

SOUTHAMPTON DIGITAL HUMANITIES

OUR YEAR

The last year was a consolidation year for Southampton Digital Humanities. Our team grew with the arrivals of Lexi, Grace, Sam, Ellie, Sharon, and Kristen. We ran our first Digital Humanities module - Data Environmentalism - and developed three further modules that draw on our research expertise. We formed new structures that manage and report on our work in research, education, knowledge exchange, and enterprise. We engaged with students by running workshops and drop-in sessions, supporting projects and dissertations, creating new facilities, and welcoming 17 interns from English, Archaeology, Ocean Sciences, History, Biology, Linguistics, Computer Science, Music, Philosophy, Film, and Health Sciences. We worked with colleagues from across and beyond the School of Humanities to prepare funding bids, invest in new equipment, develop engaging educational experiences, and facilitate trans-disciplinary collaboration. Additionally we produced original, innovative, and remarkable research that tests and expands the boundaries of the Digital Humanities, creates the basis for new grant activity, and leverages knowledge exchange and enterprise opportunities.

Consolidation has also provided a stable platform from which we have been able to make ambitious plans. We have secured funding for creative and novel research that will establish our reputation as leaders in our field. We have developed a multi-year vision for expanding our technical estate that will give us sector leading capacity. We are exploring new degree programmes that will change our structure and operations. We are also launching enterprise activities that will commercialise research, open up new income streams, and develop new student employability opportunities.

This report attempts to draw together the range of activities that have characterised our work in the last year. The report recognises the collective effort required to deliver a mission to entangle humanities education and research with digital and computational approaches, and to do so in ways that respond to things that matter: knowledge creation, justice, belonging, our biosphere. It is a big task, and - once again - I extend my heartfelt and sincere thanks to all who've supported, encouraged, and challenged us over the last year. Roll on year three!

James Baker
Director, Southampton Digital Humanities

OUR PEOPLE

People are at the heart of Southampton Digital Humanities, and this academic year our core team more than doubled in size. At the start of the academic year Dr Lexi Webster joined as Deputy Director of Digital Humanities, followed in January by Dr Grace Di Méo as a Digital Humanities Teaching Fellow and Sam Pegg as a second Digital Humanities Technician. Shortly thereafter Ellie Wakefield joined us as an Administrative Officer. Then in the summer, Dr Sharon Howard joined as Research Fellow in Digital Humanities, a post funded by the AHRC-funded ‘Beyond Notability’ project. And we are delighted to welcome Dr Kristen Schuster as Lecturer in Digital Humanities at the start of the 2023/24 academic year.

Expanding our team has expanded our expertise: we are a team of linguists, historians, information scientists, archaeologists, and creative practitioners who take digital and computational approaches to our work. Expanding our team has also enabled us to expand our activities. This year we formed two new committees - in Research, Knowledge Exchange, and Enterprise and in Education and Student Experience - to report on and monitor our work, and to involve colleagues at all levels from across and beyond the School of Humanities in our decision making.. We would like to extend our particular thanks to Sarah Pearce, Helen Spurling, Fraser Sturt, Nicky Marsh, Lorna Leverett, Wendy White, Eleanora Gandolfi, Matt Philips, Catherine Polley, James Allen, Claire Knowles, Bobbi Moore, Hannah Ley, Hirah Azhar, Joe Higgins, Giulia Champion, Lois Clark, Katie Bizley, Lian Patston, Kendrick Oliver, Alistair Pike, Nassrin Chamanian, Anisa Hawes, and Ben Chambers for their contributions across the year.

Finally, we worked with 17 Digital Humanities Interns, students from all study levels and from within and beyond the School of Humanities. These interns ran our communications, improved information about LGBTQI+ lives on Wikipedia, supported our publishing activities, processed catalogue data, made immersive environments, experimented with sonification, analysed literary data at scale, created 3d models of local heritage, turned gesture into sound, helped us understand how make the DH Hub a better place to work in, explored AI in humanities curricula, reflected on environmental resilience, and much more.



“DURING MY INTERNSHIP, I USED THE OPEN-SOURCE TOOL TWINE TO CREATE AN INTERACTIVE STORY EXPLORING THE PHILOSOPHY OF IDENTITY.”

JEWEL KONIECZNY
BA PHILOSOPHY AND ENGLISH

“I HAVE LEARNT SKILLS AT USING NEW SYSTEMS LIKE GITHUB AND DEVELOPED MY ABILITIES TO EDIT DIFFERENT FORMS OF CONTENT.”

ISOBEL MCVEIGH
MA GLOBAL LITERARY INDUSTRY MANAGEMENT

“MY INTERNSHIP HAS HELPED ME TO DEVELOP MY OWN INDEPENDENT RESEARCH SKILLS.”

JOELY FAKE
BA MODERN HISTORY AND POLITICS

“[MY INTERNSHIP] HELPED ME TO EXPAND MY MIND ON HOW TO COMMUNICATE ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE USING UPCOMING TECHNOLOGIES.”

MARCO FRIEDRICHSEN
MSC IN MARINE ENVIRONMENT

“I LEARNED NEW PROGRAMS AND RESEARCH SKILLS I DIDN’T HAVE BEFORE, SUCH AS WORKING WITHIN PYTHON AND DEALING WITH DATA SETS. [...] FOR THE FIRST TIME, I WAS ABLE TO MARRY THE CRITICAL THINKING INFORMED BY THE LITERATURE WITH THE CRITICAL THINKING INFORMED BY MY ACTUAL HANDS-ON EXPERIENCES.”

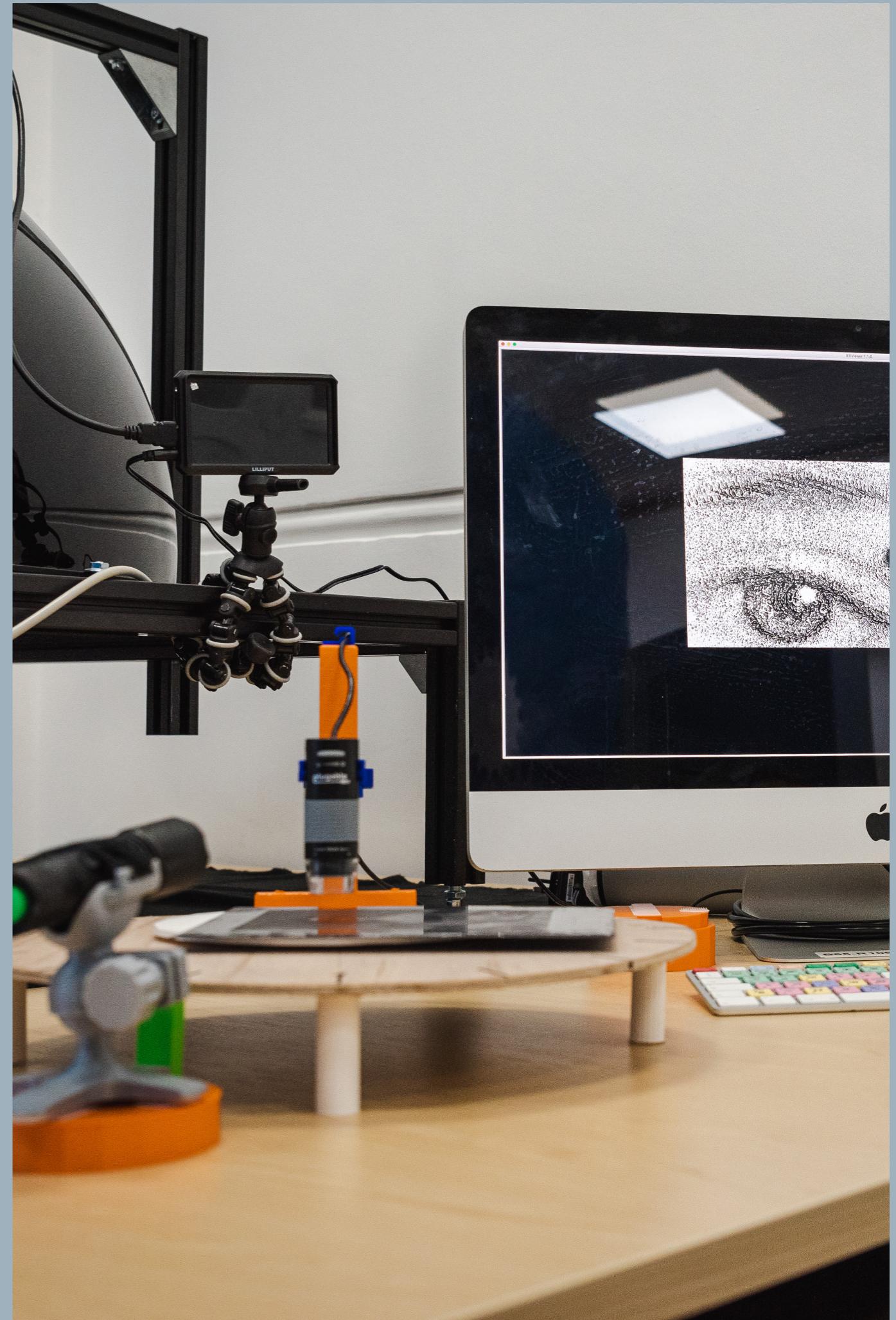
TIERRA ABETYA
MSC BUSINESS AND HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

OUR SPACE

The Digital Humanities Hub comprises six rooms on the north side of Building 65. Opened in September 2021 and run by the Digital Humanities team, it has since gone through many iterations to meet the needs of our community. In the last year these iterations have focused on investing in technologies that complement our existing strengths and on developing our estate for all who use it, be they researchers doing computational work, learners seeking new skills, or students seeking a study space. Two of our interns have directly supported this work. Jessica Boca developed new signage that seeks to help visitors understand who we are and how the space can be used. And Ouacila Ait Eldjoudi gathered information from students about how they use the space and what improvements we should prioritise.

For specialist users, we have used this year to expand our place-based technologies. Now alongside our existing 3d printers, imaging suite, and Igloo (a six-metre wide 360° audio-visual environment), students and staff have access to a Kaiser RSP 2Motion copy stand for digitisation, large screen monitors for building immersive environments, a videogames play space (comprising both historic and contemporary collections), and a Cyberith VR treadmill - enabling embodied interactions with virtual environments. We've also invested in a wider range of mobile and "pop-up" equipment packages, including a mobile Kaiser R2N Portable copy stand for high-quality digitisation off-site, a Perception Neuron Studio motion capture system, and a podcast studio with a RØDE audio production studio and mics. The latter has proven our most popular piece of kit, and represents an example of responsive investment: our community demonstrated a need, we figured out the most appropriate solution. The same is true for digitisation. We started the year with cameras and scanners appropriate for many tasks. For example, we worked with Chris Prior and his team to capture objects from Gilbert White's House as part of their AHRC-NERC funded project 'Decolonising Victorian histories' (gilbertwhiteshouse.org.uk/object-handling). Interactions like these suggested our community would benefit from better workflows for digitisation and different levels of technological complexity. And so we ended the year with a Creality Lizard Structured Light Scanner for 3d object capture and the capability to photograph objects in-house and on-site in various ways.

We now have multi-year capacity to capture, create, and compute with humanities data and in the pursuit of humanities research questions and agendas. Given the environmental imperatives towards degrowth and device non-proliferation, these investments are not made lightly. Where possible, we seek out technologies we can repair, have multiple potential uses, and are responsibly sourced. We have invested in micro-computing and fabrication, giving us more control over the technologies we have and the interfaces we build. In so doing these investments embody our values - as well as the sustainability goals of the university. We know we can always do more, and through modules like Data Environmentalism, and internship opportunities in Environmental Digital Humanities, we hope to continue to educate ourselves and grow our capacity to do better.



OUR NUMBERS

360

LINES IN MAIN.PY,
ISAAC DUNFORD'S
CODE FOR DETECTING
CATALOGUE ENTRIES IN
BRITISH LIBRARY DATA.

£543,000

IN RESEARCH GRANT
AWARDS TO SOUTHAMPTON
DIGITAL HUMANITIES

14

DH WORKSHOPS
ATTENDED BY:
101 STAFF
60 POSTGRADUATES
59 UNDERGRADUATES

1,792

WORDS IN THE STUDENT
FILM 'GREENWASHED- A
DOCUMENTARY SHORT'

WATCH
HERE:



1.5KM

OF 3D PRINTER FILAMENT USED
TO MAKE OBJECTS INCLUDING:

15 BUSTS

10 ARTEFACTS

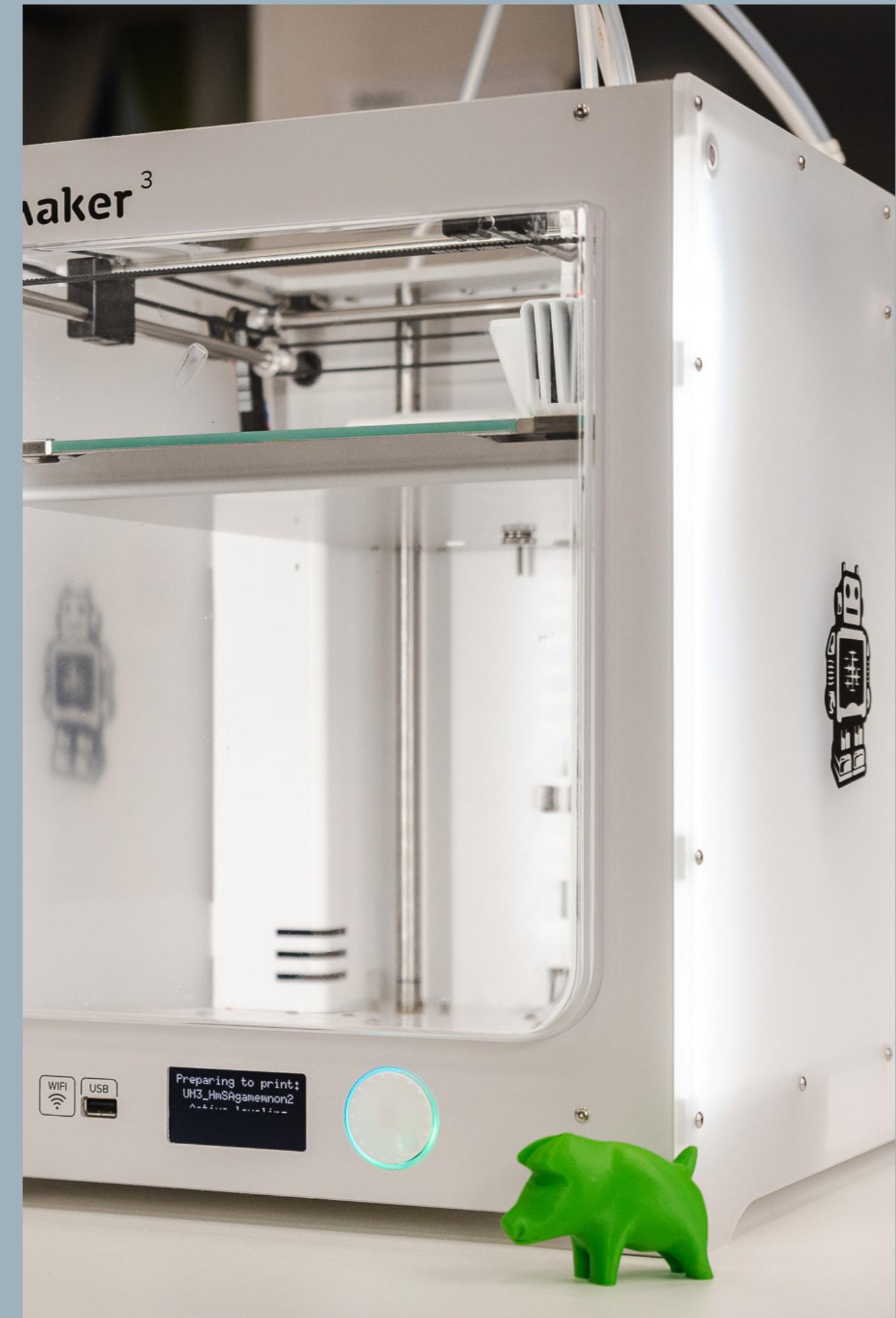
9 CLIMATE SPIRAL MODELS

8 CRYSTALLOGRAPHIC
MOLECULAR CHAINS

4 MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

3 KNITTED OBJECTS

1 TOPOGRAPHICALLY ACCURATE
GLOBE

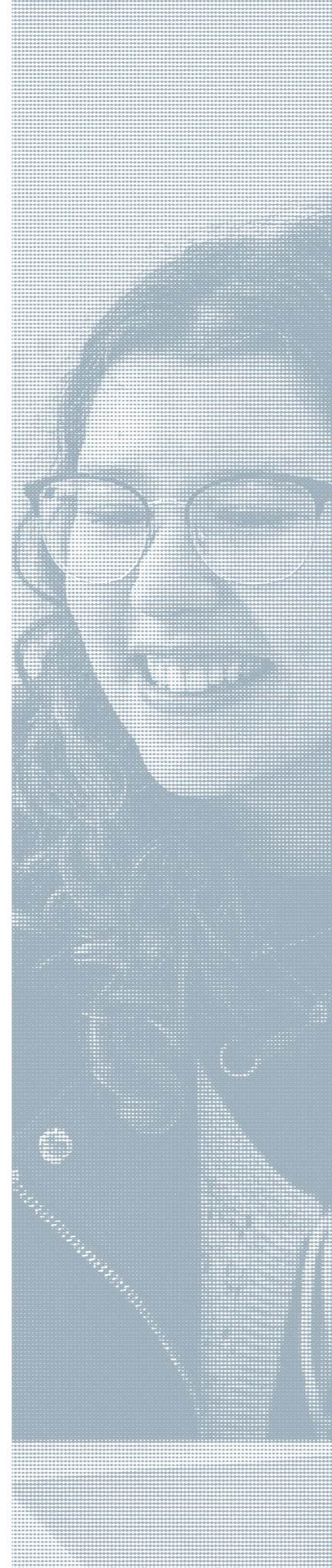


OUR STORIES

In our last annual report, we told the story of Sam Pegg, a final year BA English student and Digital Humanities Intern who used his internship to learn how to make interactive fiction. Sam continued his studies at Southampton, spending the year on the MA Creative Writing. Sam also continued his connection with Southampton Digital Humanities, joining us in January as a Digital Humanities Technician. By July he'd given his first conference talk at MIX 2023 (a conference on storytelling in immersive media), reflecting on his introduction to digital humanities and how it had changed his approach to creative practice and sparked new ideas for future research.

Sam's journey is one of the many stories that Southampton Digital Humanities has played a part in making happen, whether large or small.

We worked with Eve Colpus and Kendrick Oliver to support a student-led podcast made in collaboration with English Heritage. Students on our Data Environmentalism module created public facing magazines, vlogs, online debates, posters, and - in one case - a 9-minute video essay on greenwashing in the tech sector led by Jewel Konieczny, who later in the year joined us as a Digital Humanities Intern. Rafa Mestre and Sasha Anikina led a team of student researchers from Computer Science, Media Management, and Music who built a series of experimental multi-modal interactions with computation - turning gestures into sound, sound into backing dancers, backing dancers into prose. Clifton Suspension Bridge Trust borrowed our Museum in a Box to deliver school's outreach. Luke Aspland won the 'Teaching and Infrastructure' prize at the Southampton Technician of the Year Awards. The AHRC-funded project 'Legacies of Catalogue Descriptions and Curatorial Voice: Opportunities for Digital Scholarship', a collaboration with the British Library and Yale University, drew to a close with a residency with our partners at the Lewis Walpole Library. And the AHRC-funded Beyond Notability team worked with metadata experts in the British Library's Authority Control team to create International Standard Name Identifiers for hundreds of hitherto unknown women who we've encountered in our archival research into women in history, archaeology and heritage circa 1870-1950.



LIST OF PUBLICATIONS AND PROJECTS

FUNDED PROJECTS

Queer Joy as a Digital Good, ESRC Digital Good Network, £49,525 (2023-2024)

Our Interlocked Universe: Sociohistorical Network Analysis; Methods, Applications, and New Directions, ESRC National Centre for Research Methods, £2,700 (2023-2024)

Critical Cataloguing For Digital Preservation: A Research Commercialisation Follow-on Project, AHRC, £49,954 (2023-2024)

Developing a virtual reality interface for institutional digital archives (PI Stephen Gray, University of Bristol), AHRC and Research Libraries UK Professional Practice Fellowship Scheme for academic and research libraries, £25,000 (2023-2024)

Middle East People's Culture Conservation Collective (PI Mariz Tadros, Institute for Development Studies), British Council, £700,000 (2023-2024)

Attitudes, aptitudes, and applications of AI-enhanced assessment in Humanities curricula at Southampton, Centre for Higher Education Practice, £4,713 (2023-2024)

Legacies of curatorial voice in the descriptions of incunabula collections at the British Library and their future reuse, AHRC and Research Libraries UK Professional Practice Fellowship Scheme for academic and research libraries, £24,961 (2022-2023)

Beyond Notability: Re-evaluating Women's Work in Archaeology, History, and Heritage in Britain, 1870 – 1950, AHRC, £929,729 (2021-2024)

PUBLISHED OUTPUTS

Grace Di Méo, 'Desistance and Persistence: Women and Habitual Violence in Late Victorian and Edwardian England', *Women & Criminal Justice* (2023).

Grace Di Méo, 'Historical co-offending networks: a social network analysis approach', *British Journal of Criminology* (2023).

James Baker, 'More Process, Less Product: the making of the Making African Connections Digital Archive', *Third Text* (2023).

James Baker and Eleonora Gandolfi, 'Building digital humanities and library partnerships at the University Southampton', *UKSG eNews* 531 (2023).

James Baker, Anna-Maria Sichani, Ruth Ahnert, David Beavan, Arianna Ciula, Steve Crouch, David De Roure, et al, 'iDAH Research Software Engineering (RSE) Steering Group Working Paper' (2023).

Lexi Webster, "'Sorry You're Not a Winner": Considering critical relativism, competing interests and lateral power struggles in ethical critique', *Critical Discourse Studies* (2023).

Lexi Webster, Stella Bullo & Jasmine Hearn, "I want to remember how nice it felt to talk to someone": Positive emotions and the linguistic reconstruction of COVID-19 lockdown experiences in the UK, in *The Emerald Handbook of the Sociology of Emotions for a Post-Pandemic World*, ed. by Paul Ward and Kristen Foley (2023).

Lexi Webster, 'How to conduct ethical research with marginalised populations in online contexts', *SAGE Research Methods* (2023).

Lexi Webster, 'How to research gender online', *SAGE Research Methods* (2023).

Grace Di Méo, 'Pugilism in Petticoats: Women and Prize-Fighting in Victorian Britain', *Journal of Victorian Culture* (2022).

James Baker, Andrew Salway, and Cynthia Roman, 'Detecting and characterising transmission from legacy collection catalogues', *Digital Humanities Quarterly* (2022).

Lexi Webster, "Scary Monsters (and Super Creeps?): critiquing representations of women throughout the 1980s in Fangoria magazine", *Horror Studies* (2022).

Lexi Webster, "'Erase/rewind': How transgender Twitter discourses challenge and (re)politicize lesbian identities", *Journal of Lesbian Studies* (2022).

OUR FUTURE

If this year was about consolidation, next year is about broadening and deepening our impact.

In education, we launch new modules in Corpus Linguistics and in Data, Culture and Justice, we are threaded through the new MA in Global Challenges, and we begin a CHEP-funded project on attitudes, aptitudes, and applications of AI-enhanced assessment in Humanities curricula. We welcome a new PhD student in Creative Writing. And we are developing plans for new programmes that leverage our research expertise.

In research, next year will mark the last year of our partnership with the Institute for Classical Studies and the Society of Antiquaries of London on the AHRC-funded project ‘Beyond Notability: Re-evaluating Women’s Work in Archaeology, History and Heritage in Britain, 1870–1950’. As one research project ends, others emerge, including Lexi Webster’s ESRC-funded project ‘Queer Joy as a Digital Good’, Grace Di Méo’s National Centre for Research Methods funded project to run a major conference on historical network analysis, and James Baker’s AHRC-funded research commercialisation project ‘Critical Cataloguing for Digital Preservation’. The latter will kickstart a new enterprise activity: the Southampton Digital Preservation Advisory Unit, a flagship enterprise activity that will offer expert, hands-on, and targeted commercial training, support, and advice, respond to commercial tenders, and open up new forms of research funding opportunities.

These activities will require new forms of infrastructure. Our estate will be enhanced with dedicated capacity for digital forensic capture and storage, a facilities approach to the use of equipment in research grants, and plans to reapply learnings from the DH Hub as an education space to other areas of Avenue Campus. Most significantly 2023/24 will see our management infrastructure undergo significant change, with Digital Humanities transitioning towards a more permanent and sustainable structure.

These, then, are exciting times. To keep us in check, our KPIs – which you’ll see over the pages that follow – have been designed to guide us as we deliver a balanced portfolio of research, education, knowledge exchange, and enterprise. Whilst we cannot control external forces, we can think big and seek to inspire the remarkable, to strive for equity, and to address complex global challenges. That is the flavour of Digital Humanities we seek to be, and so we look forward to working with colleagues, students, and partners to make that possible.



2022/23: KPIs

Benefits Register Realisation KPIs

DH1: Improvement in student experience by enriching student learning and student research activities by utilising ‘Digital Humanities’ approaches and facilities.

- 7/7 SoH disciplines utilize DH (target 7)..
- Continued growth in degree programmes that use DH, with plans for new DH programming in 2025/26.
- Too early to measure impact of DH on NSS scores.

DH2: Generation of student recruitment - enhanced Digital Humanities provision will lead to an increase in our attractiveness to prospective students.

- DH embedded in plan to grow student numbers >25% over next 4 years.
- DH developing new programme that will support programme diversification.
- Too early to measure impact of DH on UoS QSS rankings.

DH3: Enhancement in academic reputation of the UoS Humanities departments.

- DH enabling new collaborations with computationally rich areas and institutions.
- DH staff recognised for sector leading academic reputation.
- DH embedded in UoS offer to prospective students.
- DH working with DUX and FOS to deliver bespoke online content.

DH4: Increased research and enterprise funding success as well as knowledge-exchange activities.

- From a small staff base, DH is making a strong contribution to FEC grant capture and bidding.
- DH is diversifying grant capture.
- DH leading on a new flagship enterprise project: the Southampton Digital Preservation Advisory Unit.

DH5: Improvement in student employability by developing digital skills of our students.

- Too early to measure impact of DH on LEO data.
- DH delivered 22 events - 14 skills workshops, community meetings, and 2 open sessions - aimed at staff and students (target: at least 20 per annum).
- 17 students gained hands-on DH experience as DH interns.
- DH elective modules delivered, with expansion planned for 2023/24.

DH6: League Table Rankings – planned growth in student numbers will also mean a more competitive offer, which will attract more highly qualified students and improve the University’s position in the League Table.

- Too early to measure impact of DH on UCAS tariffs in SoH.

DH7: Distinctiveness of School of Humanities.

- 7/7 SoH disciplines utilize DH (target: 7).
- Continued growth in degree programs that use DH, with plans for new DH programming in 2025/26.
- DH embedded in UoS offer to prospective students.
- DH contributing to civic offer via AHRC IAA events, Hands on Humanities, and external partnerships with local and regional bodies.
- DH responding to UoS Sustainability Strategy with DH Purchasing Policy and student internship focused on environmental action.

DH8: Quality of Estate - improve the quality and relevance of the Estate, in terms of relevance to students and staff.

- DH Hub making strong contributions to UoS student experience and research activity, including responsive investments in new technical estate.
- Strategy for maintaining DH estate in place through SoH DH Embedding Group and investments in DH Technicians.
- DH making proactive contributions to future FAH estate strategy.

FAH Budget KPIs

Skills Development

- 220 event attendees (target: 100).
- 49% event attendees were students (target: at least 25%).
- Good balance of event attendees across the School of Humanities.
- Good evidence of attendance from beyond Humanities.

Climate Crisis

- Refreshed approach to pre-purchase auditing to be established in 2023/24

Community Development

- 6 DH Community Meetings were held (target: at least 6)
- DH Associate Group represents 6 humanities departments (target: 7)

Events

- DH delivered 16 skills-oriented events (including 14 DH Workshops) aimed at staff and students (target: at least 15)

Student Internships

- 17 students joined the DH Internship programme (target: 10) of which 71% were SoH students (target: at least 70%)

Supporting Research

- 3 large research grants (>£100k) proposal submitted (target: 2 per annum by 2024/25), 1 of which was successful.
- Received funds for 2 ~£50k grants and 2 small grants (<£25k).



SEE YOU AGAIN NEXT YEAR!

Digital Humanities

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𝕏 @sotonDH

QB Southampton-Digital-Humanities

Internal:

<sotonac.sharepoint.com/teams/DigitalHumanities>

65/2155

Avenue Campus

University of Southampton