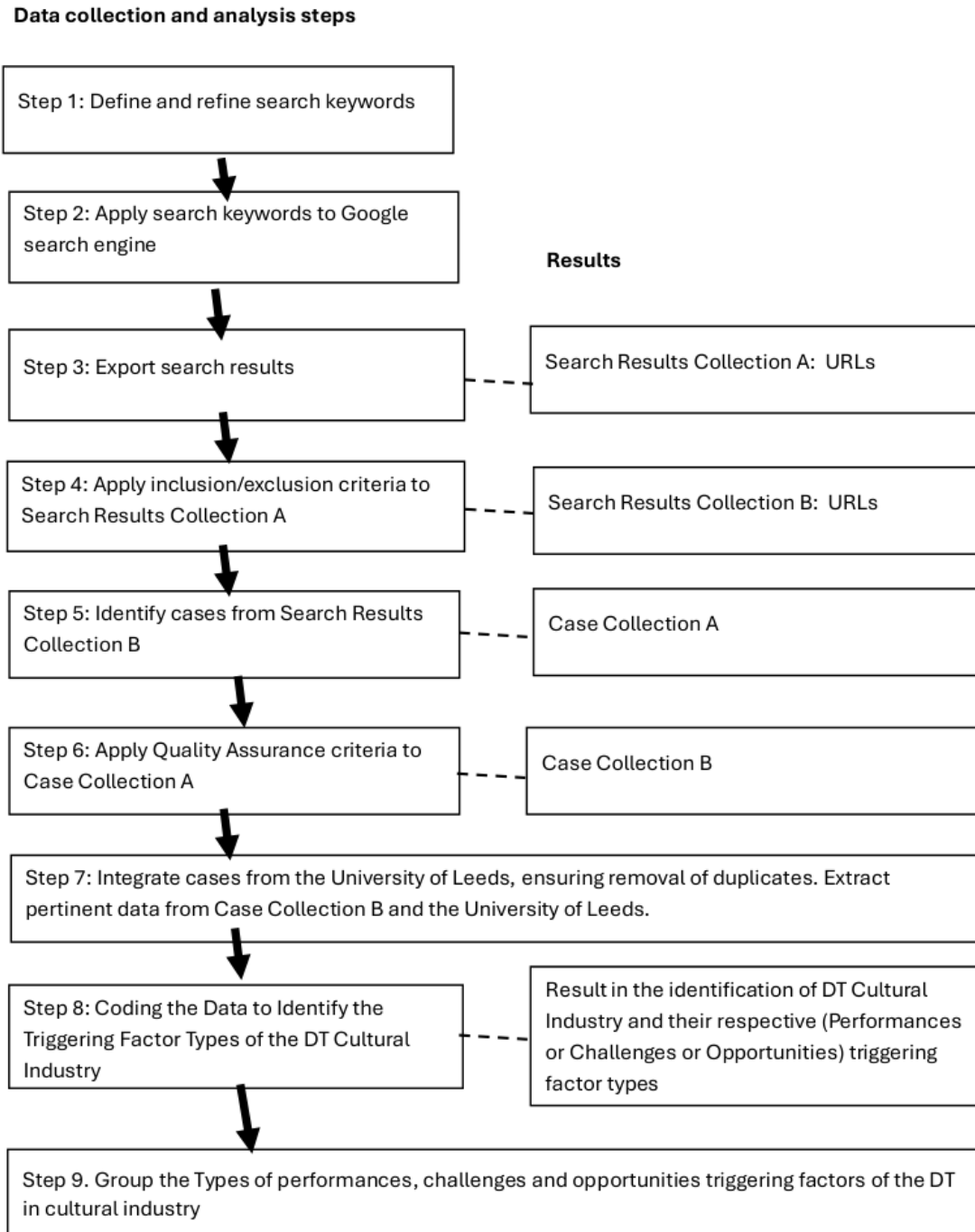
In this research, we utilize gray literature for data collection, and we can integrate data from the University of Leeds into our development process.

We will use Thematic analysis and Atlas ti software to implement the research methodology.

We created a repository on [GitHub](#) serve as official site for this study, where all the research materials are stored.

This study is designed to be exploratory. The overall data collection and analysis process is illustrated in the following UML diagram and explained in detail in the subsequent text.

Figure 2 UML Diagram data collection and analysis



# Data Collection Steps

## Step 1. Define and refine search keywords

The initial phase of data collection involved defining the search keywords for retrieving secondary data. We brainstormed an initial set of keywords based on our primary objectives and research questions. The search string was structured according to the guidelines provided by (Kitchenham, B & Charters, 2007).

To ensure comprehensive coverage of keywords related to { The Impact of Digital Transformation on Performance and the Cultural Industry: Challenges and Opportunities}, I will review the search string from a systematic mapping in digital transformation cultural industry.

After conducting several trial searches, observing the results, and refining the search string, I developed the following final search string:

{["performance" OR "successful" OR "success" OR "fail" OR "failure"] AND ["digital transformation"] AND ["cultural"] AND ["industry" OR "organization"]}

I selected the terms: "digital transformation" "cultural" "industry" "organization" due to their prevalent usage in online discourse regarding cultural organizations adopting digital technology.

When discussing "challenges or opportunities," we acknowledge that some sources may not explicitly use these terms. To address this, I utilized synonymous terms such as "fail" or "failure" to identify the challenges of the DT in cultural industry, and "successful" or "success" to identify the opportunities of the DT cultural industry. This approach helps us capture the intended concepts more comprehensively.

I use the term "performance" to identify the performance of the DT cultural industry.

I use the terms: {["cultural"] AND ["industry" OR "organization"]} for identifying cultural Industry.

This strategic combination alongside "digital transformation" and "cultural industry" enhances search precision and ensures the quality of our findings in subsequent stages.

## Step 2. Applying search keywords using the Google search engine

To search online sources, the Google search engine was accessed through the Chrome browser. To minimize the influence of geographical location on the search results, [www.google.com](http://www.google.com) was used.

Prior to starting the search, I deleted the search history in Chrome, cleared the browser cache, logged out of my personal Google account, and removed all Chrome extensions.

These steps were taken to ensure that my personal and historical data had minimal impact on the search results. In the Google search settings, I turned off Google Instant predictions and enabled 100 results per page.

## Step 3. Export Search Results

To facilitate analysis by multiple researchers at the University of Leeds, the search results need to be exported. I will export the search results (in the form of URLs) from the Chrome browser on my laptop into a Word file (DOCX format). This step resulted in the Search Results Collection A; URLs webpages converted into Word file (DOCX format).



#### **Step 4. Apply Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria to Search Results Collection A**

To identify webpages with relevant and reliable content for this study, we applied a set of inclusion and exclusion criteria to Search Results Collection A.

Inclusion criteria:

- The URL is working and freely accessible.
- The topic of the webpage pertains to pivoting within the context of (Digital Transformation Cultural Industry).
- The webpage contains examples related to (Digital Transformation Cultural Industry).
- The examples are specifically from (Digital Transformation Cultural Industry).
- The webpage is in English.

Exclusion criteria:

- The webpage contains duplicated content from a previously examined webpage.
- The webpage is non-text-based (e.g., videos, audios, or images).
- The webpage is hosted on Slideshare, Quora, LinkedIn, or personal/company blogs.
- The webpage is not in English.

This step resulted in the Search Results Collection B which contains URLs and represents webpages.

#### **Step 5. Identify Cases from Search Results Collection B**

I will review the content of the webpages, focusing on information regarding Digital Transformation and the Cultural Industry during their DT processes.

Each mention of (Digital Transformation Cultural Industry) will be considered a potential case for further analysis.

This step was relatively objective and straightforward, primarily conducted by me and the researchers at the University of Leeds who are collaborating on this project.

In cases of uncertainty, my supervisor(s) at the University of Leeds will be consulted.

This step resulted in the creation of Case Collection A, which includes the identified cases. The webpages will be reorganized according to these cases.

#### **Step 6. Apply Quality Assurance Criteria to Case Collection A**

To ensure that we possess sufficient and adequate data for further analysis, we will assess the quality of the data in Case Collection A using the following criteria:

- Can the data regarding a case involving (Digital Transformation Cultural Industry) enable researchers to reconstruct the narrative of the performance, challenges, or opportunities factors concerning what the Cultural Industry focused on before and after the Digital Transformation, and why the Cultural Industry underwent this transformation?
- Do researchers need to engage in excessive speculation to understand the nature of the Digital Transformation in the Cultural Industry and the performance, challenges, or opportunities factors that triggered it?

Cases meeting a positive response to the first criterion and a negative response to the second criterion will be included. Those not meeting these criteria will be excluded. This process has resulted in Case Collection B, which comprises cases selected for use in the data analysis.

## **Data Analysis Steps**

**Step 7.** Integrate cases from the University of Leeds, ensuring removal of duplicates. Extract the relevant data from Case Collection B and the University of Leeds

We will inquire with the University of Leeds about relevant data for our study, this data will be integrated with Case Collection B, and duplicates will be removed accordingly.

For each case contained in Case Collection B and the University of Leeds, we were looking for the following information:

### **Background Information:**

- Name of the Industry
- Location of the Industry
- Founding Year and/or First Product Release Date
- Business Domain

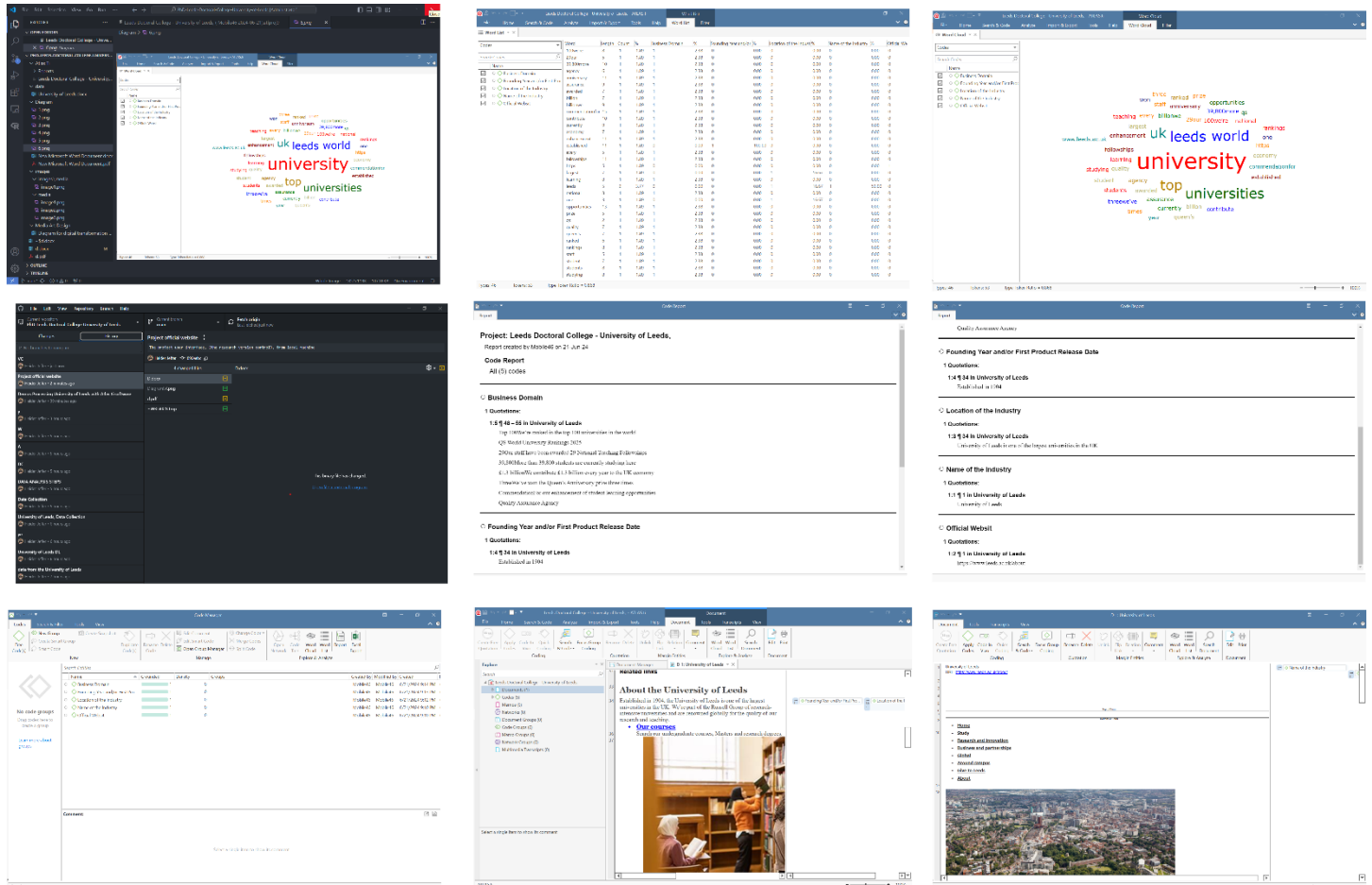
We will use the thematic analysis and Atlas Ti software to implement this step.



# Official website

We created a repository on [GitHub](#) (providing the distributed version control), which serves as the official site for this study, storing all the research materials.

Figure 3 The project user interface during activities, (the research version control), from local machine



## Expected outcomes

## Outline of Contribution

This study aims to provide a detailed analysis of how digital transformation affects performance in the cultural industry. It will offer insights into specific challenges faced by cultural organizations and highlight the performance and opportunities for leveraging digital technologies.

The findings will inform policy recommendations and strategic planning for enhancing the sustainability and resilience of the cultural sector in the digital age.

## The Major Factors Impact the Digital Transformation Cultural Industry

In this section, we will discuss the major performances, challenges and opportunities triggering factors influencing digital transformation in the cultural industry, derived from our case studies. We will categorize these

factors based on their commonalities, grouping them into identical categories. These factors will serve as the answers to the research questions posed in this project.

Here are the major performances, challenges, and opportunities factors impact the DT cultural industry that we expect to find in this research:

#### 1. Economic factors

- **Funding and Investment Shortages:** Limited access to financial resources and investment, especially for smaller or independent cultural projects.
- **Economic Recessions:** Reduced consumer spending on cultural goods and services during economic downturns.
- **Revenue Models:** Difficulty in monetizing cultural products, especially with the rise of free online content.

#### 2. Technological factors

- **Piracy and Copyright Infringement:** Unauthorized distribution of cultural content leading to revenue losses.
- **Rapid Technological Changes:** Keeping up with the fast pace of technological advancements and integrating new technologies.
- **Digital Divide:** Inequitable access to technology among creators and consumers, particularly in developing regions.

#### 3. Social and Demographic factors

- **Changing Audience Preferences:** Shifts in consumer tastes and interests that may affect demand for certain cultural products.
- **Diverse Audiences:** Catering to diverse demographic groups with varied cultural backgrounds and preferences.
- **Community Engagement:** Engaging local communities in cultural activities and overcoming apathy or disinterest.

#### 4. Political and Legal factors

- **Regulatory Hurdles:** Navigating complex regulations and policies that vary by region.
- **Censorship and Restrictions:** Government-imposed content restrictions and censorship affecting creative freedom.
- **Intellectual Property Issues:** Ensuring robust protection of intellectual property rights across different jurisdictions.

#### 5. Cultural factors

- **Cultural Homogenization:** Globalization leading to the dominance of certain cultures over others, risking the loss of cultural diversity.
- **Representation:** Ensuring diverse and accurate representation of different cultural identities.
- **Heritage Preservation:** Balancing the preservation of traditional cultural practices with innovation and modernization.

#### 6. Environmental factors

- **Sustainability Concerns:** Environmental impact of cultural production and events, including carbon footprint and waste.
- **Resource Management:** Efficient use of resources in the production and distribution of cultural goods.

#### 7. Educational factors

- **Skill Gaps:** Lack of training and education opportunities for cultural professionals to develop relevant skills.
- **Access to Education:** Inequitable access to cultural education and training programs, especially in underprivileged areas.
- **Research and Development:** Insufficient investment in research for new cultural expressions and methodologies.

#### 8. Globalization factors

- **Market Competition:** Increased competition from international cultural products and services.
- **Cultural Sensitivity:** Navigating cultural sensitivities and differences in global markets.
- **Intellectual Property Theft:** Cross-border issues with protecting intellectual property rights.

#### 9. Institutional and Organizational factors

- **Bureaucracy:** Navigating bureaucratic processes within cultural institutions and organizations.
- **Management Practices:** Lack of effective leadership and management practices in cultural organizations.
- **Professional Associations:** Limited support from guilds, unions, and professional bodies.

#### 10. Audience Engagement factors

- **Digital Engagement:** Effectively engaging audiences through digital platforms and combating digital fatigue.
- **Physical Attendance:** Encouraging physical attendance at cultural events in the face of competition from digital alternatives.
- **Accessibility:** Ensuring cultural products and services are accessible to all, including people with disabilities.

## Performances Challenges and Opportunities Factors Explained with Exemplar Cases

In this section, we will describe each performance challenges and opportunities factor and present multiple case studies that illustrate these factors. By providing at least one exemplar case for each factor, we will demonstrate in greater detail how these factors impact digital transformation in terms of performance and the cultural industry.

## Challenges Opportunities and Strategies for Success

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### Challenges

1. **Digital Divide:** The digital divide can hinder access to digital technologies and platforms, creating barriers for those who are less tech-savvy or have limited resources (Koshelieva *et al.*, 2023) (European Commission, 2022).

2. **Copyright and Intellectual Property:** The use of digital technologies raises concerns about copyright and intellectual property, particularly in the context of digital assets and data management (valantic, 2024) (European Commission, 2022).
3. **Preservation of Cultural Heritage:** The digitization of cultural heritage poses challenges related to preservation, conservation, and the long-term accessibility of digital artifacts (Koshelieva *et al.*, 2023) (Massi, Vecco and Lin, 2020).
4. **Organizational Barriers:** The adoption of digital tools and processes can be hindered by organizational silos and a lack of understanding of the value of data (valantic, 2024).

## Opportunities

1. **New Forms of Cultural Expression:** Digital technologies have enabled new forms of artistic expression, such as AR/VR, and have opened up new channels for cultural consumption and engagement (Koshelieva *et al.*, 2023) (valantic, 2024).
2. **Increased Accessibility:** Digital platforms have increased access to art and culture, making it more inclusive and global (Koshelieva *et al.*, 2023) .
3. **Collaboration and Networking:** Digital tools facilitate global collaboration and networking among artists, institutions, and audiences (valantic, 2024) (Massi, Vecco and Lin, 2020).
4. **Efficient Processes:** Digital transformation can streamline administrative processes, reducing errors and improving employee satisfaction (valantic, 2024).

## Strategies for Success

1. **Data Interoperability:** Ensuring data interoperability is crucial for seamless end-to-end processes and for addressing copyright and intellectual property concerns (European Commission, 2022).
2. **Digital Literacy:** Developing digital literacy among artists, institutions, and audiences is essential for effective adoption and utilization of digital technologies (valantic, 2024) (European Commission, 2022).
3. **Collaborative Ecosystems:** Fostering collaborative ecosystems between tech startups and creative sectors can facilitate knowledge exchange and innovation (European Commission, 2022).
4. **Digital Sovereignty:** Establishing digital sovereignty through strategic policies and regulations can ensure the long-term sustainability and accessibility of digital cultural assets (Massi, Vecco and Lin, 2020).

Overall, the impact of digital transformation cultural and creative industries is complex, presenting both challenges and opportunities. By understanding these dynamics and implementing effective strategies, the industry can harness the potential of digital technologies to enhance cultural expression, accessibility, and collaboration.

# Timescale for Research Project

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This timescale ensures a structured approach to this research, with clear milestones and strategies to overcome potential challenges, demonstrating to supervisors that the project is both achievable and well-planned.

## Year 1: Literature Review and Initial Data Collection

### Milestones:

#### Months 1-3: Project Planning and Setup

- Finalize research proposal and get approval from supervisors.
- Develop detailed project plan and schedule.
- Identify and obtain necessary resources (software, access to databases, etc.).

#### Months 4-6: Comprehensive Literature Review

- Review existing literature on digital transformation and its impact on various industries.
- Focus on the cultural industry, identifying key themes, gaps, and methodologies used in previous studies.
- Write and submit a literature review chapter.

#### Months 7-9: Research Design and Methodology

- Develop research framework and choose appropriate research methods (quantitative, qualitative, or mixed-methods).
- Design data collection tools (surveys, interview guides).
- Pilot test data collection tools and refine them based on feedback.

#### Months 10-12: Initial Data Collection

- Begin collecting primary data from selected cultural organizations.
- Gather secondary data from industry reports, financial records, and gray literature.
- Conduct initial analysis to ensure data quality and relevance.

### Challenges and Mitigation:

- **Access to Data:** Ensure agreements with cultural organizations for data access.
- **Literature Scope:** Use comprehensive databases and consult with supervisors regularly.

## Year 2: Data Collection and Preliminary Analysis

### Milestones:

#### Months 13-18: Extensive Data Collection

- Continue collecting primary data through surveys and interviews.
- Collect detailed case studies from cultural organizations.
- Ensure data is categorized and stored systematically for analysis.

#### Months 19-24: Data Analysis

- Perform quantitative analysis on performance metrics.
- Conduct qualitative analysis on case studies and interview transcripts.
- Identify key factors influencing digital transformation in the cultural industry.

### Challenges and Mitigation:

- **Data Consistency:** Regularly validate and cross-check data.



- **Analytical Tools:** Use reliable statistical software and qualitative analysis tools, with training as needed.

## **Year 3: Integration and Synthesis of Findings**

### **Milestones:**

#### **Months 25-30: Integrative Analysis**

- Synthesize quantitative and qualitative findings.
- Identify patterns, correlations, and causal relationships.
- Develop a theoretical model explaining the impact of digital transformation on the cultural industry.

#### **Months 31-36: Drafting and Refinement**

- Write chapters on data analysis and findings.
- Integrate findings into a coherent narrative.
- Seek feedback from supervisors and revise accordingly.

### **Challenges and Mitigation:**

- **Complexity in Integration:** Break down findings into manageable sections for analysis and synthesis.
- **Iterative Feedback:** Schedule regular meetings with supervisors for feedback.

## **Year 4: Finalization and Dissemination**

### **Milestones:**

#### **Months 37-42: Final Draft Preparation**

- Complete writing of all chapters, including introduction, methodology, findings, and conclusions.
- Ensure all references and citations are correctly formatted.
- Submit drafts for supervisor review and make necessary revisions.

#### **Months 43-48: Review and Submission**

- Conduct final proofreading and editing.
- Prepare for thesis defense by summarizing key findings and contributions.
- Submit final thesis and schedule defense.

#### **Months 49-54: Dissemination of Research**

- Publish research findings in academic journals and conferences.
- Create summary reports for cultural organizations and policymakers.
- Develop presentations and attend industry conferences to share insights.

### **Challenges and Mitigation:**

- **Publication Delays:** Start the publication process early and submit to multiple journals.
- **Defense Preparation:** Engage in mock defenses and seek feedback from peers and supervisors.

## **Summary of Yearly Achievements**

- **Year 1:** Establish a strong foundation through literature review and initial data collection.
- **Year 2:** Gather comprehensive data and perform preliminary analyses.
- **Year 3:** Integrate findings and develop theoretical models.
- **Year 4:** Finalize and disseminate research, ensuring practical and academic contributions.

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