



# DARIAH Newsletter

Digital Research Infrastructure  
for the Arts and Humanities

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This free newsletter is published quarterly. If you find it useful, please tell your colleagues and friends about it.

### What DARIAH is really about

DARIAH stands for Digital Research Infrastructure for the Arts and Humanities. DARIAH's grand vision is to facilitate research through long term access to digital information on European cultural heritage as well as the Arts & Humanities. In this way, a wealth of data compiled by researchers and institutes across Europe will fall within easy reach, becoming available on the researchers' desktop.

Just as astronomers require an observatory and digital tools to study the stars and planets, researchers in the Arts & Humanities need a digital infrastructure to access and interpret information and knowledge. DARIAH will offer this infrastructure for researchers across Europe.

Researchers can use DARIAH to:

- Find and use digital content from Europe and acquire tools to use and interpret it,
- Ensure the long-term preservation of data,
- Ensure that they work to accepted standards and follow best practice,
- Exchange ideas and knowledge of digital scholarship and seek advice, and
- Use DARIAH as a site of experimentation and innovation in collaboration with other scholars.

Archives, libraries, museums and other "repository agencies" can use DARIAH to:

- Make their digital information known to a wider pan-European public,
- Ensure the long-term preservation of data,
- Get help with and advice on digitization, curation and preservation of data,

- Use DARIAH as a site of data exploration and innovation in collaboration with other institutions.

The sharing of data, ideas, methodologies and expertise is one of the main objectives of this new infrastructure whose main goal is to make different collections of information accessible and compatible. It is also hoped that a European digitized infrastructure will help to standardize technologies and means so that research undertakings will gain equal strength and benefits.

The construction of such a large-scale infrastructure requires serious preparatory work. To this end the project 'Preparing DARIAH' has successfully received funding from the EC and officially began in September 2008. The EC has granted a subsidy of €2.5 million to enable partners to develop a detailed and feasible plan over the next two years. The kick-off meeting of the project will be held on the 27th and 28th of October at the Hague, Netherlands.

#### Want to know more about DARIAH?

Check our DARIAH website: <http://www.dariah.eu>

Send us an e-mail: [info@dariah.eu](mailto:info@dariah.eu)

## Who stands behind DARIAH

Initially, there were 4 organizations that shared the vision of a European-wide infrastructure for digital information about cultural heritage and the arts & humanities. These were CeRch (AHDS) in the UK, DANS in the Netherlands, CNRS in France and MPG in Germany. Other partners also acknowledged the huge possibilities of a European infrastructure for research areas and joined the project, having today fourteen partners in ten European countries involved:

DANS, the Data Archiving and Networked Services in the Netherlands, is an expert in storing and providing permanent access to research data from the Humanities and Social Sciences. Tasks include data acquisition and curation, software development, promotion of data re-use and dissemination of knowledge. DANS is the Project Coordinator of Preparing DARIAH.

- CeRch, the Centre for e-Research at King's College, London, follows on from the work of the Arts and Humanities Data Service (AHDS). Its key aims are to build an e-research environment and data management infrastructure at King's College and to conduct and support research in e-science and knowledge management. It also makes a significant contribution to national and international e-research developments and infrastructures.
- CNRS, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, in Paris is a research organization for generating knowledge and making it available to society. It is active in all major fields of science including the humanities. A national coordination structure, Adonis, is part of CNRS and stores and provides permanent access to digitized material and research data.
- MPG, the Max Planck Gesellschaft in Germany, performs basic research in the interest of the general public. The Max Planck Digital Library coordinates all aspects of scientific information management for the Gesellschaft and has expertise in networks of research teams, data infrastructures and financial and legal issues.
- AA, the Academy of Athens, is the national institute for the Arts and Humanities in Greece. It has expertise in the digitization of documents of all kinds and the creation of digital research infrastructures. The Academy

of Athens rewards excellence in research and promotes learning.

- ADS, the Archaeology Data Service of the University of York in England, supports research, teaching and learning with high quality digital resources. It hosts an OAIS digital repository and disseminates a broad range of archaeological data. ADS has extensive expertise on data aggregation and dissemination technologies, digital curation and standard development.
- DCU, the Digital Curation Unit, Athena Research Centre, is a centre for information, communication and knowledge technologies. It includes a digital curation unit and has extensive knowledge of information design, semantic information integration and operations modelling.
- ICH, the Institute of Contemporary History in Slovenia, focuses on the interplay of tools for analysis and interpretation, methodological approaches and interdisciplinarity. With its infrastructure centre and citation index, it boasts experience in national and international content presentation.
- IRCHSS, the Irish Research Council for Humanities and Social Sciences funds cutting-edge research in order to create new knowledge and expertise. It also promotes the use of digital research infrastructures and has specific expertise on the digitization of sources and documents and on a strategic interface between information providers, information managers and information users.
- NFI, the Nordisk Forskningsinstitut at the University of Copenhagen specialises in early Scandinavian language and literature, manuscript studies, name research and Danish dialectology. The NFI has extensive knowledge of text encoding and standards implementation and evaluation.
- RBI, the Ruder Boskovic Institute in Croatia is a large inter-disciplinary research institute in the fields of natural and technical science. The RBI is a major expert in grid infrastructure, distributed computing and scientific visualization.
- UGOE, the Goettingen State and University Library at the University of Goettingen, is not only a library; it also provides an institutional infrastructure for research and education. The

library's tasks include search engine technology and software development, digitization and retro-digitization and digital long-term preservation.

- EUC, the European University Cyprus is a private, higher education institution, dedicated to the advancement of science, knowledge and learning. It has established the 'Social and Humanities Research Observatory'. In addition, the EUC received national funding for the 3D digitalization of the Byzantine collection of Kykkos' Monastery Museum, a collection of world heritage significance.
- OUCS, the Oxford University Computing Services, manages and maintains the IT infrastructure and hosts the Oxford Text Archive, the British National Corpus and the OSSWatch Advisory Service. OUCS has particular expertise on digital project management, text encoding and metadata standards. Martin Wynne, head of Oxford Text Archive, will be our liaison officer for Common Language Resources and Technology Infrastructure (CLARIN [www.clarin.eu](http://www.clarin.eu)), another truly exciting EU-project.

**Interested in becoming a partner of DARIAH?**

Contact us: [info@dariah.eu](mailto:info@dariah.eu)

**"Preparing DARIAH" receives EC funding**

It came as an early Christmas present when the European Commission (EC) invited 'Preparing DARIAH' to Grant Agreement negotiations in December 2007. Taking into account the recommendations of the evaluators, an adjusted version of the project was proposed to the EC in January. The most important adjustments include the reduction of the budget and the addition of a new partner, the Oxford University Computing Services. Negotiations were finalized in the summer of 2008 and Preparing DARIAH was officially started on September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2008.

On the DARIAH website [www.dariah.eu](http://www.dariah.eu) you can read more about 'Preparing DARIAH'.

**Founding partner Peter Doorn of DANS, The Netherlands:****'The ultimate goal is to have partners in all European countries'**

*In view of the kick-off meeting coming up in the end of October, the DARIAH newsletter held an interview with Peter Doorn, director of the Dutch national archiving organization DANS.*

*Doorn was one of the founders of the DARIAH project and his institute is now hosting the DARIAH management team. Doorn notes that expansion to the current fourteen partners in DARIAH was actually quite easy, and that a further expansion of membership within Europe is the 'ultimate goal', while cooperation beyond the European boundaries is desirable.*

\* Can you explain the relation between 'Preparing DARIAH' and the DARIAH-project as a whole?

*P. Doorn:* The 'Preparing DARIAH' project will result in a blueprint or first step to construct the infrastructure. Prototypes will demonstrate what DARIAH will look like in the domains of archaeology and manuscripts. One could compare this to the infrastructures they have in the natural sciences. The humanities are treated in the same way. For instance, when astronomers build a telescope, they also first have to make a blueprint. This is part of the process – the same process for all projects on the European Roadmap for Research Infrastructures. In our case, a lot of paperwork needs to be done too, because it is not an easy job to get so many partners and countries moving in a single, coordinated direction.

\* What are the chances of the greater DARIAH-project after 'Preparing DARIAH' has come to an end?

*P. Doorn:* In total, there are some 35 proposals for European research infrastructures on this roadmap, six of which are in the humanities and social sciences. It is up to the national ministries and research funding organizations which projects they select for support. Right now, only a few countries have made their choice. Formally, a minimum of three countries is needed, but I hope many more will support DARIAH. Humanities projects are,

incidentally, much cheaper to fund than, let us say, particle accelerators or telescopes. I am quite confident that a substantial number of countries will support DARIAH, and some of them have in fact already made this decision. But we will also have to prove in the preparation project that we are worth it.

\* DARIAH has started off as a project of four national archiving organizations. Now there are some fourteen partners involved and there is still the ambition to increase that number. Can you describe how the process of ever-increasing involvement developed from the beginning?

*P. Doorn:* We have now three types of partners: data centres, technical institutes, and humanities research partners. We have thereby united providers and users, with the latter group expressing a great deal of interest in digital applications, of course. This growth from four to fourteen progressed without much effort at all: we spoke about DARIAH in a few conferences, sent around a letter to research funding organizations and that was it, more or less. Right now, we are noticing much more interest, and over the next two years I hope that the number of countries involved will at least double. However, the institutes I mentioned are just the instruments doing the work. All institutes need to be backed up by ministries and research funders who will be the official partners.

\* What is the ultimate goal, in terms of participating countries? Are you thinking within Europe only, or could DARIAH include countries from outside of the EU boundaries?

*P. Doorn:* The ultimate goal is to have partners in all European countries, but we need to go beyond the geographical boundaries of Europe. Of course, we have contacts with similar initiatives elsewhere, for instance in the US and Canada. The Cyber infrastructure programme for the humanities in the US is, in some respects, comparable to what is happening here. Japan and South America may be involved in some disciplines that DARIAH will serve, such as social and economic history.

\* It is estimated that an annual amount of six million euros is needed for the greater DARIAH-project. For how many years should this contribution go on? If you have a time limit in mind, have you also limited the aspirations of the project to this period, or are you aiming for a more open-ended future?

*P. Doorn:* It is our estimate that the six million yearly, to be paid by national governments and funding organizations, is needed to construct and operate a pan-European infrastructure of about 25 countries. This seems a lot, but if you divide 6 million by 25 you have less than 250 thousand euros per partner. Probably large countries will pay more and small ones less, depending on national priorities, and it is likely that the country hosting the central office will pay slightly more. One of the deliveries of the preparation project is to come up with a more detailed budget, which will, of course, depend on the number of partners.



### Interesting & exciting developments in the eHumanities in Europe: The Example of Ireland



**Members of the DARIAH Ireland working group**

Front: Dipti Pandya, IRCHSS; John McDonough, University College Dublin

Back: Catriona Crowe, National Archives of Ireland; Jane Ohlmeyer, Trinity College Dublin

The IRCHSS (Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences - [www.irchss.ie](http://www.irchss.ie)) has formed a DARIAH national steering committee

comprised of key stakeholders and chaired by Professor Jane Ohlmeyer. The committee's work will feed directly into the DARIAH Strategic Work Package. Stakeholders include universities, the library community, major cultural bodies, policy makers and the commercial sector. This group was formally launched on 22 October 2008 and will work closely with the recently established Digital Humanities Observatory, based in the Royal Irish Academy. Please see [www.dho.ie](http://www.dho.ie) for more details.

The IRCHSS has committed support to DARIAH both through funding allocated by the preparatory phase and an element of co-funding. This co-funding is represented by the appointment of Kathryn Kozarits as Project Officer. Kathryn brings her experience of administration of the IRCHSS national research schemes to the 'Preparing DARIAH' project. Over the coming months she will work closely with colleagues responsible for the Strategic Work Package.

It seems highly likely that DARIAH will appear as a priority research infrastructure on Ireland's ESFRI roadmap.



### Focus on selected DARIAH partners



The OUCS manage and maintain the IT infrastructure needed to support research at a world class university. The Research Technologies Service in OUCS pursues many projects and collaborations investigating and developing research technologies, and provides services including the Oxford Text Archive, the Text Encoding Initiative, the British National Corpus, the OSSWatch Open Source Software Advisory Service, and the Intute Arts and Humanities gateway.

OUCS has a long history of participation in initiatives in digital applications in the Humanities, with particular expertise in archiving, text encoding, metadata standards, electronic editing and publishing technologies and corpus linguistics. Oxford plays a leading role in the CLARIN research infrastructure, and will act as the liaison between DARIAH and CLARIN, as well as developing links

with other relevant organizations, initiatives and projects.



**European University Cyprus**  
Laureate International Universities

The EUC is a private higher educational institution, dedicated to the advancement of science, knowledge and learning. With an emphasis on interdisciplinary approach, the EUC is one of the leading academic and research institutions in Cyprus.

The University is the national representative of the International Social Survey Program (ISSP) and it has been appointed by the World Bank as the official administrator of their publications in Cyprus. Along with the Cyprus Development Bank, it is also the national partner for the World Economic Forum's Competitiveness Report. In addition, the EUC is the national coordinator of the European Social Survey (ESS Rounds Three & Four), a project included in the ESFRI report. The EUC has established the 'Social and Humanities Research Observatory' through national funding. In September 2008, the EUC received national funding for the 3D digitalization of the Byzantine collection of Kykkos' Monastery Museum.

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## Growing prospects for DARIAH

In at least three participating countries – the Netherlands, Ireland and Denmark – it is likely that DARIAH will be incorporated in the national Roadmaps for Research Infrastructures, the priority listings as established by the Ministries of Science.

This became apparent at the DARIAH kick-off meeting in late October in The Hague. The good news clearly contributed to the general confidence in the outcome of the 'Preparing DARIAH' process, a confidence which was already considerable at the start.

Representatives of data institutes from Ireland, the United Kingdom, Slovenia, Croatia, Denmark, Germany, Greece, France, the Netherlands and Cyprus, among others, discussed possibilities to make circumstances as favorable as possible for the 'Building DARIAH' phase of the project, which is supposed to start in 2010. On behalf of the European Commission, representatives were addressed by Mrs. Maria Carvalho Dias, speaking on behalf of the Research Infrastructures Unit

within the Directorate-General Research of the European Commission. Carvalho Dias stipulated that the Commission attaches a great deal of importance to the data infrastructure that DARIAH aims to realize.

Carvalho Dias had several recommendations toward enhancement of opportunities for success in the final submission of the 'Building DARIAH' proposal. The current project, 'Preparing DARIAH,' was put in motion to lay the ground work for this next phase. Ultimately, the size of the 'Building DARIAH' project is estimated at some 6 million euros annually.

In the field of research methods and tools, a considerable yield is expected from DARIAH. The project will not only enable the development of new methods and tools, but will also work towards their exchange and dissemination among researches in all participating countries. In this way, researchers can take advantage of progress that is realized in one country.



Partner representatives at the DARIAH Kick-Off Meeting, The Hague (NL), October 2008.