

How SSHOC Meets the Needs of Researchers

An Interview with Maurizio Toscano



🔍 Introductions

My name is Maurizio Toscano. I am a digital humanities researcher at the University of Granada (Spain) and a member of the Executive Board of the Hispanic Association of Digital Humanities. My research interests include digital public history and cultural heritage crowdsourcing as well as data modelling, web information systems and GIS. I help humanities researchers in public and private institutions implementing DH methods and practices. People look to me to advise them on the use of certain tools for their workflows and scenarios as well. So technology is absolutely fundamental to my work.



🔍 Challenges in SSH Research

My biggest challenge is understanding whether a specific tool matches a user's requirements and use case. Next is to find out if it's well supported and if, in the long run, it's worth investing in learning it. To date I've relied on standard Google searches rather than searching specific repositories. I'm very hopeful that the SSH Open Marketplace will change that.

🔍 What can I do with SSHOC tools & services?

From what I saw as a tester of the SSH Open Marketplace, I like the approach the developers have taken and the governance model they've adopted. Even at this early stage where the content is pretty limited I was able to find materials for a webinar I recently delivered to Tunisian doctoral students about "Digital tools for research in Humanities", in the context of the RAQMYAT Erasmus+ project

🔍 Wish list

My wish list for the final version of the SSH Open Marketplace is extensive but overall I want it to work as a personalised recommender system, not just as a catalogue. Like Netflix for Digital Humanities, providing personalized suggestions about tools and datasets, based on user's experience and research interests. And a personal dashboard where resources can be bookmarked, searches saved, and issued reported. I'd also like the info on each tool to be enriched with the license type, latest release date, difficulty level, time required, and availability of certification (for training). Lastly the system should provide contributor credits and a suggestion box.

🔍 SSHOC and EOSC

I don't have a clear picture of what the EOSC will be and the services it will provide. Maybe SSHOC can play an active role in this regard, providing training to key people who can then act as ambassadors in their institutions and through their ongoing projects to promote SSHOC and EOSC services, especially for new researchers.



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