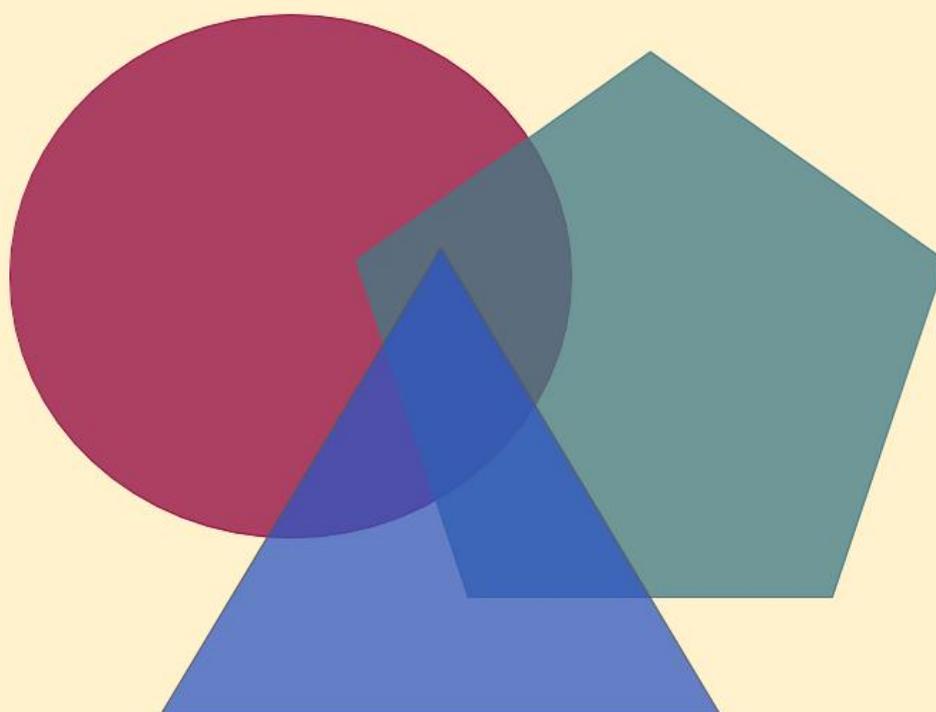


Barriers and Pathways to Community Engagement



Report on the activities of the DARIAH VCC2
Community Engagement Working Group
2017-2018

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Report on the activities of the DARIAH VCC2 Community
Engagement Working Group

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Dublin, Ireland

2018

Barriers and Pathways to Community Engagement

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Executive Summary

The Community Engagement Working Group successfully applied and received funding in 2017 through the DARIAH Working Group Funding Scheme. It was the first time that the Working Group managed to secure some funding for its operation, an initiative which allowed the two co-chairs of the Group, Vicky Garnett (Trinity College Dublin) and Eliza Papaki (then Maynooth University - currently DARIAH and Trinity College Dublin) to “dream big”, design a Future Strategic Roadmap and plan further steps and activities to enhance the network of the Working Group and, in consequence, of DARIAH.

From 2014 - Jan 2017, the Working Group was primarily used as an outreach and dissemination activity for VCC2. However, since February 2017, the WG widened its remit, following the increased strategic focus of DARIAH shifting into methods of growing the network and increasing sustainability and dissemination. Therefore, the WG’s focus shifted towards investigating new research communities that have previously not engaged with DARIAH, looking at how we can bring them into this network, what barriers prevented them from doing so, and how we can overcome them. This focus shaped the project “Engaging Research Communities beyond DARIAH” that received funding for a period of 12 months to perform the following activities:

1. Webinar

In 2017, the Working Group hosted a webinar with 43 registered participants to identify the barriers to engaging with a Research Infrastructure and pathways of communication to non-DARIAH affiliated researchers. The participants varied from DARIAH experts to researchers who had not previously engaged with DARIAH, but could potentially benefit from this network. Equally, the invited talks varied from DARIAH experts who illustrated what is DARIAH and what are its benefits for the community to researchers that made use of the network for their own projects and research and had a positive experience to share.

2. MPhil programme internships

The Working Group offered its first student internship, in the context of the MPhil in Digital Humanities in Trinity College Dublin. The internship introduced the concept of Research Infrastructures, and specifically DARIAH, and was built around identifying a research community and exploring the communication pathways to reach this audience. As this was a first run at an internship, we learnt lessons along the way that we also plan to bring to the rest of the DARIAH community, in particular the Working Groups if they should plan to do something similar.

3. Participation in Conferences and Outreach Events

Among the planned activities was to identify, submit contributions and participate in various Digital Humanities Conferences with poster, roundtable and paper submissions. The aim was to present DARIAH, the WG and its undergoing research particularly in non-DARIAH

audience, as was the case with a Baltic Environmental Humanities Conference (BALTEHUMS). For this, the WG collaborated with the Geohumanities Working Group.

4. Travel bursary for Early Stage Researcher

With this bursary, we aimed to give the opportunity to early stage researchers to be part of a (Digital) Humanities conference, meet DARIAH and the WG and gain experience from participating, organising and capturing a roundtable discussion.

5. Report on Engaging Research Communities Beyond DARIAH

These planned and funded activities contributed to a report documenting barriers, pathways and recommendations for DARIAH VCC2 and DARIAH-EU in general in engaging research communities beyond the traditional DARIAH 'playground'.

In addition to this, the WG will also publish part of this research as a book chapter in the Routledge Handbook of Digital Humanities in 2019.

Recommendations

Following completion of this work, and as part of this report, we offer some recommendations to those involved in devising and implementing strategy within DARIAH, (including Working Group Chairs, National Contact Points, and NCP Coordinators), as well as those working in other humanities-based Research Infrastructures.

- **Fine-tune communication practices through more targeted campaigns**
- **Increase Advocacy activities**
- **Increase activities that invite people in through internships or realistic travel bursaries**
- **Show what we've got**

Acknowledgements

None of these strategic planning and activities could have been materialised without the support and funding from the **DARIAH Working Group funding scheme**. 2017-18 was a particularly active year for the Working Group due to the possibilities provided from this funding to design a new agenda, approach new audiences, and conduct further cross-collaborative research. The structure of the scheme allowed for design - action - reflection, a process which is only positive for further developing and re-orientation of each Working Group's plan of actions.

Finally, the authors of this report wish also to acknowledge the significant contribution made to this report by our intern **Xander Cosgrave** who helped us to identify research communities to target for our online survey, and the recipient of our Travel Bursary, **Patricia Ferreira-Lopes**, who made extensive notes during the BALTEHUMS Roundtable Session on which that section of this report is based.

The Community Engagement Working Group

The Community Engagement Working Group, established in 2014, sits within VCC2 - Research and Education. It does so with the remit to build relationships and engage with communities based on practice or career level on research and education. Up until 2017, one of the main tasks of the Working Group was to manage and update the blogsite¹ for VCC2 activities.

Some, already established, working definitions are:

- Under VCC2, we define the 'communities' with which we wish to engage as being categorised by
 - Career level
 - Discipline/subject
 - Methodological approach

- Research and Education is defined within this Working Group as
 - Common research themes
 - Common and emerging research methodologies
 - Education and training within those communities

Since February 2017, the Working Group widened its remit, following the increased strategic focus of DARIAH shifting into methods of growing the network and increasing sustainability and dissemination. The Working Group's focus shifted towards documenting communities in the area of Arts and Humanities, investigating how these communities are formed and looking into ways to engage with them, what barriers prevented them from doing so, and how we can overcome them.

The aims of the Working Group have thus been to:

- Identify and build a cohesive community and sub-communities of practice
- Identify members of research communities beyond DARIAH's core membership and bring them into the wider DARIAH landscape
- Communicate and discuss issues relating to research and education, in a way that informs about DARIAH and related initiatives
- Identify user-needs for training within those communities

¹ DARIAH VCC2 Community Engagement Working Group Blogsite <http://dariahre.hypotheses.org> - retrieved 17th Dec 2018

The Aims of the Funding

The 'Engaging Research Communities Beyond DARIAH' project aimed to:

- build on the work of the Community Engagement Working Group up to October 2017, and focus on growing the current range of research communities who engage with DARIAH.
- investigate the following issues among the wider Arts and Humanities community across Europe.
 - What barriers (perceived or existing) are there to working with a Research Infrastructure in the Arts and Humanities?
 - What are the traps that Research Infrastructures (such as DARIAH) fall into when trying to reach out beyond the usual community, and how can DARIAH work towards overcoming them?

In addition to these overarching aims, we asked ourselves the following questions:

- **How do researchers define 'research communities'?**
By considering how researchers defined research communities, it also opened up discussion around which communities they identified with, and how they aligned themselves to those communities.
- **How do research communities communicate?**
This was important not only so that we could find if and how modes of communication might differ among different research communities, but also which modes of communication might be best for DARIAH to consider when reaching out to them.
- **How do they manage their data?**
We were particularly interested in how researchers in different communities obtained their data, what types of data they used, how they analysed and managed their data, what methods (if any) of data citation they practiced, and if and how they engaged in Open Science practices.
- **If and how members of different RCs engage with Research Infrastructures?**
We wanted to know how people engaged with Research Infrastructures, what they found useful, and where they considered room for improvement within Research Infrastructures. If they did not engage with large Research Infrastructures such as DARIAH, why not? This would provide us with our crucial information regarding the barriers (real or perceived) to engagement.
- **What do researchers in different communities WANT from Research Infrastructures?**
Similar to asking where there were areas for improvement, by asking what researchers WANT from Research Infrastructures it allowed us to identify possibly new areas that DARIAH has not previously considered.

Our Approach

The Community Engagement Working Group planned 5 key activities for the 12-month period from November 2017 to October 2018, subsequently extended to December 2018 for further outreach activities.

1. **Webinar**
2. **MPhil programme internship**
3. **Workshop at the BALTEHUMS Conference 2018**
4. **Travel bursary for Early Stage Researcher to BALTEHUMS Conference 2018**
5. **Report on Engaging Research Communities Beyond DARIAH**

We discuss the methods and results of each of these approaches in more detail.



The Webinar

The webinar was the first outreach activity of the one-year funded project “Engaging Research Communities Beyond DARIAH”. Its aim was to identify research communities within the Arts and Humanities and the barriers they face to engaging with a research infrastructure, such as DARIAH. More particularly, with this webinar we sought to find untapped research communities that could benefit from the wide range of training, methodological development and networking opportunities that DARIAH has to offer to researchers in the Arts and Humanities.

The webinar, “*Engaging Research Communities Beyond DARIAH: Identifying communities of practice*”, took place on Tuesday 5th of December. It was primarily aimed at researchers in the Arts and Humanities who had not previously engaged with DARIAH and in a lesser extent to researchers of the DARIAH network. To achieve this, the announcement of this webinar alongside its registration link was circulated in different mailing lists (such as Humanist, VARL etc.) to attract as much as possible a ‘new to DARIAH’ audience and reach new research communities. The announcement was also disseminated through the Working Group’s and DARIAH’s communication channels. As a result, 41 participants registered for this event while almost half of them (16) noted that they were not familiar with DARIAH. Geographically, the participants were quite diverse with the majority joining from Germany (6), Croatia (6) and Ireland (5) (see Figure 1).

Designed to be short but informative, the webinar lasted approximately 2.5 hours, and included brief presentations from people at the heart of DARIAH as well as researchers who had benefited from this Research Infrastructure and could share experiences and reflections. It then moved on to a discussion in which all participants were encouraged to ask questions and share their opinions.

The schedule of the webinar was designed as follows:

- Presentation by the two Working Group Co-Chairs on the Working Group itself, the aim of the one-year funded project (context of outreach activities) and the aim and structure of the webinar
- Presentation by Dr. Jennifer Edmond (DARIAH Director) on *What is DARIAH? What can DARIAH do for researchers?*
- Presentation by Dr. Marianne Ping Huang (DARIAH VCC2 Head) on *What does the Research and Education Virtual Competence Centre (VCC2) do for researchers and what are the communities it currently serves? How can people get involved?*
- Presentation by Jakob Epler (DARIAH Communications Officer) on *What communication channels does DARIAH currently use, and how can communities get in touch with DARIAH?*
- Presentation by Dr. Julie Birkholz and Dr. Jasper Schelstraete (University of Ghent) on *Researcher's experience of working and collaborating with DARIAH*

This mixture of presentations aimed to give a good overview of what DARIAH is, its structure, its benefits for researchers, particularly in relation to issues of Research and Education, and ways in which people can engage with this Research Infrastructure. The last presentation

illustrated the case of two researchers who have collaborated with DARIAH, in this case DARIAH-BE, for developing and promoting a Digital Humanities research project.

Participants from different countries

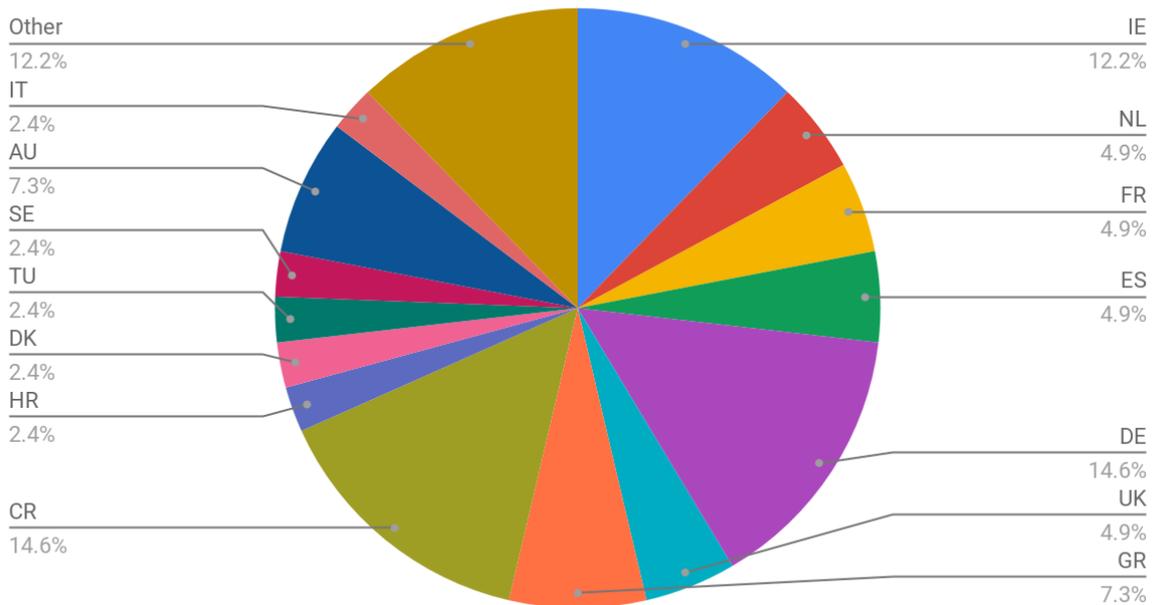


Figure 1 - Webinar participants by country

The discussion that followed up aimed to address the following questions:

- Who does DARIAH currently serve?
- Who should it serve?
- What does the community want with regards to research and education from a humanities and research infrastructure? How do you imagine such an infrastructure?
- How does this differ from the current offering for research and education from DARIAH?
- How do we get there? Why should the community participate in DARIAH? What might put a researcher off using DARIAH or a research infrastructure?

The webinar was recorded, only for the purposes of analysis by the two co-Chairs of the Working Group, and it was then analysed using a Qualitative Data Analysis and Research Software (Atlas.ti). Here we will attempt to give an overview of the answers we received addressing the questions above.

The research communities that were present in the call were quite diverse from the field of Humanities, namely: Archaeology, Archival studies, Comparative literature, Cultural Anthropology/Ethnology, Digital Humanities, Film Studies, German Studies, History, Italian Studies, Linguistics, Literature, Library Science, Museum studies / Museology and Performing arts.

By asking what research communities need from a Research Infrastructure, the answers we received were quite varied and are summarised in the following points:

- (Digital) platform
- Community support / peer support
- Digital tools that will be user friendly, open, free, adaptable, personalised
- Dissemination and communication of events
- Better information on what constitutes a Research Infrastructure, such as DARIAH
- Networking opportunities
- Guidance into Open Science practices
- Long term preservation of digital objects/digital tools and services
- Digital services
- Sharing knowledge within the community
- Training opportunities

An interesting suggestion we received from an early career researcher referred to the need to develop a more centralised platform where researchers would be able to find various digital humanities techniques or solutions for their own research and projects. The feeling behind this was that there are many different, “decentralised” projects or initiatives and therefore researchers tend to be confused and lose the bigger picture of what is available in the field. This early career researcher went on that the development of a list with key topics / disciplines / services / e-resources / project websites and events would be very helpful for the community.

Finally, to the question what pathways should DARIAH investigate to reach new audience the answers we received were:

- Conferences
- Mailing Lists (disciplinary)
- Mailing Lists (institutional)
- Social media

The Internship

In order to engage more closely with researchers in their early stage of career and also to introduce the concept of collaborative work and digital research infrastructure well in advance of a person's professional development, one of our approaches was to offer a 5-month internship in the context of Digital Humanities postgraduate courses. The internship was designed and submitted as a proposal to the M.Phil. Digital Humanities and Society postgraduate course at Trinity College Dublin, Ireland. Its structure followed a two-pronged approach. On the one hand, to help us understand which are the research communities and what are their research needs, the intern would work closely with the Co-Chairs to find ways to identify these communities and design a strategy to forge links with them. This would also include conducting desk research on clarifying terms such as research infrastructures and state of art of digital research practices and needs.

A second part of this internship was on investigating the various Humanities conferences, to what extent their audience is familiar with Research Infrastructures and in collaborating with the Co-Chairs to prepare a conference submission and presentation. This part aimed in disseminating and presenting work conducted within the internship and the Working Group to a conference audience. The intern would be included as one of the contributors, in case of successful submission.

In summary, the intern within the Community Engagement Working Group would:

- experience how digital research infrastructures work, and experience how multinational research teams collaborate
- work closely with the Co-Chairs to find ways to identify research communities and design a strategy to forge links with them
- contribute to a Digital Humanities Conference submission, and listed as one of the authors

After the design and submission of the internship proposal to the Digital Humanities postgraduate course in Trinity College Dublin, as explained above, one student showed interest and took the internship from January to April 2018. Xander Cosgrave was our intern for this period and the experience from his first round of internship, designed and ran by the Working Group, was quite interesting and productive. Collaborating with an M.Phil. student, with background studies in the area of Digital Humanities, can lead to new, fresh insights into the issues the community may have in understanding and engaging with a Research Infrastructure. His contribution was useful in terms of capturing existing research communities, mailing lists or social media that various communities follow.

Testimonial from Xander Cosgrave

“The DARIAH Community Engagement working group internship was part of the programme for identifying research communities and their needs, one of the working principles of the working group., and was then tied into the professional development module for the M.Phil. in Digital Humanities and Society that takes place in TCD.

It was structured with a mix of the following, with a focus on being flexible as new questions arose through research.

- Regular Engagement Meetings
- Collaborative research
- Self-Directed Learning

These were all for the purpose of supporting the working group to help their overall goals of finding academic research groups to engage with on behalf of DARIAH, and of course for professional growth. Some of my deliverables as part of my internship included:

- Blog posts on the DARIAH Community Engagement Blog
- Sourcing other academics to engage with the Blog
- Finding novel and new research communities to engage with
- Helping define how academic communities are engaged with.

On the other side of this, the internship had several points of academic and professional development as it tied into the MPhil.

- Updates on the MPhil academic blog
- A series of presentations for my academic supervisor
- A full white paper showing the work that had been done for DARIAH
- Developing New Online Research and Interview Skills
- Working as part of an academic research group

All of this culminated in supporting the poster presentation, as well as having supported a novel and worthy programme while engaging with the academic and professional development learning goals of the MPhil. This all has led to the development of some useful skills, as I said above, but also an appreciation for the important work that research infrastructures support, and why we need to use them to make the best academic work possible. “

The Survey

Structure and methodology

In April 2018 we launched an online survey to see how Humanities and Social Science scholars identified their research communities, what they considered to be digital tools, how they communicated, and if and how they engaged with research infrastructures such as DARIAH.

The survey was disseminated via mailing lists, through social media, and on our blogsite.

Survey Results

About the respondents

In total, we received 40 responses, the majority of which were from Europe, although we also received a handful of responses from Singapore, Canada and the USA (see Figure 2 and Figure 3).



Figure 2 - Worldwide map of responses to online survey

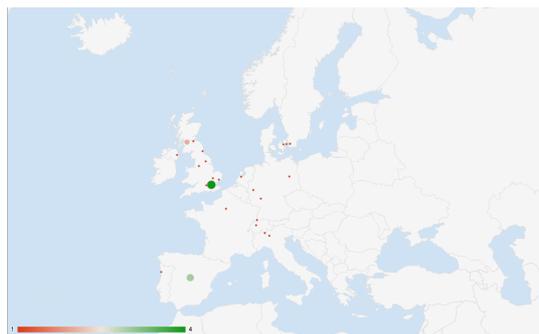


Figure 3 - European Map of responses to online survey

Within Europe, the majority of responses were from the UK. This is perhaps not surprising as the majority of mailing lists to which we sent the survey were through JISC mailing lists, a UK-based mailing server. The recipients of these mailing lists do come from outside the UK, but the lists themselves are based at UK academic institutions. The language of the survey was also in English. However, as the UK is currently not a member of DARIAH, it still suited

our needs in terms of finding out what barriers (perceived or otherwise) may exist to engaging with Research Infrastructures.

The areas of research represented within our survey results were mostly from Linguistics (30%), Art and Art History (25%) and Sociology (10%), with the remaining 35% made up of one or two respondents from Literature, Classics, History Architecture, Media Studies, Economics, Psychology, Environmental Sciences, Drama, Archeology and Data Science (see Figure 4)

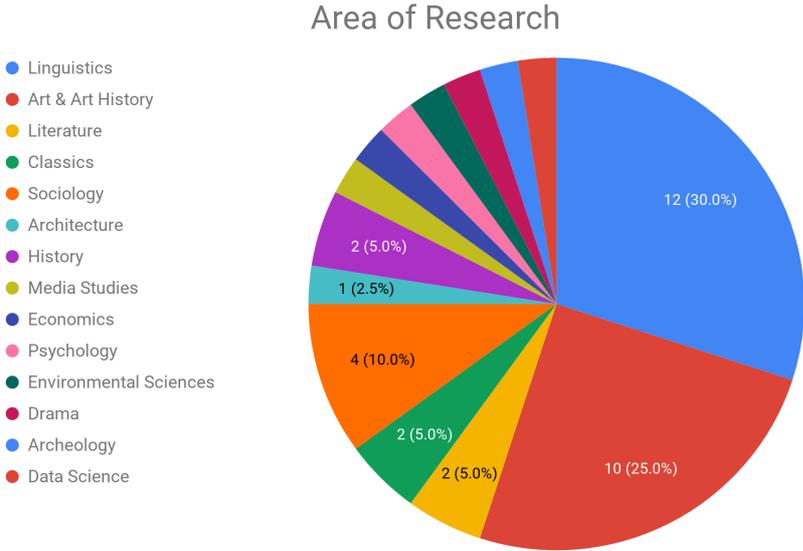


Figure 4 - Areas of Research of respondents to online survey

We received responses from mostly Senior- Career Researchers (47.5%) with mid-career researchers the next largest group (27.5%), and Early Career Researchers (20%). Two respondents declined to answer (5%).

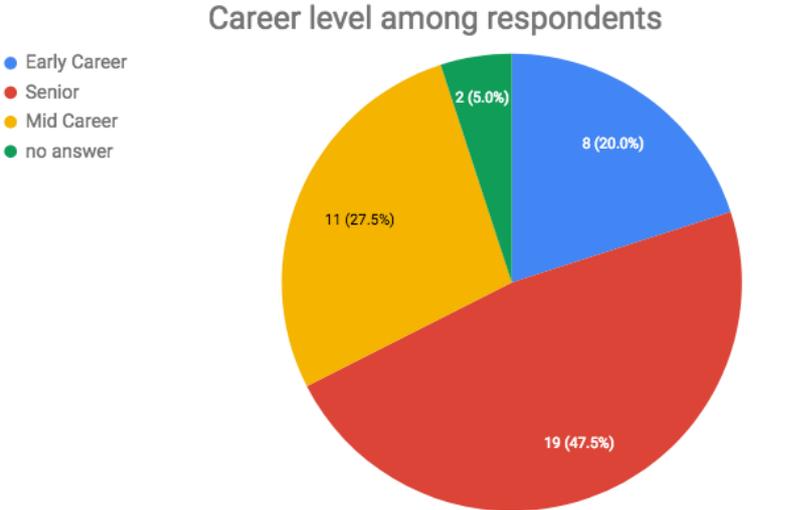


Figure 5 - Career levels among respondents to online survey

With these demographics in mind, we have first looked at some of the further questions as a whole, and then delved a little deeper to see what patterns emerge when we look at some of the responses by Area of Research, or by Career Level.

On Research Communities

We asked “How do you identify your research communit(ies)?”, offering answers in a multiple choice. The overwhelming majority of responses said that they identified their research community primarily by discipline (87.5%), with 10% declaring methodology as their primary indicator, and one person (2.5%) indicating both methodology and discipline (see Figure 6)

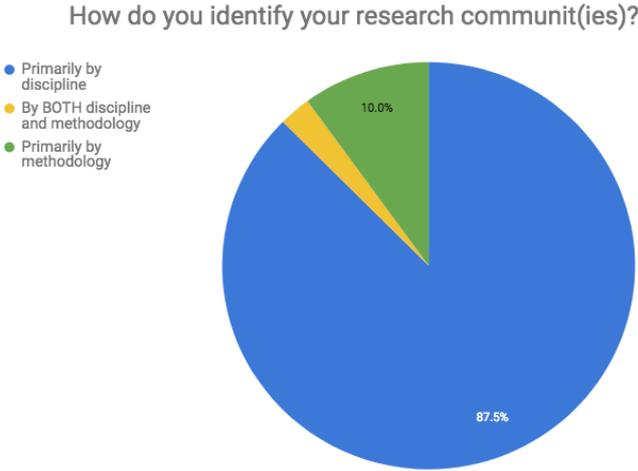


Figure 6 - How respondents to the online survey identify research communities

We asked how they communicated within their research community. Respondents could select multiple answers via checkboxes. We received 67 different answers from our 40 respondents (see Figure 7). The most popular means of keeping up to date with developments in their field from all our respondents was via ‘Conferences’ (39.3%% of all responses). The second most popular was through ‘Mailing Lists’ (32.6%), followed some way behind by ‘Twitter’ (15.7%). Facebook Groups received 10.1% of the answers, and LinkedIn was only checked by two respondents (2.2%).

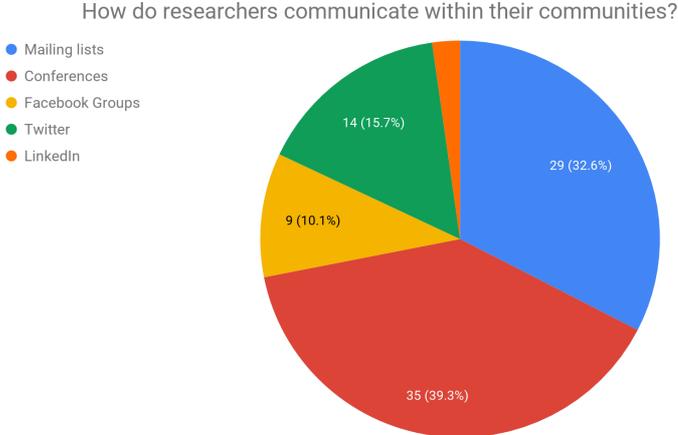


Figure 7 - How respondents to the online survey communicate within their research communities

If we look at this according to career level, there are some slight differences. While the majority in all career levels preferred the face-to-face approach of conferences, they were

most popular among the Early Career Researchers (ECRs), along with mailing lists. However, social media such as Facebook groups and Twitter were more popular among the Mid-Senior Career Researchers (see Figure 8). There are two possible reasons for this. The first is that, while researchers at all levels of their career are incredibly busy, mid-senior level researchers are more likely to have teaching and administrative responsibilities that mean that they are unable to travel, and therefore more remote means of communication suit them best. The second reason could also come down to a level of confidence in one’s own research field.

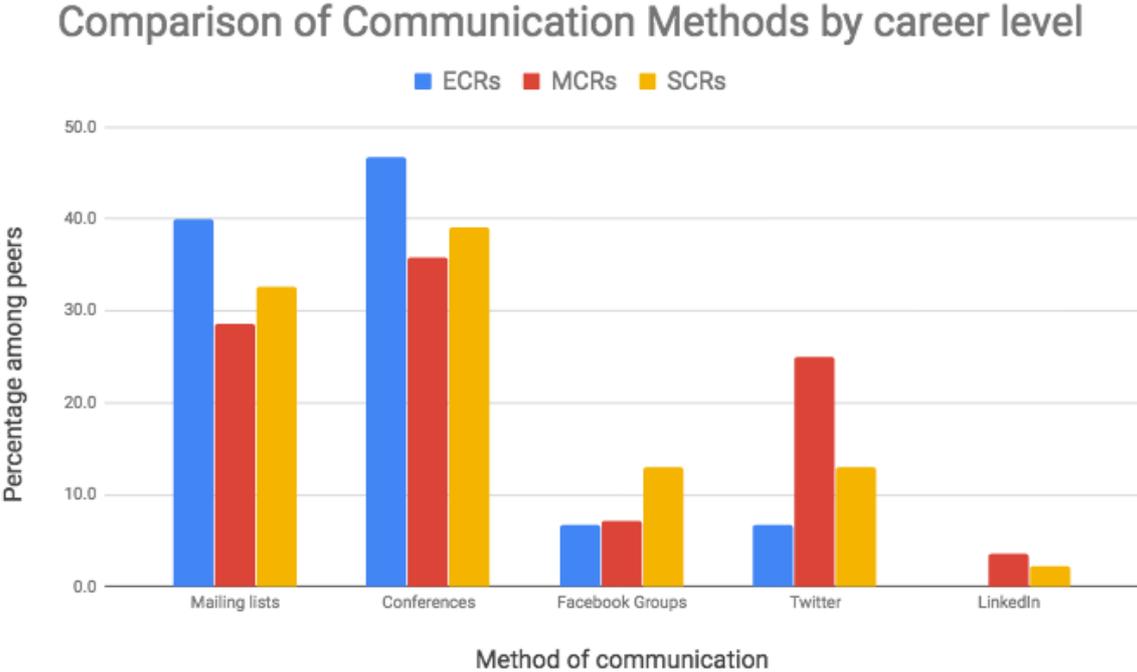


Figure 8 - Modes of communications among online survey respondents according to career level

The second reason could also come down to a level of confidence in one’s own research field. Early Career Researchers might be more hesitant to make a statement online where it can be read by anyone, and therefore potentially expose themselves to ridicule, whereas mid-senior career researchers are perhaps more comfortable with expressing an opinion or making a statement in something within their area of expertise.

In reality, it is perhaps a combination of these two reasons. But in any case, it still points to different communication approaches for different career levels, which shows that there is no ‘one-size fits all’ approach to academic communication.

How ‘digital’ are our researchers?

As described above, we asked our survey respondents which area of research they worked in. None of our respondents indicated ‘Digital Humanities’ as a discipline they would align in.

themselves to. However, we were still curious how much they used digital methodologies and tools within their research.

The large majority said yes (75%), 6 people (15%) said they did not use digital tools, and 10% (4 respondents) said they weren't sure (see Figure 9).

We investigated further by asking our respondents to indicate what digital tools or software they did use as part of their research. This revealed some interesting answers. Of the 15% who said that they did not use digital tools, two gave some examples of what they consider digital tools that they use as part of their research (social media, and digital collections), with a further one person saying that they were unclear on the question.

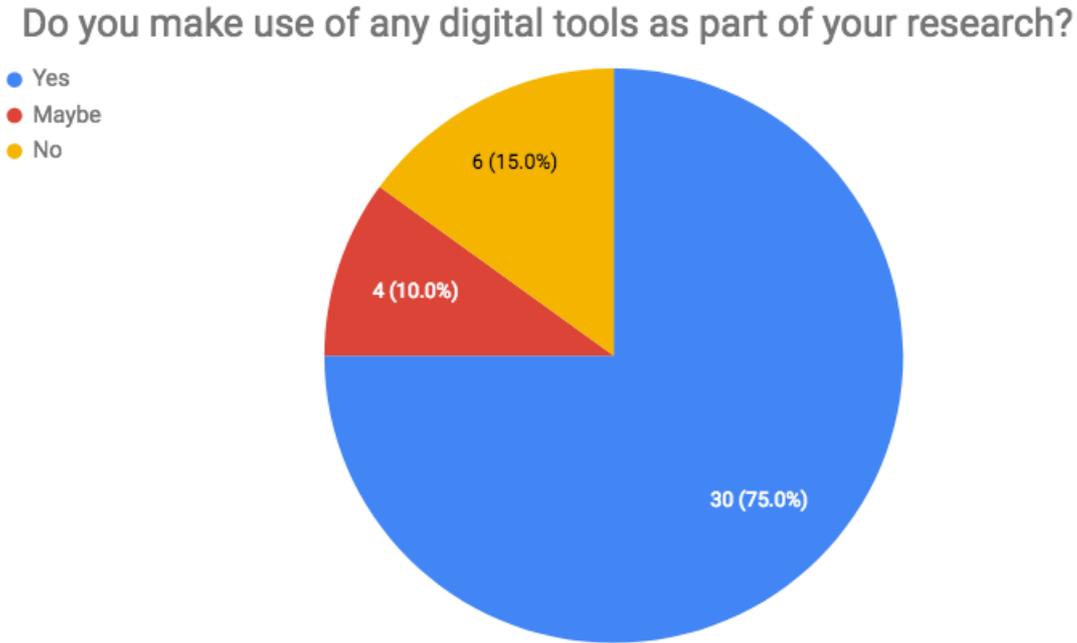


Figure 9 - Use of digital tools among respondents to our online survey

Among the 'maybe responses', we were again asked for clarifications by one person, while the other three respondents offered up somewhat generic tools such as 'the Internet', MS Word, Excel, and bibliographic software, as well as digital tools with quite specific uses, such as R, Antconc, NVivo and SPSS.

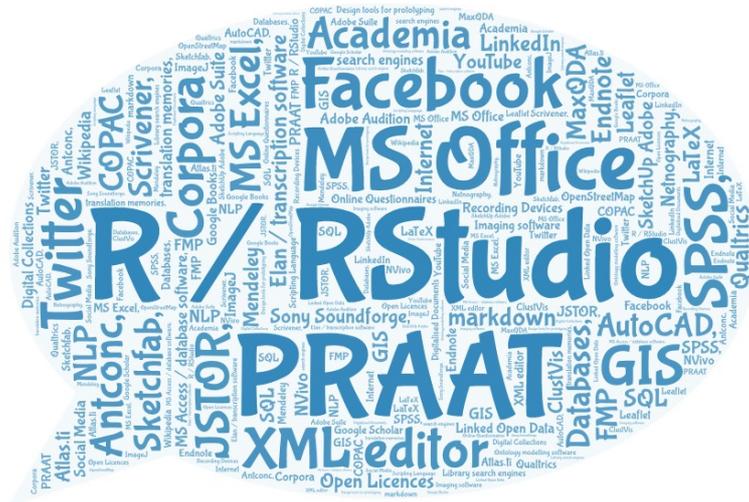


Figure 10 - Word Cloud of all the digital tools listed by online survey respondents

When we look at the overall responses to what digital tools are used by our respondents, we had 106 answers, broken down into 63 different tools named, as presented in the 'Word Cloud' above (see Figure 10). In order to show some manner of pattern, we have grouped the tools together by their most common use (acknowledging of course that many tools can have multiple functions).

The largest single group of tools were those that assisted with Data Management, Processing and Visualisation (41 listed), with Corpora, Databases and Repositories, which were grouped together for their resource-holding function, and Social Networking Media having an equal but smaller portion of the answers (14 each) (see Figure 11).

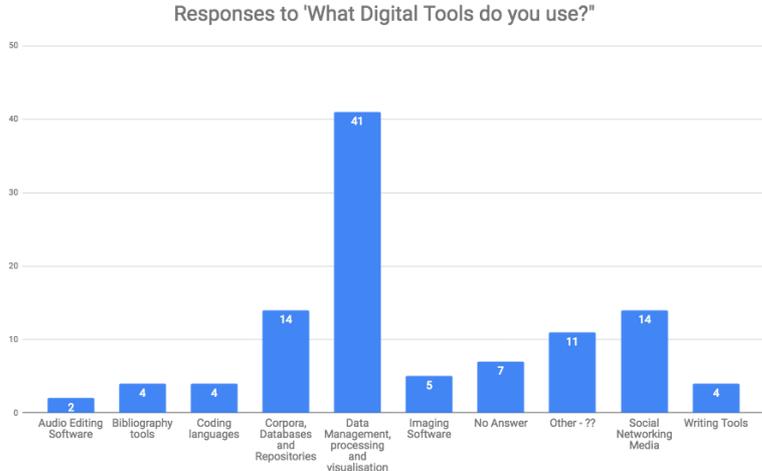


Figure 11 - Digital tools reported used by online survey

The two we will look at more closely here, however, are those responses that fell into this largest grouping, and the 'Other' category. We begin by breaking down the 'Data Management, Processing and Visualisation' tools (see Figure 12).

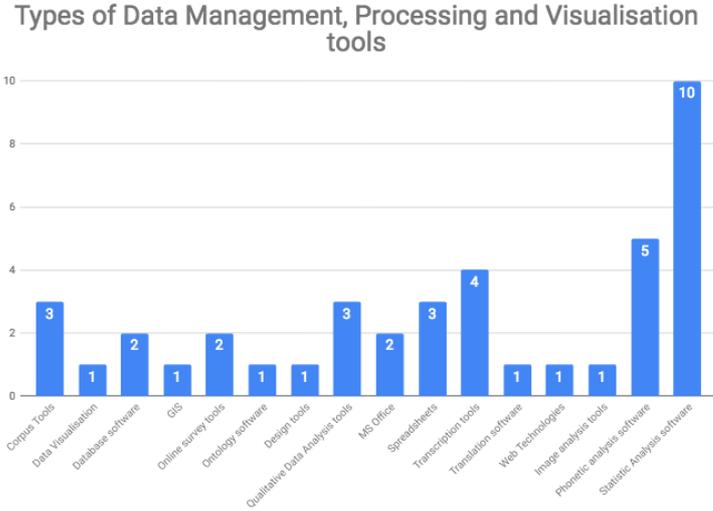


Figure 12 - Data management, processing and visualisation tools used by online survey respondents

These tools were grouped together under this umbrella heading of 'Data Management, Processing and Visualisation' because they all stood out as tools that are used for analysis of data, either in a quantitative or qualitative manner. Of the 41 responses that fell into this group, the largest came under Statistical Analysis Software. This included software such as R, R Studio and SPSS. Perhaps unsurprisingly given

the number of linguists that responded to our survey, the next largest group was 'Phonetic Analysis Software', and 'Transcription Tools' was the third largest.

However, when we turn to the 'Other' category, we start to see something very interesting about just what people consider to be a digital tool.

All 'Other' responses to "what digital tools do you use?"

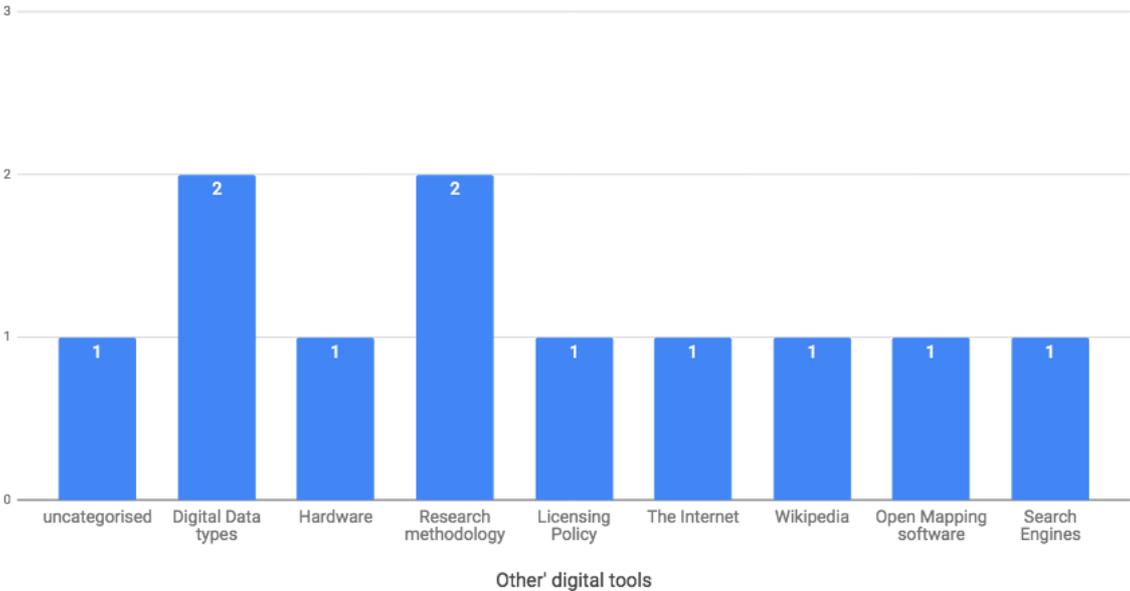


Figure 13 - All tools listed under 'other' from our online survey

Due to the idiosyncratic nature of the responses that came under this ‘Other’ header, each of the responses stands alone, with two that have some manner of grouping: ‘Digital Data Types’ and ‘Research Methodology’ (see Figure 13). The disparate nature of these responses reveal that, along with our more generic groupings already shown, there is no clear definition of what constitutes a ‘digital tool’, and that among our scholars, despite using a large number of digital tools in order to conduct their research, none of them identifies as a ‘digital’ scholar of any sort.

Taking this in mind, we now turn to how humanists and social scientists might engage, if at all, with Research Infrastructures.

Humanists and (Digital) Research Infrastructures

We asked our survey respondents if they participated in any Research Infrastructures, and the overwhelming response was ‘No’ (55%). Some 15% (6 responses) said that they did participate in Research Infrastructures, and a further 30% (12 responses) were not sure if they did or didn’t.

We wanted to know what was preventing those who didn’t engage with Research Infrastructures from doing so. We gave a few sample answers, and respondents could pick from a multiple-choice list, or add their own answer.

Most went for one of the options we had already provided, with indications that there was interest, but either the respondents didn’t know how they could get involved with a Research Infrastructure, or indeed what a Research Infrastructure could do for them (see Figure 14).

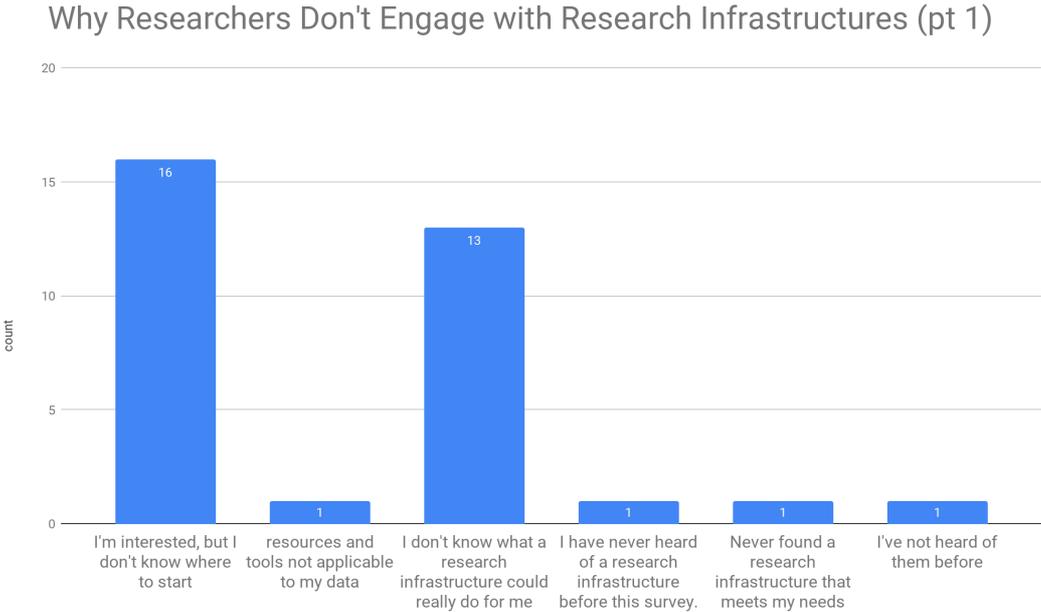


Figure 14 - reasons given in our online survey for not engaging with Research Infrastructures (pt1)

Why researchers Don't Engage with Research Infrastructures (pt 2)

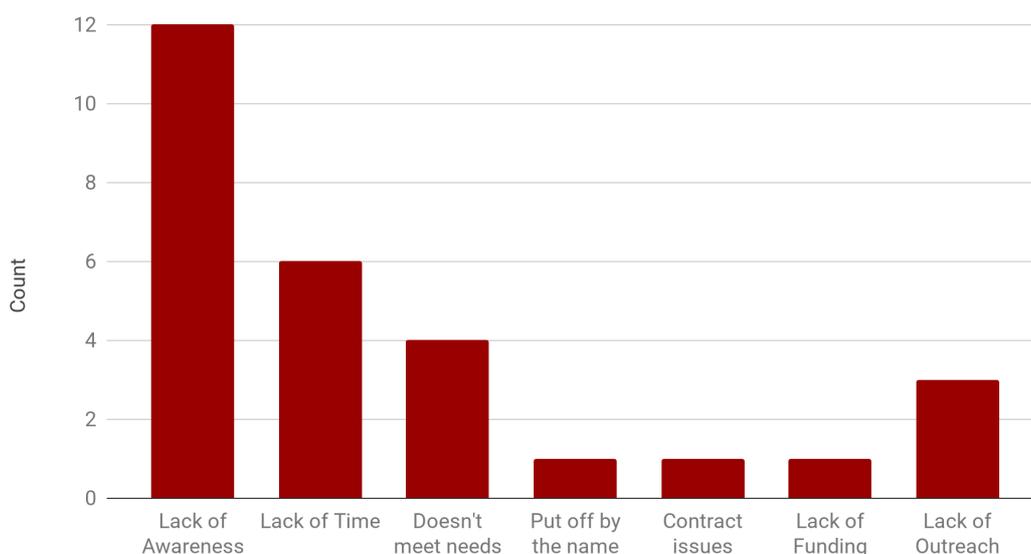


Figure 15 - reasons given in our online survey for not engaging with Research Infrastructures (pt2)

Of those answers that had been given freely, we had two who indicated that they had never heard of Research Infrastructures before this survey, and two who felt that their research and data types would not be supported by a Research Infrastructure.

We dug a little further for more specific reasons, allowing a free-text box, and grouped the responses together as in Figure 15. Again, a lack of knowledge about either Research Infrastructures as a whole, or indeed how researchers might engage with them was the biggest reason for not engaging, with a lack of time being given as the second most frequent. A belief that a Research Infrastructure would not meet their particular needs was given as a reason, either because of the respondents' stage of research, their position within a team, or the 'specialised field' in which they work. More specific responses pointed to a concern over funding and indeed the 'longevity' of Research Infrastructures, a dislike for the nomenclature, and personal concerns around contract issues that prevented the respondent from making any long-term commitments. Finally, and perhaps the companion grouping to those who cited a lack of awareness, there were those who indicated a lack of outreach on the part of the Research Infrastructure. This final category is perhaps relevant to all of the preceding categories of responses, as better outreach from a Research Infrastructure is the goal here.

Finally, we asked what kinds of supports our respondents would like to from Research Infrastructures. Once again we provided a multiple choice list from which respondents could select as many items as they wanted. Access to digital collections and resources, and opportunities for collaboration, either for research purposes, or to obtain funding, were the top answers given. Information about conferences, access to digital tools, training opportunities and transnational access programmes were less popular, but still scores relatively highly (see Figure 16). Of course, all the options we gave were supports already in place within Research Infrastructures, but this all points to what supports Research Infrastructures need to showcase to humanities researchers in their outreach activities.

What Supports do Humanities Researchers want from Research Infrastructures?

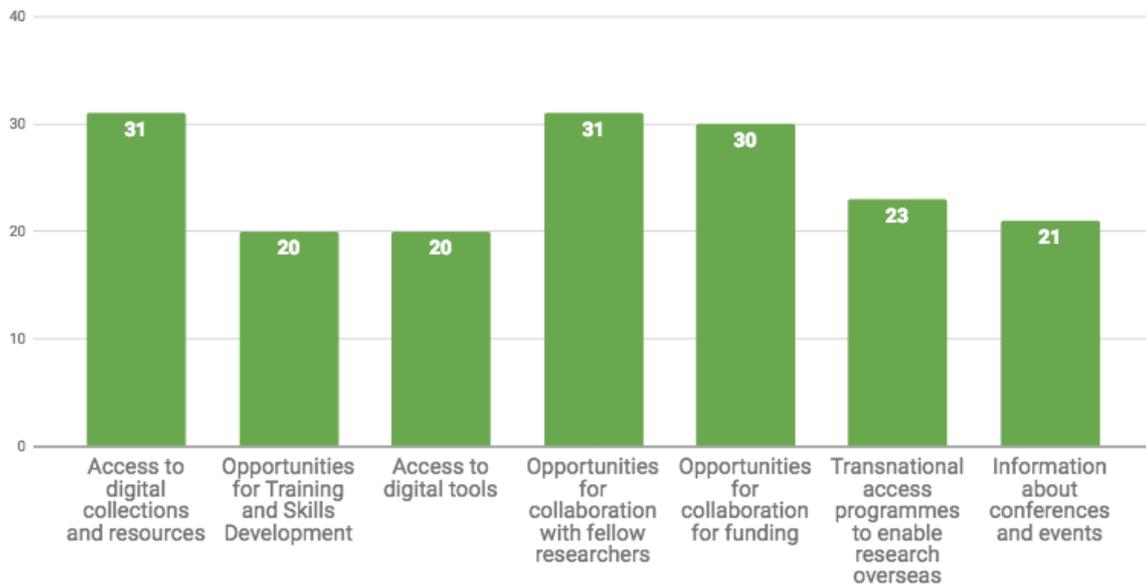


Figure 16 - What supports do Humanities Researchers want from Research Infrastructures

The Case Studies

Structure and methodology

Following the survey, we decided to form two case studies to further investigate how researchers in two discipline-specific communities identify themselves, how they communicate within their community, how they identify and handle research data, and finally what is their interaction and level of engagement with Research Infrastructures such as DARIAH. The two disciplines selected for these case studies were Sociolinguists and Geohumanities.

Interviews were conducted within each community with researchers at different stages of their career, having at least one participant at the early career and senior career level, and being geographically dispersed. Potential participants were recruited through our own social networks (such as colleagues, previous project partners, etc.) while we also reached to interested respondents from the online survey we conducted earlier. Four participants, two from each discipline, expressed interest and availability for this research. These interviews were held either face to face, or virtually through Zoom. In both cases, the interviews were recorded, following consent of the interviewee, only for interview analysis by the two co-Chairs.

In designing the interview structure, we took under consideration questions already addressed through the online survey such as:

- Research community they engage most closely with
- Academic role
- Use of digital tools
- Familiarity with research infrastructures

The interview structure was then designed based on the discussion on research primitives by John Unsworth² cross-referenced with the work on research practices by Carole Palmer et al³ to answer the following questions:

Discovering (Unsworth) / Searching

- Where would they normally go to obtain this data?
 - Library
 - Museum
 - Archive
- What format would their data take?
 - Audio recordings
 - Manuscripts, etc.?

² Unsworth, J. (2000). Scholarly primitives: What methods do humanities researchers have in common, and how might our tools reflect this (Vol. 13, pp. 5–00). Presented at the Symposium on Humanities Computing: Formal Methods, Experimental Practice. King's College, London.

³ Palmer, C. L., Tefteau, L. C., & Pirmann, C. M. (2009). Scholarly Information Practices in the Online Environment: Themes from the Literature and Implications for Library Service Development. Dublin, Ohio 43017 USA: Online Computer Library Center. Retrieved from <http://www.oclc.org/content/dam/research/publications/library/2009/2009-02.pdf?urlm=162919>

- How easily accessible is this kind of data normally?

Annotating (Unsworth)

- Do they 'process' the data in any way prior to analysis?
 - E.g. digitise it? 'Clean' it?
- What kinds of tools might they typically use with this sort of data?

Palmer's Data Practices

- Do they generate new data for the purposes of analysis?
 - What format might this normally take?
 - How might they store the data?
- How do they manage their data (both acquired and generated?) during and after the analysis process?
- What issues have they found with making use of their data (both acquired and generated?)
 - Have they encountered any issues with regards to copyright and licensing in their use of the data / manuscripts?
- What issues do they foresee in the next 5 years or so with new regulations around data use, Open Science and Privacy laws?
- Do they make use of any 'data citation' practices? If so, what approach do they take to this?
 - If they do not use data citation practices, why not?

Representing (Unsworth)

- How might they typically go about disseminating the results of their work?
- Have they considered disseminating their results through existing Research Infrastructures?
- What prevents them from making use of digital knowledge sharing environments such as Research Infrastructures?

Analysis of data

Once the recordings had been transcribed, the data were collaboratively analysed and thematically coded according to the following areas: Research communities and self-identify, Research practices and data, Communication among communities and Interaction with Research Infrastructures. This analysis aimed at understanding and documenting research practices in these two disciplines, Sociolinguistics and Environmental Humanities, mainly with a view on identifying similarities and differences among these two communities that may even suggest patterns for the wider Social Sciences and Humanities in terms of practices. For the purposes of this report, we present results that relate to communication and dissemination practices identified among research communities as well as interaction with research infrastructures.

Results

Communications and dissemination practices

The discussion on how researchers tend to communicate their work, their research successes or problems, led to an interesting observation that such practices are at the end “a personality thing”. This was a suggestion made from most of the interviewees, saying that they are all aware of these practices happening in their research communities or institutions but they are not really following this trend. The way researchers tend to communicate and disseminate their research through social media or other dissemination platforms, like ResearchGate, is a personal decision and practice at the end. Interestingly, all participants described in a similar way the recent practices they notice around, within their institutions and beyond, for a wider dissemination of research successes mainly. However, as they don't personally embrace these habits, they stand a bit critical or just neutral in such practices. The low-use of social media among early career researchers, as noted from this case studies research, could perhaps point to an anxiety around whether what they write or say could potentially be misinterpreted and therefore act as harmful to their future careers. The mid-senior level researchers may feel a little more comfortable in their field to be able to communicate in this manner. Social media have a reputation for being somewhat antagonistic, and perhaps the early career researchers would rather not engage in any potential conflict or discourse in which they are not entirely comfortable with their level of expertise.

Despite the fact that more and more research groups and networks are shaped digitally, participants mentioned that usually their points of contact for such communications are the people or colleagues in their vicinity or institution. Proximity seems therefore to have a role in such communication and dissemination practices. Such practices are reinforced by the whole idea that face to face interactions are still very important for research. One of the interviewees mentioned that, even though most of research is done online, this will never substitute the need for personal face to face communications and exchange of research ideas. All case study participants seemed to agree on the fact that conferences are still a highly preferable way of presenting work to the community and networking.

Social media and dissemination platforms were mentioned in all interview discussions as an accepted and valid way of communicating research. However, if such dissemination practices are not dictated by a project funding then their use for communicating individual research is up to each researcher's personality. Mailing lists on the other hand are used by everyone as they don't require an active participation. Most of the participants were members of different mailing lists mainly for information gathering about their research community.

Interaction with Research Infrastructures

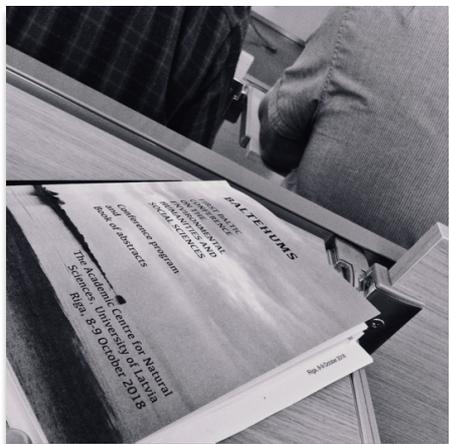
Most of the interviewees were familiar with Research Infrastructures, and in particular DARIAH and CLARIN. However, they often had problems understanding how they function or what are the benefits of engaging with Research Infrastructures for researchers. Characterised as sometimes ‘difficult to use’, one of the interviewees also stressed the need

for training in introducing such concepts and practices from an early stage of a researcher's career. While the importance of using, engaging with and networking within a Research Infrastructure is acknowledged, in the busy researcher's life, one has to be clear of the benefits before he goes on to invest time and effort on this.

On the other hand, one of our interviewees was well familiar with Research Infrastructures and she gave positive feedback on the whole experience and support received from such networks. She underlined in particular how helpful Research Infrastructures have been with data citation and data standards in her research, noting that having such facilities in place "takes a lot of the pressure of practical issues away".

The BALTEHUMS Conference & Travel Bursary

The BALTEHUMS conference



The First Baltic Conference on the Environmental Humanities and Social Sciences (BALTEHUMS⁴) took place in Riga, Latvia, in early October 2018. It ran over 2 days, and included participants from not only the Baltic region (that is Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia), but from further afield, such as Finland, Sweden, Spain, Russia and Japan.

Why BALTEHUMS?

The conference was selected after reviewing upcoming conferences. We wanted to attend a conference that had a strong Humanities element, was largely multidisciplinary, but that had not already engaged with DARIAH. This was to ensure that we were bringing DARIAH to an entirely new audience. BALTEHUMS was determined to be a perfect match because Environmental Humanities and Social Sciences are a relatively new area within DARIAH, following the formation of the Geohumanities Working Group earlier in 2018⁵. The conference was held in Riga, Latvia, and aimed primarily at researchers in the Baltic region. There are currently no members of DARIAH from Baltic states, so this also offered an opportunity to establish links within a new geographical space.

After discussing our proposal for a 'roundtable' session with the conference organisers, it was agreed that we would include participants from the region to present on aspects of Digital and Environmental Humanities, thus enabling greater cooperation with the emerging community.

Process for Travel Bursary

As part of our continued mission to include Early Career Researchers more in the activities of DARIAH, and the Community Engagement Working Group in particular, we offered a travel bursary for an ECR to attend the BALTEHUMS conference. As part of their bursary, they would be required to attend the Roundtable session and take extensive notes for inclusion in this report.

The call for applications for the travel bursary was announced in August 2018 via our blogsite⁶. The applications received were evaluated by the two Community Engagement WG Chairs, and a member of the DARIAH Coordination Office, thus ensuring we had three evaluators to avoid a tie. The criteria by which the applications were assessed were:

- Experience of collaborative projects (15 marks)
- Experience in Event Reporting (15 marks)

⁴ The BALTEHUMS Conference details can be found here: <http://eseh.org/the-final-baltehums-program/> - retrieved 17th Dec 2018

⁵ <https://www.dariah.eu/activities/working-groups/geohumanities/> - retrieved 19th Dec 2018

⁶ The full announcement of the call for applications to the Travel Bursary can be found here: <https://dariahre.hypotheses.org/864>

- Strength of argument for career development (30 marks)

Following our assessment of the applications, the travel bursary was awarded to Patricia Ferreira-Lopes from the University of Seville.

Topic of roundtable - structure

The roundtable session was 90 minutes in total, and comprised presentations and room for discussion between the speakers and the audience around questions we had predetermined⁷.

The session was chaired by Vicky Garnett from Trinity College Dublin (Co-Chair, DARIAH Community Engagement Working Group). The speakers were Eliza Papaki from DARIAH-EU and Trinity College Dublin (Co-Chair, DARIAH Community Engagement Working Group), Dr. Piraye Hacigüzeller from the University of Ghent (Co-Chair, DARIAH Geohumanities Working Group), Anda Baklāne from the National Library of Latvia / University of Latvia, and Linda Kaljundi from the University of Tallinn / KAJAK.

The structure of the roundtable was as follows:

- **Presentation 1:** Eliza Papaki: Research Infrastructures emerging from Research Communities
- **Presentation 2:** Piraye Hacigüzeller (via Skype): What Research Infrastructures can offer Geohumanities researchers
- **Presentation 3:** Anda Baklāne: Cross-institutional collaboration in Digital Humanities: Bridges, Gaps
- **Presentation 4:** Linda Kaljundi: Research and education design around environmental and digital humanities in Estonia
- **Audience Discussion**
 - What defines your research community?
 - How do you share knowledge and/or data as a community?
 - Are you making use of digital knowledge sharing environments (which could include Research Infrastructures?)
 - Experiences of bringing DH into Geohumanities within the Baltic region
 - Supports in place?
 - Training opportunities?
- **Concluding remarks**

⁷ The full set of slides for this roundtable session can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/ybxgdt3j>

Points arising during the discussion

What defines your research community?

The group felt that research on an individual level requires further consideration, over a more general research community. In particular, who is the researcher in the context of digital data? Research is not exclusive to those in academia, and therefore data should be accessible to the Citizen Scientist, as well as those who conduct non-academic research as part of their profession, such as journalists.

The group also recognised that there is no single community for researchers, identifying layers and levels at which researcher operate, either in geographical space, or in disciplinary space.

How do you share knowledge and/or data as a community?

The group were sceptical over the need to digitise everything, perhaps due to a lack of resources, or time. Ensuring that funding on projects remained stable, and identifying areas of priority were the current challenge. Priorities for Cultural Heritage practitioners in the region came down to which materials required the most urgent digital preservation (in order to keep a record of disintegrating legacy items, or due to 'digital obsolescence'), and to ensure that the most famous or valuable works were preserved digitally, thus ensuring that they could be viewed by as wide an audience as possible, ideally taking a bottom-up approach, by determining what researchers need, what we could call "digitalization on demand". In the case of Latvia, the institution is asking the researchers what they need.

The relative size of the geographical region, was considered both a help and a hindrance in that it made it much easier to communicate with researchers from within the community, but The National Library in Latvia indicated that they were keen to assist with many of the innovative projects taking part in Latvia at the moment, but were unsure how best they might be able to assist.

Are you making use of digital knowledge sharing environments (which could include Research Infrastructures?)

The group felt that, certainly in the Baltic Region at least, the issue of data protection and sharing data was a fairly new one among social scientists, so there isn't currently a standard way of sharing knowledge. Copyright is a big issue, as it leads to uncertainty over what can be shared, and in what format. One suggestion was around sharing databases, but again there was uncertainty over how to do this. A further suggestion was to tie some of the database work with educational programmes to create a more accessible and understandable source.

Funding and resources was cited as an issue, as despite many scholars in the region being involved in pan-European projects that have been digitising on a large scale, the issue came

when they met reluctance (although it was unclear who from) to invest time and money into attracting new users. A lack of technical knowledge, and concern over the sustainability (mostly due to funding issues) of the data or research also makes researchers reluctant to share their data, as they don't feel it will be sufficiently useable. The technical concerns were highlighted again in a concern around incompatibility of formats of data. As was pointed out, there needs to be a strategy in place.

Experiences of bringing Digital Humanities approaches into Geohumanities within the Baltic region

One member of the group had worked on the "European Encyclopedia Romantic Nation"⁸ project. The project has a digital encyclopedia and has the systematisation of data that encyclopedia have. This enables someone working in the field of Digital Humanities to research the connections between different nations activities in the 19th and 20th centuries. One of the challenges of this project was the multilinguality of the resources, and the issue of how to make the use of a data that is not in a language that you are familiar with.

Others in the group commented around issues they had in bringing digital humanities approaches into the Geohumanities. In addition to multilingual resources, another issue that is currently causing concern in the projects underway in the Baltic Region is what to do with what they called 'outdated data', that is data that is no longer usable due to digital obsolescence. Again, much of the concern came down to resources and funding. There is enthusiasm to try to make their data more FAIR⁹, but much of the challenge lies in trying to ensure the digital data they already have is backed up, and remains useable.

Supports and Training opportunities

The National and academic libraries within the Baltic Region have the capacity to teach, as well as a large amount of resources for digitisation, and are therefore open to running some manner of small-scale projects where there is room for collaboration and cooperation around specific collections. For example, in Tallinn University (Estonia) the library works with the media school in digital humanities based projects, so there already a reputation for support there.

One other member of the group mentioned that their Centre runs summer and winter schools around data archiving and analysing. The strategy here is to give introductory courses and training to students, which in turn gives the students the information to then look for more specific training.

When the supports currently available through DARIAH were introduced into the conversation, there was general support and enthusiasm among the group, but there were further comments that a place to meet other people and consult with them about their

⁸ <https://ernie.uva.nl/viewer.p/21> - accessed 17 Dec 2018

⁹ FAIR Principles – "Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable" , <https://www.go-fair.org/fair-principles/> retrieved 19th Dec 2018

research practices would be extremely useful. It was unclear if this was in a face-to-face capacity, or virtually through online networking and fora.

Overview of the discussion

- The group tended to look at research communities in terms of proximity, looking at geographic regions as communities, either at Institutional, National or International levels.
- There are serious concerns around the issue of funding and sustainability, and the issue access, interoperability and reusability of the data, particularly with a growing problem of data obsolescence
- Training tends to occur more within institutions with libraries offering to participate in small-scale projects around digitisation and best practices. There has been less take-up of training offered through European-Wide initiatives, but there is a huge enthusiasm for them, particularly if there is more done at a national level.

Barriers to Engagement

- **Lack of knowledge about the Research Infrastructure**

The wide-scale lack of knowledge about just what a Research Infrastructure *is*, and what the benefits of engaging with a Research Infrastructure can be for researchers at an individual, institutional and national level is one of the biggest barriers to engagement overall. Moreover, misperceptions about what a 'Research Infrastructure' within the Humanities actually is, both from the more STEM-based sectors, as well as within the Humanities and Social Sciences leads to a feeling that it's not for them. This was evident in some of the responses we got from the survey where people indicated that their area of research was so specialised that a Research Infrastructure would be irrelevant to them.

- **Institutional or team structure prevents information getting to all who might benefit from it**

Management-styles within teams, or even within institutions, can sometimes lead to a 'filtering' of information to those working at the grass-roots level. This 'Top-Down' approach to information dissemination often means that those who might benefit the most from collaboration beyond their team or institution on cross-disciplinary or cross-sectoral issues are the last to hear of such initiatives.

Equally, even if there is a less-hierarchical approach to information dissemination within research teams, competing pressures for researchers to prioritise work according to publication output, or that which may lead to academic accreditation, means often they might dismiss engagement with multinational infrastructures that rely on in-kind contributions in favour of that which might more obviously lead to career progress according to the criteria of their team or institution.

- **Lack of academic accreditation for the work and the engagement with a Research Infrastructure**

This reflects the issue of 'top-down' information dissemination. Research Infrastructures currently rely on a lot of unfunded or 'in-kind' contributions from researchers in order to maintain their supports, tools and networks. This 'pro-bono' work from researchers can go unrecognised, particularly if the work doesn't result in any publications. A lack of publications means a downturn in a bibliometric score, and without a standardised form of data citation, or non-universal take-up of the CRediT Taxonomy¹⁰ for authorship in scholarly publications, there are few options for the scholar who engages in non-research based scholarship.

- **Communication methods not tailored towards smaller communities. One size does not fit all**

Often, a communications strategy for a large project or Research Infrastructure relies very heavily on one particular mode of dissemination, and social media has provided that in a cost-effective way. However, as our research has shown, social media only reaches a handful of researchers, as more still favour either mailing lists or face-to-face interactions as a means of communication.

¹⁰ <https://casrai.org/credit/> - retrieved 17th Dec 2018

- **Lack of contractual stability for the Early Career Researchers**

The lack of contractual stability for Early Career Researchers means that they have little enthusiasm or time to try to find their way into a Research Infrastructure. Their priorities lie elsewhere, mainly in trying to write publications or funding applications. Again, this comes down to the structural priorities within their team or institution.

- **Lack of 'buy-in' from National Policymakers**

From discussions with our colleagues at the BALTEHUMS conference, there was certainly a willingness among researchers and cultural heritage practitioners to get involved with Research Infrastructures such as DARIAH, but issues of funding and a lack of buy-in from Policymakers who ultimately make the final decision around national membership makes it difficult to ensure funding is in place to enable such engagement. In some respects, Research Infrastructures and larger projects and initiatives such as the PARTHENOS Project have recognised this particular barrier, and offer materials aimed directly at policymakers, such as the "*Why invest in Humanities Research Infrastructures?*" brochure produced in 2016¹¹.

- **Language Barriers**

While it wasn't listed outright, some of the discussion around the need for translation of multi-lingual data that was coming out of the discussion at BALTEHUMS does point to a potential for language barriers. DARIAH is a multilingual Research Infrastructure, with partners from across Europe. Yet the major languages spoken at an operational level are English, French and German. The majority of communication and dissemination is done through English. This suggests an assumption of good knowledge of English, which is not always the case.

¹¹ "Why Invest in Humanities Research Infrastructures?" PARTHENOS Project <http://training.parthenos-project.eu/for-trainers/brochures-and-printed-materials/> - retrieved 17th Dec 2018

Pathways to Engagement

- **Internships for ECRs**

Certainly, our own experience of hosting an internship within our working group was a positive one. Our approach meant working along with an existing MPhil programme that included internships as part of its curriculum, however it would be very easy to scale this out beyond existing training programmes. Proximity issues could be overcome, particularly as EU-Wide projects already provide a model for remote communications, meetings and workflow management.

Of course, it is important to ensure that the intern gets something meaningful from the internship, so that they come away with a) a good introduction to the concept of Research Infrastructures, b) a positive association with the specific Research Infrastructure, and c) ideally something they can also refer to in their own portfolio as work that indicates their contribution, such as a publication, conference submission or collection of data, for example.

- **Continual Professional Development**

Many Research Infrastructures already offer training and transnational access (TNA) programmes to support researchers at all stages of their careers in their continual professional development, and in most cases they have proved very successful. There are some difficulties, however, in the implementation of such programmes, particularly with regards to funding for the individuals, and supports for those with families or other caregiving responsibilities. For some practitioners, access to such programmes around training or TNA can rely on considerable negotiation with managers who question the cost-benefits of participation. So while provision for continual professional development programmes offer a very effective pathway to engagement with Research Infrastructures, they also have some significant barriers of their own to overcome.

- **Events and communications targeted at non-DARIAH groups**

DARIAH sits very comfortably within the wider international Digital Humanities community. However, as we have seen throughout our work, there are many researchers who do not identify themselves within this Digital Humanities world, but make use of digital methods and resources, and could therefore strongly benefit from the Research Infrastructure. For this reason, DARIAH advocates, be they National Contact Points, or Working Group members, should look beyond the usual conferences or mailing lists, and develop contacts through other non-digital communities.

- **Face-to-Face engagement**

As our survey respondents and case studies showed, face-to-face interaction such as that in conferences and workshops is the most popular medium for communication among all communities. Therefore, while it is obviously more cost-effective to rely heavily on remote communications practices, greater weight should be put on conference attendance. This is once again where National Contact Points can be relied on, by supporting and encouraging them to conduct their advocacy work in face-to-face opportunities as much as possible.

Recommendations

Communication

- **A combination of both social media and more direct communication** via disciplinary specific mailing lists, national contact points, and training opportunities is recommended.
- **Clear layout and presentation of what constitutes a Research Infrastructure** (and particularly how DARIAH works as a Research Infrastructure) and what are its benefits should enable those who are unsure of how a Research Infrastructure could help them to be make a more informed decision.

Advocacy

- **More advocates, either at a national, or even intra-national (regional) level**, and ensuring that the advocates are constantly seeking out researchers beyond the usual suspects. This involves supporting the overall communications strategy of the Research Infrastructure by using all means of dissemination possible, and in particular it requires support from the National Contact Points to advocate in the language(s) spoken within that country, to overcome any linguistic barriers.
- This advocacy work should also point towards **ensuring that engagement and work with a Research Infrastructure receives academic credit**, and indeed a range of other issues that require buy-in from policy-makers and national stakeholders. Both National Contact Points and Working Groups can support researchers and institutions in making this move towards a system that recognises all types of scholarly outputs.

Invite people in

- There is still the perception that many researchers don't know where to start. Therefore all DARIAH outreach activities need to be more proactive. This can be done through...
 - **Internships for Undergraduates, Postgraduates and Early Career Researchers to support Working Group activities.**
 - **Workshops and Training Opportunities** with (where possible) greater opportunities for **realistic travel bursaries and supports for (early career) researchers and practitioners.**

Show what we've got

- **Showcase Research Infrastructure supports** with priority on resources, and collaborative opportunities for research and funding over continual professional programmes such as teaching and transnational access.

