

# Managing Scope and Scale:

## Applying the Incubator Model to Digital Scholarship

FSU, UCLA, U-Nebraska, (UMich)  
<https://adholibdh.github.io/ds.incubators/>  
#dlfforum #t2d

Take notes @:  
[bit.ly/dlfincubate](https://bit.ly/dlfincubate)

# Introduction

This panel was  
conceived in  
spring 2016,  
via the DH  
Slack:



**micahvandegrift** 9:29 AM

Digital Library Federation CFP!

<https://www.diglib.org/archives/11627/>

@alixk @agilchristpike wanna put together  
something on "digital project incubators"?  
Our program will be running at FSU by then.



#t2d || @alix\_rae

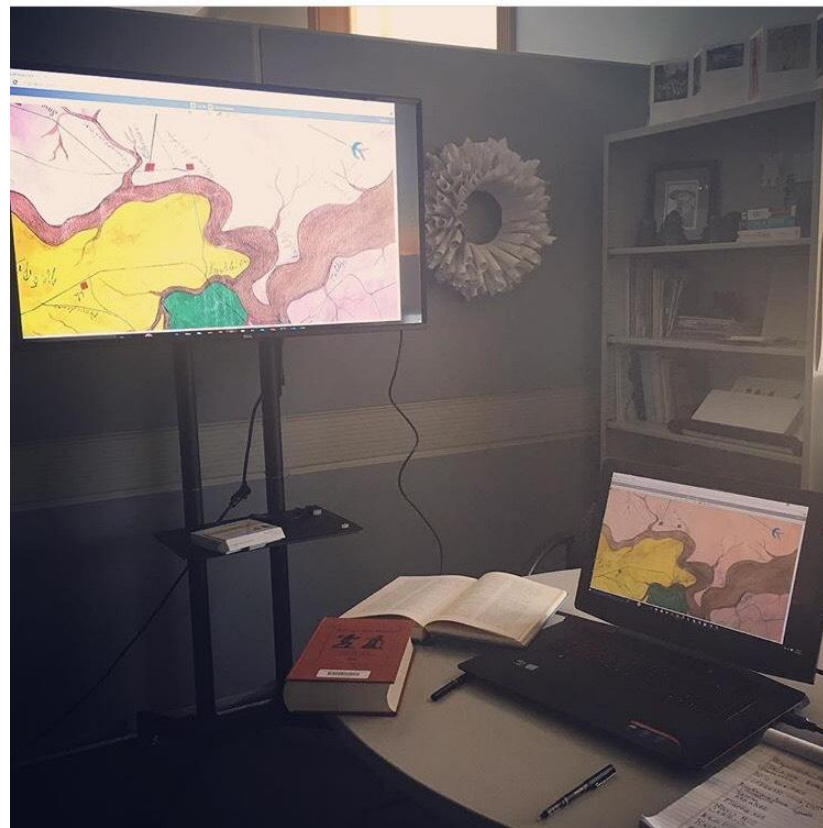
# Digital Scholarship Incubators

- Adapting the mentor model from tech incubators
- A team of experts (researchers, librarians, and/or administrators) who work with an individual or project team
- Provide an environment for researchers to develop prototypes and workflows

# Outcomes

To name a few:

- Building community
- Increase community knowledge base
- Model collaborative research and new methods



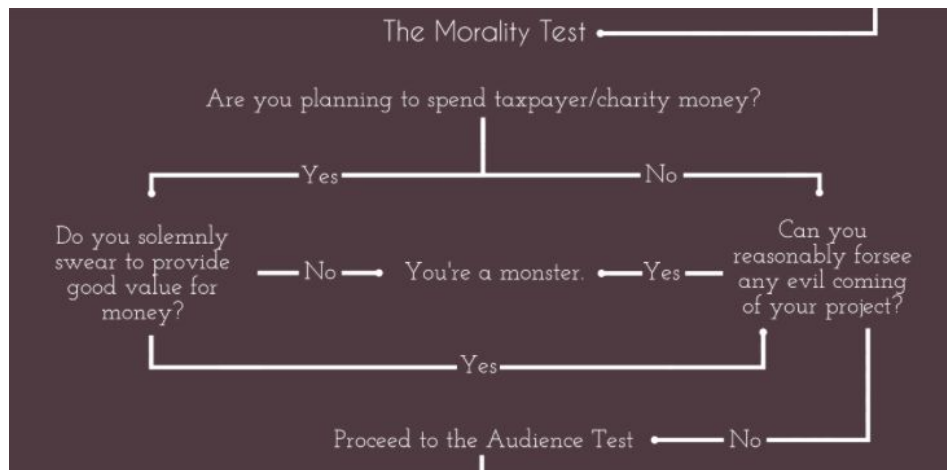
# PEN and Inc. @ Florida State

- Project development “course”
- A scholarly network for campus
- Digital Scholarship is people!



Our first cohort: Rachel Duke,  
Melissa Hughes, Tanya  
Peres, Zach Stoltzfus

# PEN and Inc.: Highlights



Detail from flowchart: [Does your historical collection need a database-driven website?](#)

(Crymble) This section asks morality questions about impact and using public/charity funding.

- In-person & remote conversations
- Most useful discussions:
  - Risk assessment; scope; collaborative partnerships

# PEN and Inc.: Next Steps

- Move to a less class-based model
- Encourage future incubator participants to become project mentors!





## Context - UNL Digital Scholarship Incubator

- Promotes & supports student-led digital scholarship through a funded fellowship
- Funded by Dean's Office; further support from Center for Digital Research in the Humanities
- Runs for 12 weeks during the summer
- To date, 3 cohorts & 11 fellows

# Highlights - UNL Digital Scholarship Incubator

## Fellows:

- spend 15 hours/week coworking
- are responsible for all content & tech development
- deliver a presentation to the university community

## UNL Libraries:

- create a supportive environment
- provide consultations (disciplinary expertise, methods, technology)
- connect fellows with resources

# Future - UNL Digital Scholarship Incubator

- Engage more departments and disciplines
- Develop more of a curriculum
- Engage more people from within the libraries
- Encourage further conversation among fellows outside of their disciplinary comfort zones



**Partnerships**

**Start-Up**

**Research**

**Digital**

# UCLA Library

## DResSUP

Zoe Borovsky  
@zoepster

Dawn Childress  
@kirschbombe

# Strategy

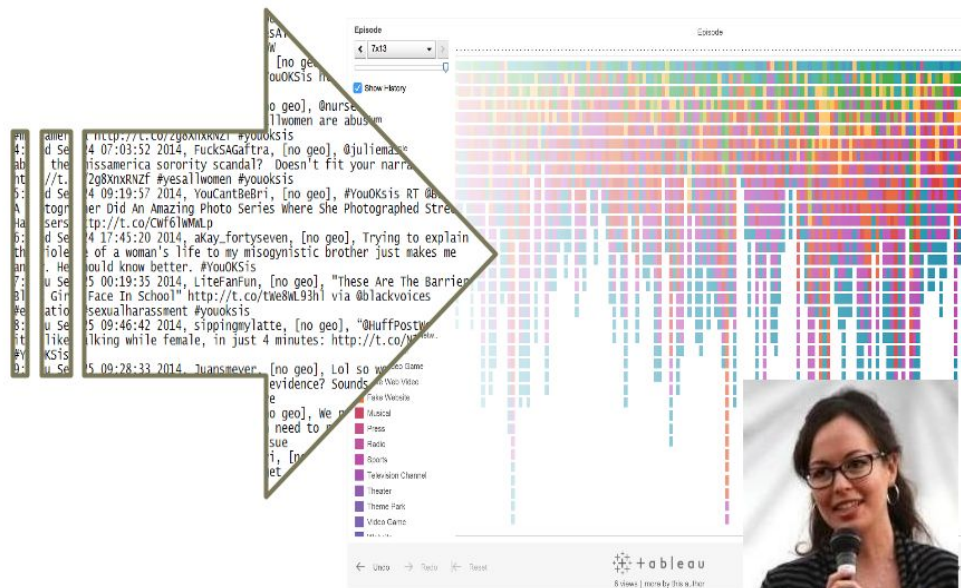
**When:** 6-week Summer Program

**Who:** 5 library staff, 1 (full-time) grad student assistant (\$5k) , 4-6 grad students with projects

**What:** Partnerships rather than fellowships

**How:** User-focused, Project-based, Process, Prototypes, and Workflows

How to turn raw data into....?

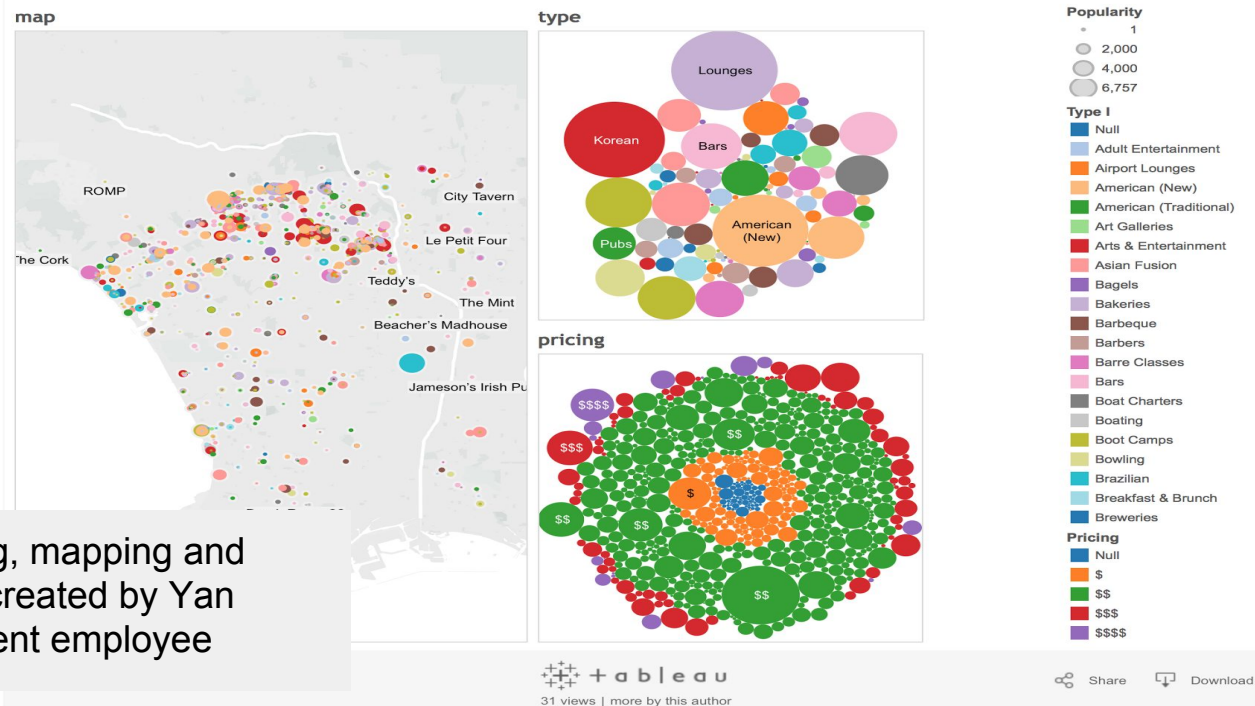


Nina Flores, Ph.D. Candidate in Urban Planning



# Flexible framework, based on research data lifecycle

web-scraping, geo-coding, mapping and  
visualization -- a tutorial created by Yan  
Liang, our graduate-student employee



Scheduled workshops

Open office hours

# Obviously, students love DResSUP,

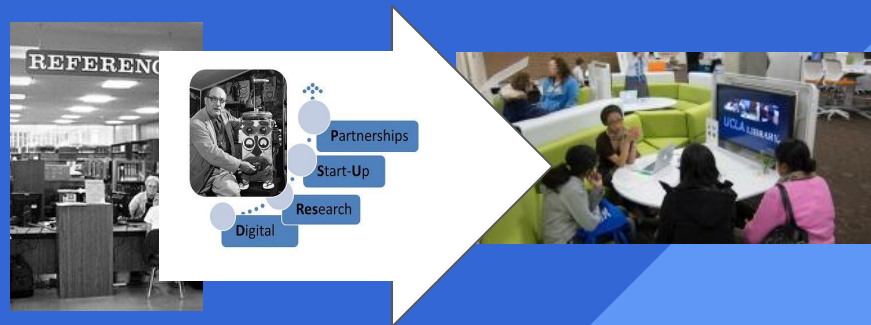
"It felt like a **real collaboration** as they truly listened to what we wanted to try and accomplish and helped to make that happen".



(but,  
what's in it  
for the  
**Library?**)



# What's in it for the LIBRARY?



1 Transform collection development

Collect and **develop library expertise**, methods, tools, data sets

2 Programs that integrate library content with tools and methods

Paid graduate student assistant allows staff to focus on **teaching, prototypes, and workflows**

3 Build infrastructure, connecting staff who work in separate departments

**Build communities** around users, library as research team

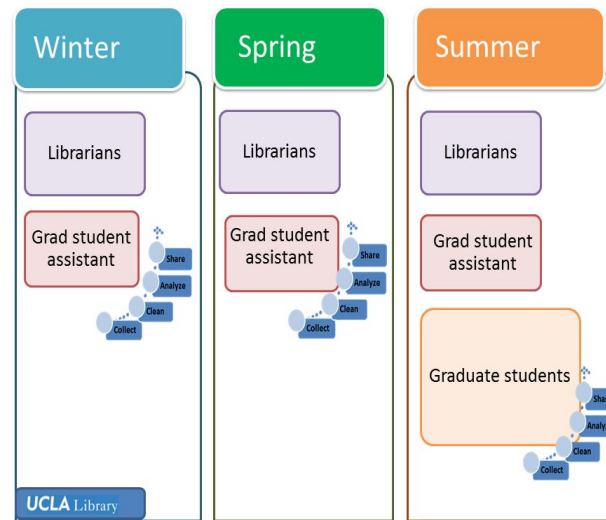


## UCLA - What's next?

- Open DResSUP to our librarian colleagues
- Support a shared librarian digital project
- Encourage train-the-trainer system
- Focus on collections-related datasets and research projects

With our increased capacity:

- Accept larger grad student cohort
- Integrate faculty through their grad students / Academic Senate funding



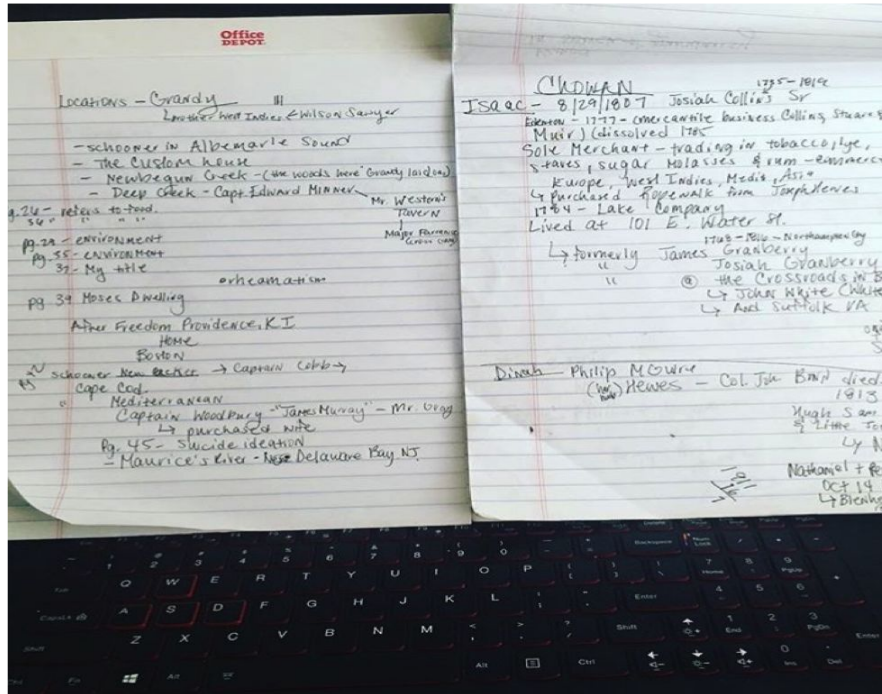
# Incubators - A Student's Perspective

1. What is the primary humanities research question you're exploring?
2. What is your data?
3. What is your theoretical framework/system of values?
4. What is your method?
5. What are the (scholarly, other) contexts of your work?
6. How will you manage these contexts of your work?
7. What is your minimum viable product?
8. How/when will you communicate about your project?

# Incubators - A Student's Perspective

- Jettisoned the idea of single scholar in producing content and ideas
- Emphasized collaborative approach to content creation
- Consistent feedback from cohort

# Incubators - A Student's Perspective



# Analyzing enslaved runaway data before creating the spreadsheet

<http://go.unl.edu/refuge>

@activistHistori || #t2d

# Thank you!

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# Questions and Conversation

## Panel:

1. Why was your particular model chosen?
2. How did you select projects to incubate?  
What, exactly, is being incubated?
3. How are your incubators funded & staffed?

## Audience:

1. How many of you are planning an incubator-of-sorts?
2. Would any of these models resonate at your institution? Why or why not?