**PALM — Implementing**

<0 images>

**Implementing and Sustaining a DH Infrastructure: ‘The HUMlab Experience’**

Palm, F. and Mähler, R.

To curate processes within the digital humanities, an elaborate infrastructure of technology, supporting processes, physical spaces, competences, and human attitudes is needed, which can be challenging to create and sustain in the academia of humanities. In this poster we will share our experiences, good as well as bad, and how we have tackled the challenges of working within the digital humanities.

The physical spaces of HUMlab are open and accessible, where technicians, students, and researchers from a wide variety of fields can meet and collaborate. The spaces in HUMlab have been designed with the aim of creating an appealing and attractive ‘meeting place’ with a technological infrastructure that breaks interdisciplinary barriers. The codesign of digital research methodologies and tools also functions across the disciplines and joins knowledge from different fields.

The supporting processes, and the way they are executed, emphasise collaboration, knowledge sharing, and joint venture. The project model used in software development is based on an agile approach that has been adapted to the special needs and demands of academia and research within the humanities. Supporting workflows have been specified and implemented (e.g., stakeholder discussion, project initialization) with tollgates and templates. The real challenge is to create formalized workflows that promote new ideas, quality, creativity, innovation, and individual development.

An open mindset is required to achieve and sustain interdisciplinarity and collaboration on equal terms. The working process must allow mistakes and encourage new ideas. Part of the challenge is to build trust and share knowledge in a dialogue that translates scholarly needs with technology to give added values.

Technology plays an important part of HUMlab (e.g., a multitude of screen scapes), but even more important is the critical attitude towards the technology and how it is used. It is vital to understand the underlying epistemology of different technologies, and the methods and tools, and to have transparency on how they are applied in order to achieve certain (research) objectives.

A real challenge is to sustain the numerous competences needed within the fields of digital humanities and humanities computing (especially when you don’t know the needs of the next collaboration). At HUMlab, this is done by so-called pet projects (freedom to work with personal projects), focus projects (small projects to expand knowledge in certain areas, and to step out of your ‘comfort zone’), assigned fields of interest (personal responsibility to sustain knowledge for a specific fields), and a competence matrix at an organizational level that is based on HUMlab’s needs and vision for the future, but also dynamic and flexible and adapting to an ever-changing world.