NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE
Humanities

OFFICE OF **DIGITAL HUMANITIES**

DIGITAL HUMANITIES ADVANCEMENT GRANTS

Level I

Deadline: December 15, 2017

If after reading this document you have questions about this grant program, contact Dr. Lauren Tilton at ltilton@richmond.edu

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I. Program Description

Digital Humanities Advancement Grants (DHAG) support digital projects throughout their lifecycles, from early start-up phases through implementation and long-term sustainability. Experimentation, reuse, and extensibility are hallmarks of this grant category, leading to innovative work that can scale to enhance research, teaching, and public programming in the humanities. You can find a discussion of the forms that experimentation can take in the Frequently Asked Questions document, which is available on the program resource page.

This program combines the former Digital Humanities Start-Up Grants and Digital Humanities Implementation Grants programs; the combined program is offered twice per year. Proposals are welcome for digital initiatives in any area of the humanities.

Digital Humanities Advancement Grants may involve

- creating or enhancing experimental, computationally-based methods or techniques that contribute to the humanities;

- pursuing scholarship that examines the history, criticism, and philosophy of digital culture and its impact on society, or explores the philosophical or practical implications and impact of digital humanities in specific fields or disciplines; or

- revitalizing and/or recovering existing digital projects that promise to contribute substantively to scholarship, teaching, or public knowledge of the humanities (for further information, see the question about revitalizing existing projects in the Frequently Asked Questions document, which is available on the program resource page).

The NEH offers three categories. For this assignment, complete a grant application for a Level I Award. (For informational purposes, Level II and Level III information is included.)

Level I awards (from $5,000 to $40,000) are small grants designed to fund exploratory sessions, workshops, early alpha-level prototypes, and initial planning. In addition to early planning towards an experimental prototype, Level I proposals can identify a problem or research question, explore a research agenda, or discover appropriate methodologies or technologies for both new projects and projects in need of substantive revision or recovery. Outcomes for Level I projects would likely include reports, position papers, and plans for subsequent steps and future research or development. Level I projects may also fund meetings, workshops, or reports addressing specific topics related to the impact of technology on the humanities. Proposals should include specific plans for broad dissemination of project outcomes.

Level II awards (from $40,001 to $75,000) are larger grants that can be used for more fully-formed projects that are ready to begin implementation or demonstrate proofs of concept. Level II proposals should therefore include a more articulated plan of work leading to concrete and tangible outcomes, such as working prototypes; detailed plans for upgrading existing or defunct projects in need of substantive revision, enhancement, or recovery; test beds; or demonstration projects.

Digital Humanities Advancement Grants at both Level I and Level II stages support full-time or part-time activities for periods up to **eighteen months**.

Level III awards (from $100,000 to $325,000 for up to three years) support implementation and scaling-up of already established projects. All projects must already have completed a start-up phase prior to application. The earlier phase of the project could have been supported previously by an NEH Digital Humanities Start-Up Grant or by another funding source. (Please see the instructions for the narrative component of the application below, in particular beneath the "History of the project" bullet.)

Level III projects must submit both data management and sustainability plans, and all projects are expected to fulfill the obligations outlined in these plans.

Level III Digital Humanities Advancement Grants support full-time or part-time activities for periods ranging from **one to three years**.

For all levels of support:
Support is available for various combinations of scholars, consultants, and research assistants; project-related travel; article processing charges for open access publications; and technical support and services. Up to 20 percent of the total grant may be used to acquire computing

hardware and software. All grantees are expected to communicate the results of their work to appropriate scholarly and public audiences.

Grantees must submit a white paper. This white paper should document the project, including lessons learned, so that others can benefit. This white paper will be posted on the NEH website.

All proposals will be required to include a *data management plan* that discusses how research data will be preserved. (Please see the instructions for this component of the application below for more details.) Level III Digital Humanities Advancement Grants must also include a *sustainability plan* that discusses long-term support for the project. (Please see the instructions for this component of the application below for more details.)

Types of projects not supported

Digital Humanities Advancement Grants may not be used for:

- projects that mainly involve digitization, unless the applicant is proposing an innovative method for digitization; (Note: For your final project , this restriction does not apply.)
- the creation or conversion of a scholarly journal (although the implementation of new modes of scholarly publication is permitted);
- recurring maintenance costs that would support only the day-to-day operations of existing projects rather than substantive changes or upgrades;
- recurring or established conferences or professional meetings;
- acquisition of computer equipment or software in excess of 20 percent of the grant total;
- work in the creative or performing arts;
- work undertaken in the pursuit of an academic degree;
- projects that seek to promote a particular political, religious, or ideological point of view; or (Note: For your final project , this restriction does not apply.)
- projects that advocate a particular program of social action. (Note: For your final project , this restriction does not apply.)

Applicants seeking to build or digitize collections, create general-use archives, or develop reference resources like dictionaries and encyclopedias should consider the [Humanities Collections and Reference Resources](#) (HCRR) program. Applicants in the planning stages of such projects should especially consider the HCRR *Foundations* subset of this grant category. Applicants seeking to address major challenges in preserving or providing access to humanities collections and resources should consider the [Research and Development](#) program. Both of these programs are offered by the [Division of Preservation and Access](#).

Applicants seeking to create websites, mobile applications, games, and virtual environments that significantly contribute to public engagement with the humanities should consider the [Digital Projects for the Public](#) program offered by the [Division of Public Programs](#). Applicants seeking to experiment with approaches to developing or implementing innovative approaches to creating digital projects for the public are, however, welcome to apply for a Digital Humanities Advancement Grant.

Please contact ODH program staff if you have any questions.

The Common Good: The Humanities in the Public Square

NEH invites projects related to its initiative, The Common Good: The Humanities in the Public Square. This initiative seeks to connect the study of the humanities to the current conditions of national life. Many of today's challenges require more than ever the forms of understanding and knowledge represented by the humanities. They require the broadest possible engagement of scholars and the public with the resources of the humanities, including but not limited to the study of language, literature, history, philosophy, comparative religion, and ethics. The study of the humanities can help illuminate the complexity of many contemporary challenges while enriching our understanding of the common good.

Note that the Common Good initiative incorporates the Standing Together initiative, which encourages projects related to war and military service.

Protecting our cultural heritage

In response to the destruction of cultural heritage materials worldwide, NEH encourages applications for projects that study, document, or create digital representations of lost or imperiled cultural heritage materials. Proposed projects should be based on scholarly work and follow standards and best practices. Project teams must include appropriate methodological specialists and humanities scholars. Projects must demonstrate the capacity to be sustained and must be widely accessible to the public. For more information click here.

Libraries and museums advance the digital humanities

In support of the national digital platform effort, the Institute of Museum and Library Services anticipates providing additional funding through this program to encourage innovative collaborations between museum or library professionals and humanities professionals to advance preservation of, access to, use of, and engagement with digital collections and services. These projects will advance the IMLS mission of improving broad public access to knowledge, cultural heritage, and lifelong learning.

Through this partnership, IMLS funds would support Level I and II projects that involve collaborations with museums and/or libraries. Projects funded in whole or part by IMLS must meet IMLS organizational eligibility requirements. For libraries, see the most recent Notification of Funding Opportunities for the National Leadership Grants for Libraries Program. For museums, see the most recent Notification of Funding Opportunities for the National Leadership Grants for Museums Program. Organizations interested in applying for support for larger projects involving museums or libraries may still apply to the NEH DHAG program (Level III) but should also consider applying to either the IMLS National Leadership Grants for Libraries program or the IMLS National Leadership Grants for Museums program.

All applications will be given equal consideration in accordance with the program's evaluation criteria, whether or not they respond to the Common Good initiative or the Standing Together

initiative, focus on imperiled cultural heritage materials, or involve collaboration with libraries or museums. Only applications addressing collaborations with libraries and museums from applicants eligible for IMLS grants will be considered for IMLS funds.

Providing access to grant products

As a taxpayer-supported federal agency, NEH endeavors to make the products of its grants available to the broadest possible audience. Our goal is for scholars, educators, students, and the American public to have ready and easy access to the wide range of NEH grant products. For the Digital Humanities Advancement Grants program, such products may include software code, algorithms, digital tools, reports, articles, and websites. For projects that lead to the development of such products, all other considerations being equal, NEH gives preference to those that provide free access to the public.

NEH grantees must follow the requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which is designed to eliminate discrimination on the basis of handicap in any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. For more information consult Design for Accessibility: A Cultural Administrator's Handbook here.

Award information

Awards for Level I and Level II grants are for up to eighteen months. Awards for Level III Grants are for one to three years.

Digital Humanities Advancement Grants have three levels of funding:

Level I grants range from $5,000 to $40,000 in outright funding.

Level II grants range from $40,001 to $75,000 in outright funding.

Level III grants range from $100,000 to $325,000 in outright funding. Applicants for Level III grants can also request up to an additional $50,000 in matching funds specifically allocated toward their sustainability or data management plans. (See the instructions for those two components of the application below.)

In the narrative, applicants must specify which level of funding they seek.

Successful applicants will be awarded a grant in outright funds, matching funds, or a combination of the two, depending on the applicant's preference and the availability of funds. (Learn more about different types of grant funding.)

All awards will be issued by the NEH. As part of our partnership with the Institute of Museum and Library Services, some awards may include funds from IMLS and will be identified as joint NEH/IMLS projects.

Cost sharing

Cost sharing consists of the cash contributions made to a project by the applicant and third parties, as well as third party in-kind contributions, such as donated services and goods. Applicants are welcome to use cost sharing for projects in which the total budget exceeds the NEH grant limit. Cost sharing is not required for Level I and Level II projects. Level III projects that request a Sustainability Match must report the contributions raised to release NEH matching funds as cost sharing.

Subsequent project phases

A grant from NEH for one stage of a project does not commit NEH to continued support for the project. Applications for each stage of a project are evaluated independently.

Eligibility

Eligibility is limited to

- U.S. nonprofit organizations with IRS tax-exempt status; and
- state and local governmental agencies and federally recognized Indian tribal governments.

Individuals are not eligible to apply.

Applicants that receive whole or partial funding from IMLS must also meet IMLS eligibility criteria. For libraries, see the most recent Notification of Funding Opportunities for the National Leadership Grants for Libraries Program. For museums, see the most recent Notification of Funding Opportunities for the National Leadership Grants for Museums Program.

Degree candidates may not be project directors or co-directors. Degree candidates may, however, serve in other project roles. (Note: For your final project, this restriction does not apply.)

Project directors and co-directors may submit only one application to this program at a time, although they may participate in more than one Digital Humanities Advancement Grant review in the DHAG program, another application for the same project will not be accepted to this program.

When two or more institutions or organizations collaborate on a project, one of them must serve as the lead applicant and administer the grant on behalf of the others.

Applicants may apply to any of the three levels as appropriate to the needs of the project. Applicants are not required to obtain a Level I or II award prior to applying for a Level III award, but applicants must have completed some earlier phase of work prior to applying for Level III.

NEH generally does not award grants to other federal entities or to applicants whose projects are so closely intertwined with a federal entity that the project takes on characteristics of the federal entity's own authorized activities. This does not preclude applicants from using grant funds from, or sites and materials controlled by, other federal entities in their projects.

NEH will not review late, incomplete, or ineligible applications.

II. Preparing and Organizing your Application

Resources for preparing a strong application

To prepare a strong application, applicants are encouraged to take the following steps:

- read the **guidelines** carefully, noting what information needs to be provided in the application;
- review the **sample narratives**, which are available on the [program resource page](#);
- consult the program's **evaluation criteria**, which are listed immediately below;
- read the **Frequently Asked Questions**, which are available on the [program resource page](#);
- contact the **program staff** (at odh@neh.gov) to discuss your project and raise any questions you may have about the application; and
- submit an optional **draft proposal**, to which program staff will respond with suggestions and advice (you can find additional information below, beneath the evaluation criteria).

Applicants whose projects have received NEH support may apply for a grant for a new or subsequent stage of that project. These proposals receive no special consideration and will be judged by the same criteria as others in the grant competition. In addition, such applicants must substantially update their proposals and must include a description of the new activities and a justification of the new budget. Such applicants must also describe how the previously funded project met its goals.

Evaluation criteria

Applicants should read the program's evaluation criteria (listed below) and ensure that their applications respond to them. **Note: I will provide a rubric on our github page.**

1.   The intellectual significance of the project for the humanities, including its potential to enhance research, teaching, and learning in the humanities.

2.   The feasibility of the plan of work, and the appropriateness of the project's methods and use of technology.

3. The quality of the conception, definition, organization, and description of the project and the applicant's clarity of expression.

4. The qualifications, expertise, and levels of commitment of the project director and key project staff or contributors.

5. The reasonableness of the proposed budget in relation to anticipated results.

6. The quality and appropriateness of project plans for data management and (if applicable) sustainability.

As noted above, before they submit a proposal applicants are encouraged to contact program officers, who can offer advice about preparing the proposal and the review process. Program officers can also review draft proposals, which are optional. Program officers' comments on draft proposals are not part of the formal review process and have no bearing on the final outcome of the proposal, but previous applicants have found them helpful in strengthening their applications.

Program staff recommends that draft proposals be submitted at least four to six weeks before the deadline. Time constraints may prevent staff from reviewing draft proposals submitted after that date. Draft proposals should be submitted by e-mail attachment to odh@neh.gov.

Application elements

Your application should consist of the following parts. Final grant must include all of the sections in red. They must be done in Markdown and submitted through your GitHub repository.

1. **Table of contents**
   List all parts of the application.

2. **List of participants**
   On a separate page, list all project participants and collaborators and their institutional affiliations, if any. The names on this list should match the names mentioned in the staff section of the project's narrative description. The list should also include the names and institutional affiliations of advisory board members and of any experts who have provided letters of support. The list is used to ensure that prospective reviewers have no conflict of interest with the projects that they will evaluate.

3. **Abstract (250 words)**
   Provide a one-paragraph abstract written for a nonspecialist audience, clearly explaining the project's principal activities and its expected results. You should also copy the paragraph into the Project Information field in the Application for Federal Domestic Assistance - Short Organizational form.
   (Information about this form is available in the Grants.gov Instructions for Institutional Applicants document. You can find a link to that document on the program resource page.)

4. **Narrative**

The narrative should not assume specialized knowledge, and it should be free of jargon. It should clearly define technical terms so that they are comprehensible to a nonspecialist audience.

Successful projects often incorporate multiple perspectives from a variety of disciplines, institutions, and communities.

Provide an intellectual justification for the project and a work plan. For Level I grants, the narrative section should not exceed four single-spaced pages. For Level II grants, the narrative should not exceed six single-spaced pages. For Level III grants, the narrative should not exceed ten single-spaced pages. All pages should have one-inch margins, and the font size should be no smaller than eleven point. You may use any citation style and format, as long as you use them consistently.

The narrative should address the long-term goals for the project, as well as the activities that the Digital Humanities Advancement Grant would support. Keep in mind the criteria (listed above) used to evaluate proposals. Applicants must state whether they are applying for a Level I, Level II, or Level III grant.

Provide a detailed project description that addresses the following topics.

- **Enhancing the humanities (1500 - 2500 words)**
Provide a clear and concise explanation—comprehensible to a general audience—of the project activities and the ultimate project results, including their intellectual value to scholars, students, and general audiences in the humanities. Describe the scope of the project activities, the major issues or research questions to be addressed, and their significance to the humanities. For projects that are developing experimental methods, techniques, or tools, describe the technologies, platforms, and standards that you plan to use and how they will help you address your central research questions. NEH views the use of open-source software as a key component in the broad distribution of exemplary digital scholarship in the humanities. If the project will not employ generally accessible open-source software, explain why and also explain how NEH's dissemination goals will still be satisfied by the project.
If you are requesting complete or partial funding for the development, acquisition, preservation, or enhancement of geospatial data, products, or services, you must conduct a due diligence search at the Data.gov list of datasets to discover whether the needed geospatial-related data, products, or services already exist. If not, you must produce the proposed geospatial data, products, or services in compliance with applicable proposed guidance posted at www.fgdc.gov. For further information on this requirement, please see Article 34 of the General Terms and Conditions for Awards.

- **Environmental scan (500 - 1000 words)**
Provide a clear and concise summary of an environmental scan of the relevant field. The goal of an environmental scan is to take a careful look at similar work being done in the applicant's area of study. For example, if you are developing software to solve a particular humanities problem, please discuss similar software developed for other projects and explain how the proposed solution differs. If

there are existing software products that could be adapted and re-used for the proposed project, please identify them and discuss the pros and cons of taking that approach. If there are existing humanities projects that are similar in nature to your project, please describe them and discuss how they relate to the proposed project. The environmental scan should make it clear that you are aware of similar work being done and should explain how your proposed project contributes to and advances the field.

- **History of the project (100 - 500 words)**
  Provide a concise history of the project, including information about preliminary research or planning, previous related work, previous financial support, publications produced, and resources or research facilities available. Work on projects initiated during the term of a Level I or II grant is expected to continue after the period of the grant. Describe plans for that work and probable sources of support for subsequent phases of the project.
  Level III grants fund projects that have already demonstrated their potential value during an earlier planning or start-up phase. Provide a concise history of the project, including previous related work, previous financial support, publications produced, and resources or research facilities available. Please describe the results of any testing or evaluation of this earlier work and provide a clear explanation of how earlier phases have positioned the project for successful execution. Describe how this implementation phase will enable the project to fulfill its goals.
  If you seek to revitalize or recover an older project, briefly describe how—if at all—the project is currently maintained (for example, through institutional support or grant support). If you have the information, provide data documenting the project's usage and/or describe the project's past impact on the field. Detail any planning activities that have prepared you to move forward with this new phase. Provide references to any earlier work (for example, by including URLs in this section of the narrative, or by providing relevant attachments in an appendix).

- **Work plan (250 - 500 words)**
  - Describe the specific tasks that will be accomplished during the grant period. Identify the computer technology to be employed, and identify the staff members involved. Describe each task and include a schedule of important tasks and milestones for the length of the project.

  - Identify any risks and note how they might adversely affect the overall schedule. Describe your strategies to mitigate these risks, so as to keep the project on budget and on schedule.

  - Describe plans for evaluating the results of the project activities. These plans will typically involve people from outside your project team, for example, evaluators drawn from your intended audience. This evaluation should both look back on what the grant will have accomplished and look forward to how the long-term project goals will be achieved.

- If your project involves staging a workshop or conference, please include, as an appendix to your application, the agenda and a list of proposed participants or specific criteria for selecting participants.

- **Staff**
Identify the project director and collaborators who would work on the project during the proposed grant period and describe their responsibilities. Explain how their technical competency and humanities qualifications will enable them to fulfill these responsibilities. Project directors must devote a significant portion of their time to their projects. List all persons directly involved in the conduct of the proposed project (whether or not their salaries are paid from grant funds), indicate their anticipated commitments of time, and explain the reasons for and nature of their collaboration.
If the project has an advisory board, provide a statement of its function here and the board members' names in the list of participants section of the application. Include the board members' biographies in the biographies section of the application, which is discussed below.

- **Final product and dissemination (250 - 500 words)**
Describe the plans to disseminate the project results through various media (printed articles or books, presentations at meetings, webinars or training sessions, electronic media, or some combination of these). Briefly describe the steps you will take to ensure that the project results will be accessible to individuals with disabilities. Explain how your white paper will detail the activities of the project and discuss its usefulness to the field.
Projects developing new software are encouraged to make the software free in every sense of the term, including the use, copying, distribution, and modification of the software. Open-source software or source code should preferably be made publicly available through an online repository such as SourceForge or GitHub. Software should be thoroughly documented to promote its reuse. Applicants are encouraged to make publications resulting from this grant available in an open access venue.

5. Biographies

Include a biographies section that contains a brief, one-paragraph biography for each principal project participant.

6. Project budget

Using the instructions and the sample budget, complete the budget form (MS Excel format) or a format of your own that includes all the required information. You can find links to the budget instructions, budget form, and sample budget on the program resource page.

All project directors will attend a planning meeting at the NEH offices in Washington, D.C. Directors should budget accordingly for a one-day meeting in the first year of the requested grant period.

Applicants for Level III awards may also request the Sustainability Match for up to $50,000 in matching funds, which must be matched one-to-one by nonfederal gift funds raised from eligible third parties. These contributions must be directed specifically toward sustainability or data management activities (as described in the instructions for the data management plan and sustainability plan components of the application). Funding up to $50,000 is in addition to the $325,000 allowed in outright funds. This additional request is optional. Some applicants will receive awards only in outright funds, while others will receive both outright funds and offers of matching funds.

If the applicant institution is claiming indirect costs and already has a federally negotiated indirect-cost rate agreement, submit a copy of its current federally negotiated indirect-cost rate agreement. Do not attach the agreement to your budget form. Instead you must attach it to the Budget Narrative Attachment Form (also known as the Budget Narrative File). (See the instructions for this form in the Application Checklist near the end of this document.) Alternatively, you must attach a statement to the form, explaining a) that the applicant institution is not claiming indirect costs; b) that the applicant institution does not currently have a federally negotiated indirect-cost rate agreement; or c) that the applicant institution is using the government-wide rate of up to 10 percent of the total direct costs, less distorting items (including but not limited to capital expenditures, participant stipends, fellowships, and the portion of each subgrant or subcontract in excess of $25,000).

Indirect costs are computed by applying a negotiated indirect-cost rate to a distribution base (typically a portion of the direct costs of the project). If the applicant institution is claiming indirect costs and has a current federally negotiated indirect-cost rate agreement, include on the budget form the following information: a) the indirect-cost rate; b) the federal agency with which the agreement was negotiated; and c) the date of the agreement.

If the applicant institution does not have a current federally negotiated indirect-cost rate or has not submitted a pending indirect-cost proposal to a federal agency, you may choose one of the following options, if you wish to include overhead charges in the budget:

o   NEH will not require the formal negotiation of an indirect-cost rate, provided that the charge for indirect costs does not exceed 10 percent of direct costs, less distorting items (including but not limited to capital expenditures, participant stipends, fellowships, and the portion of each individual subgrant or subcontract in excess of $25,000). This option is not available to sponsorship (umbrella) organizations. If you choose this option, you must maintain documentation to support overhead charges claimed as part of project costs.

o   If the applicant organization wishes to use a rate higher than 10 percent, you must provide an estimate of the indirect-cost rate and the charges on the budget form. If the application is approved for funding, NEH will provide instructions in the award document on how to negotiate an indirect-cost rate with NEH.

If you choose one of these two options, please indicate on your budget form that you are doing so.

Budget notes

Include brief notes supplementing the budget, explaining projected expenses or other items in the financial information provided on the NEH budget form. The budget notes may be single-spaced.

7. **Appendices**

If applicable, include an expanded work plan, proposed workshop or meeting agenda, a bibliography or list of works cited, use cases, wireframes, screen shots, or other project plans. If applicable, include as well relevant materials from the project's start-up phase— for example, evaluation reports that help explain the project's potential, initial results, or significance. Materials in this section may not exceed ten pages.

8. **Letters of commitment and support**

Include letters of commitment from participants and cooperating institutions. Note that the project director does not need to provide a letter of commitment.

A letter of commitment is typically written by a person or organization that is committing something to your project: for example, giving you access to a collection of materials for your research or agreeing to make some kind of contribution to your project.

You may also include up to two letters of support from experts who are not directly involved in the proposed project but can speak to its value to the field or to the appropriateness of the proposed methodology or the technical plan.

For more information about letters of support, see the Frequently Asked Questions document, which is available on the [program resource page](#).

9. **Data management plan**

Prepare a data management plan for your project (not to exceed two pages). The members of your project team should consult this document throughout the life of the project and beyond the grant period. The plan should describe how your project team will manage and disseminate data generated or collected by the project. For example, projects in this category may generate data such as software code, algorithms, digital tools, reports, articles, research notes, or websites. For further guidance on the content of this plan, please see Data Management Plans for NEH Office of Digital Humanities Proposals and Awards. (A link to this document is available on the [program resource page](#).)

10. **Sustainability plan (required only for Level III awards)**

If you are applying for a Level III award, prepare a sustainability plan for your project. This plan should discuss the long-term financial needs of the project and show how the project will continue to be able to meet its goals after the grant has ended. The plan must address potential institutional support or future funding streams necessary to allow the project to thrive beyond the grant period. The content of the plan will, of course, vary, depending on the activities being undertaken during the grant period. You may wish to consult the NEH-funded Ithaka report [Sustaining Digital Resources: A Briefing Paper for](#)

[Leaders of Projects with Scholarly Content](PDF) (PDF) for tips on putting together your plan. The plan may not exceed three pages.

If you are applying for a Sustainability Match, detail how the additional funding would be used. This description should not exceed one additional page.

III. Submitting your Application

All applications must be submitted on the course GitHub page.