Cultural Data Analytics

Reporting

Project Information

CUDAN

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Project website ↗

DOI ⓘ
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Project closed

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29 May 2018

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SOCIETAL CHALLENGES - Climate action, Environment, Resource Efficiency and Raw Materials

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€ 2 500 000,00

EU contribution ⓘ
€ 2 500 000,00

Coordinated by
TALLINN UNIVERSITY
🇪🇪 Estonia

Periodic Reporting for period 3 - CUDAN (Cultural Data Analytics)

Reporting period: 2022-01-01 to 2024-08-31

Summary of the context and overall objectives of the project ⌄

In a nutshell, the CUDAN project mission is to further understand the nature of cultural interaction, cultural dynamics, and cultural evolution, through research in the mode of a multidisciplinary science lab, and through nurturing the associated community of practice in an exercise of intentional academic mixing. Our project aims at building a new analytical approach, called "Cultural Data Analytics" that

integrates quantitative and qualitative methods, including aspects of network science, complexity science, computational social science, science of science, machine learning, data science, design research, visualization, art history, cultural semiotics, digital culture studies, and creative industries' studies to work with digitized cultural heritage as well as with born-digital data acquired from contemporary platforms.

The main objective of CUDAN is to build on and develop the existing strengths in digital culture studies within Tallinn University and in Estonia more broadly. This will be accomplished through establishing the ERA Chair position and the transdisciplinary and innovative cooperation platform (Open Lab) at Tallinn University. The two are co-constitutive, the ERA Chair will spearhead the Open Lab project, its team members will facilitate Open Lab projects and events, will develop its methods and management protocols. Open Lab will cooperate with multiple external partners, both public and private, in order to collect, analyse and use digital cultural data, to better understand contemporary cultural dynamics and incorporate this understanding into public cultural service designs, and cultural and creative industries policies.

Work performed from the beginning of the project to the end of the period covered by the report and main results achieved so far ⌄

Despite the slow beginning of the project (due to recruitment delays) the concept of the Open Lab has been constantly worked on and evolving. Members of the Project Management Committee have been developing partnership relations with various external institutions in Estonia (Ministry of Culture, Estonan Public Broadcasting, Estonian Film Archive, Äripäev, Postimees Grupp, Estonian National Museum, Estonian National Archives, etc.). The designs of the premises of the lab have been finalised and refurbishment works are about to start.

Recruitment activities have been demanding throughout the project's initial 15 months. We announced the competition for the ERA Chair professor at the beginning of January 2019 and promoted the position heavily. In October 2019 Dr. Maximilian Schich was elected as the new ERA Chair professor in Cultural Data Analytics, Dr. Schich will start his position at TLU in June 2020. The competition for his team members, Research Fellows in Cultural Data Analytics, was also announced. 5 positions were announced in January 2020 and the elections process has just ended - as the outcome three experienced research fellows were hired and two very good candidates were given time to first finish their PhDs before the end of Summer 2020 after which they will be also hired early Autumn 2020.
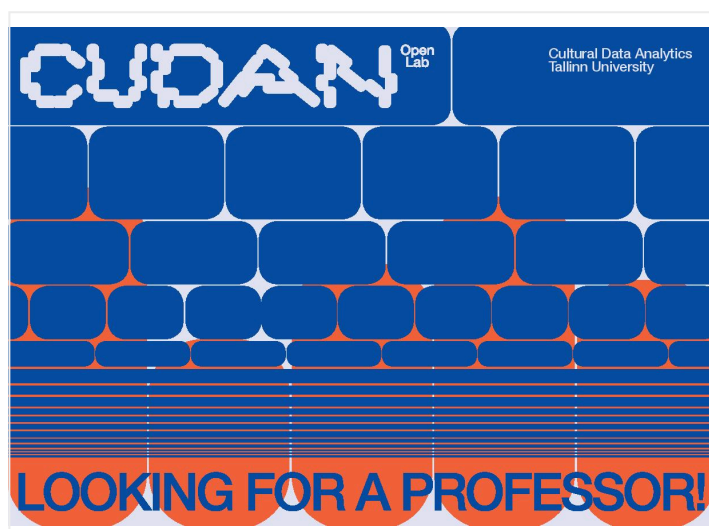
CUDAN Project Management Committee has already conditioned joint work between the participating TLU Schools. An example of this is a new joint project where researchers from all three schools are investigating ways to use data in public cultural heritage databases to visualise alternative histories of the city of Narva in a mobile augmented reality application. This project and the application is currently in development and could become one of the first CUDAN-initiated projects within TLU. Many other potential new projects have been designed and set up with existing Estonia's media and cultural institutions (Estonian Public Broadcasting, Äripäev, Estonian Film Database), additionally we

have been collaborating with the Open Knowledge Estonia and Estonian Ministry of Culture on cultural heritage digitisation and facilitating access to it (including for researchers).

Interdisciplinary synergies between participating TLU schools emerge from the currently ongoing joint hiring process of PhD students which highlights differences and reveals possible alignments in the hiring process. One of the decisions arrived at between the participating TLU schools has been to use nearly half the project overheads for PhD training. TLU has committed to admit 5 PhD students attached to CUDAN project and pay them in addition to PhD student scholarships also 50% of the junior research fellow salary. Two students have been admitted already and have started their studies, 3 will be admitted this upcoming Summer.

Progress beyond the state of the art and expected potential impact (including the socio-economic impact and the wider societal implications of the project so far)

The project aims, first, to increase TLU research excellence and the preconditions for this have been created by hiring an excellent international team. The second main aim has been to increase the attractiveness of TLU as an employer. This will be, before everything else that follows (actual research and dissemination work) first facilitated by team excellence and improved working environment - for this the necessary steps have been taken. The third planned impact - institutional changes to implement the European Research Area priorities - are underway by the development of the Open Lab format, development of the new Data Management Plan and by the increased cooperation between the TLU schools. The last two main planned impacts - TLU's improved capability to participate in international research projects and enforced contributions to Estonian smart specialisation strategies and other policy objectives - continue to be long term objectives and will be worked towards systematically in the course of the subsequent 3,5 years.

CUDAN Flyer for hiring a Professor

CUDAN Flyer for hiring a Professor 2

Last update: 26 February 2025