King’s Digital Lab

Digital researchers and data experts

We create digital tools to explore academic research in new ways.

OVERVIEW & CONTEXT
King’s Digital Lab

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We create digital tools to explore academic research in new ways.

Dr. James Smithies

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Enabling DH at Scale

@kingsdh

30 years of activity, against a background of rapid innovation and change in Humanities Computing and Digital Humanities

Centre for Computing in the Humanities (1991) - Prof. Harold Short

Centre for e-Research (2008) - Prof. Sheila Anderson

Department of Digital Humanities (2011-):

- ~500 students across 5 Masters and 1 Undergraduate degrees
- PhD programme
- ~60 staff including researchers and teaching fellows
Enabling DH at scale

Operational since 2015

13 staff: Project Manager, Analysts, Software Engineer, Developers, Designers, Systems Manager + Research Affiliates/Visiting fellows

4 VMWare Hosts, ~200 VMs, 784GB RAM with ~400GB used + AWS / Azure

~200 digital projects, including ~100 inherited: ~5 million digital objects

Business, HR, Operational Plans for 2016–2020 complete; funding, impact & comms strategies

Supported by external funding, under-written internally
Faculty of Arts and Humanities

Interdisciplinary Research Centres
- Gamble Centre for Studies in Portuguese Language and Culture
- Centre for Enlightenment Studies
- Centre for Late Antique and Medieval Studies
- Centre for Life-Writing Research
- Centre for Modern Literature and Culture
- London Shakespeare Centre
- Monzias Centre for Australian Studies
- Queer@King’s

Departmental Centres
- Centre for the History of Science, Technology and Medicine (CHoSTM)
- Research Institute for Systematic Theology
- Centre for Social Transformation

Departments
- Classics
- Culture, Media and Creative Industries
- Comparative Literature
- Digital Humanities
- English Language and Literature
- European and International Studies
- Film Studies
- French
- German
- History
- Modern Language Centre
- Music
- Philosophy
- Spanish, Portuguese and Latin American Studies
- Theology and Religious Studies

Programmes
- Liberal Arts

Cross-faculty Research Centres
- Centre for Language Discourse and Communication (Based in SSPP)
- Centre for Humanities and Health (Based in A&H)
- Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence (Based in Dickson Poon)
King’s Digital Lab  **What we do**

**Development** of collaborative research proposals and projects (digital resources, collections, tools, data analysis, visualization, immersive experiences, AI, mobile apps)

**Consultancy** on topics such as specific digital methods and technologies, writing research grant applications, or data curation

**Sustainability**, enhancing and repurposing existing digital resources, research data and tools

Provision and maintenance of a common **infrastructure** & shared tools for developing digital resources within the Faculty

Running **events**, internships, workshops, training and occasional teaching

**10% time**, innovation and entrepreneurship
Our work ranges from the development of historical databases and digital archives, digital scholarly editions, map-based tools, data and text analysis, visualization, and eBooks.

Archetype
An integrated suite of web-based tools for the study of medieval handwriting, art and iconography.

City Witness
Was the brigand William Cragh spared by divine intervention?

Atlantic Europe in the Metal Ages
Where did the Celtic language and people migrate from?

Gough Map
Who created the Gough Map, and why?

German Screen Studies Network
Designing a platform for online debate on German-language screen culture

The Values of French
Interrogating the role of the French language in the emergence of a European identity in the Middle Ages

Paradox of Medieval Scotland
Examining the roles and relationships of medieval Scottish society

Schenker Documents Online
How can we present and contextualize thousands of personal papers to convey an enduring theoretical influence?

Digital Prosopography of the Roman Republic
The remarkable transformation of the Roman Republic from city-state to imperial power
Some collaborators and funders

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<td>Arts &amp; Humanities Research Council</td>
<td>University of Oxford</td>
<td>Queen's University Belfast</td>
<td>University of Southampton</td>
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<td>The British Library</td>
<td>University of Cambridge</td>
<td>Prifysgol Cymru University of Wales</td>
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<td>The Leverhulme Trust</td>
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<td><strong>Immersive experiences</strong></td>
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<td>○ Building on ongoing projects with businesses on AR/VR</td>
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<td>○ Sustain and enhance ongoing effort</td>
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<td>○ Innovative collaborative projects building on 10%</td>
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<td>○ Global challenges</td>
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<td><strong>Design &amp; visualization</strong></td>
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<td>○ Design first</td>
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## Context

### Inflection point >> challenges for ‘pure’ humanities research

| Illustrate innovation, but also continuity and value for funding |
| Secure past efforts and new projects initiated and maintained according to robust management criteria |
| Experiment as well as demonstrate institutional responsibility to integrate with Library and IT, and manage legal and financial risks |
| Industry standards methods required to address scale and complexity of contemporary projects and infrastructure |

See Smithies (2017), *Systems Development & Applications / Data Lifecycle Management at King’s Digital Lab.*
## Context

### Some solutions

- Develop broadly accepted assessment procedures to document community and research impact as well as potential technical/financial/data-related risks for a DH project.

- Adopt open technical frameworks and standards to enable interoperability of data and long-term maintenance.

- Develop research data management workflows in close collaboration with Library / Data centres.

- Hide complexity for non-technical partners but ensure dev processes protect them (and us) from inevitable archiving and data management issues.

See Smithies (2017), Systems Development & Applications / Data Lifecycle Management at King’s Digital Lab.
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