

# DHAI 2018 (Digital Humanities Alliance of India) Inaugural Conference-June 1-2, 2018

*Jointly organized by*

**IIT INDORE and IIM INDORE**

## ***DH in India: Contestations, Connections and Collaborations***

In his recent polemical piece, noted academic and cultural critic, Timothy Brennan calls Digital Humanities, a “bust” and declares: “[a]fter a decade of investment and hype, what has the field accomplished? Not much.” Brennan’s critique of DH, amongst others, is that “[DH] promises to break *the book format* without explaining why one might want to — even as books, against all predictions, doggedly persist, filling the airplane hangar- sized warehouses of *Amazon.com*.” What remains potently interesting is that Brennan’s questioning of DH and its machine-oriented methodology[ies] is itself rooted in an Anglo-American episteme: one that has continuously promoted the “print medium” as the only legitimate paradigm for advancing worthwhile humanistic inquiry. We juxtapose Brennan’s provocative piece with the experience of disparate and disruptive forms of DH in India—often an outlier to Anglo-American argument strains— to frame this CFP for the first Digital Humanities Alliance of India (DHAI) Conference in June 2018.

Taking off from Padmini Ray Murray’s comment at the Digital Diversity 2015 conference: “your DH is not my DH,” the DHAI 2018 conference hopes to critically discuss the possibility of disrupting dominant assumptions about the nature and form of DH. Through a self-reflexive reminder that DH practices are contingent and situated, we would like to explore how postcolonial digital performances are about the need to forge our own (humanistic) practices that may find overlaps but may possibly and necessarily be divergent from Euro-American DH methodologies. Deeply cognizant of the fundamentally different terrains as well as institutional and national histories that shape our experiences in India, the inaugural DHAI conference is committed to deciphering through interrogations, intersections and rigorous deliberations how DH theory and praxis converge (or not), within these physically and discursively diverse spaces.

For this first edition of the Annual DHAI conference, we invite academics, scholars, practitioners, artists, students and interested stakeholders to not only propose operational questions like “Does India have the required technological framework and/or the required levels of access provided to different intersectional identities to implement a DH curriculum at the school and university levels?” but also questions of ontology: should knowledge frameworks be substantially reconceptualized keeping in mind technological exigencies and if so, what is the role of the Humanities in developing the contextual (local) theoretical vocabulary? In other words, what are the methodological challenges in decolonizing knowledge structures? Does the Digital matter and does it matter differently in a postcolonial space such as India?

Paper/Panel topics might include (but are not limited to) those that address:

- Digital Pedagogy
- Digital Literacy

- New knowledge archives
- Cultural heritage work
- Digital genealogies
- The role of the Digital in Social justice in South Asia

Please submit your panel and paper proposals to the conference organisers at [dibyadyutir@iimidr.ac.in](mailto:dibyadyutir@iimidr.ac.in) and [nmenon@iiti.ac.in](mailto:nmenon@iiti.ac.in) by **April 15th, 2018**

- Panel proposals (150-200 word abstract). Panels will last for 90 minutes, and it is advisable that proposals allow sufficient time for the presentation of papers as well as discussion.
- Independent papers (100-150 word abstract). These will be allocated to suitable panels by the conference organizers.



**IIT Indore**



**DH Research Group**



**IIM Indore**