



## Digital Research Infrastructure: What's In It For ME?

A Symposium on Thursday 11 April 2024

11.00-17.45

Maastricht University, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

Grote Gracht 90-92, 6211 SZ Maastricht

[Register for the Symposium](#)

### Full Schedule

**10.30:** Welcome Coffee

**11.00 -12.00**

Keynote I: *Building Infrastructures for the Future: the New Public Intellectuals*

Dr Laura Mandell, Professor of English at Texas A&M University

**12.00-13.00**

Panel I: Labs as Infrastructure Chaired by Dr Annika Richterich, Associate Professor in Digital Cultures, MU

Panellists:

- Dr Joris van Zundert, Senior Researcher at Huygens Institute for the History of the Netherlands
- Professor dr Gabriele Gramelsberger, Chair for Theory of Science and Technology and Co-Founder of the Computational Science Studies Lab, RWTH Aachen University
- Dr Costas Papadopoulos, Co-Founder of The Plant, FASoS and Associate Professor in Digital Humanities and Culture Studies, UM

**13.00-13.45:** Lunch

**13.45-14.45**

Keynote II: Chaired by Dr Monika Barget, Assistant Professor of History, Department of History, UM

*How Many Humanists Does it Take to Build a Research Infrastructure? Navigating the Challenges Technological and Cultural Change in Arts and Humanities*

Dr Toma Tasovac, Director of the Belgrade Center for Digital Humanities (BCDH) and Director of the pan-European Digital Research Infrastructure for the Arts and Humanities (DARIAH)

**14.45-15.00** Coffee

**15.00-16.00**

Panel II: Digital infrastructures - What's in it for me? Chaired by Professor dr Sally Wyatt, Professor of Digital Cultures and Associate Dean of Research, FASoS, Maastricht University

Panellists:

- *Dr Tom Emery*, Associate Professor, Department of Public Administration and Sociology of Erasmus University Rotterdam and Director of Open Data Infrastructure for Social Science and Economic Innovations (ODISSEI)
- Roeland Ordelman, CTO CLARIAH research Infrastructure for the Arts and Humanities, Technology Advisor Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision (NISV), Coordinator NISV iLabs and CLARIAH Media Suite, and senior researcher at University of Twente Professor dr Franciska de Jong, Professor of e-Research for the Humanities and former Executive Director of CLARIN ERIC, Utrecht University

**16.00-17.00**

Launch of #dariahTeach's Social Justice and the Digital Humanities Course Chaired by Professor dr Susan Schreibman, Professor of Digital Arts and Culture, UM

Panellists:

- Ms Felix Bui, Teaching Fellow, Department of Literature and Art, UM
- Dr Koraljka Kuzman Šlogar, Head of the Department of Documentation, Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Research (Zagreb) and National Coordinator for Croatia for DARIAH
- Dr Marianne Ping Huang, Associate Professor at School of Communication and Culture at Aarhus University.
- Ms Anna Villarica, Teaching Fellow, Department of Literature and Art, UM
- Dr Sophie Withaecx, Department of Philosophy, UM

**17.00-17.45:** Reception

### **Keynote Addresses**

#### **Keynote I**

*Building Infrastructures for the Future: the New Public Intellectuals*

Dr Laura Mandell, Professor of English, Texas A&M University

In this talk, I examine projects in the field of digital humanities that build technological and social infrastructures inviting public participation in scholarly research. Drawing on Kathleen Fitzpatrick's definition of "generous thinking," I describe how the Linked Infrastructure for Networked Cultural Scholarship, the Syriac Reference Portal, and three crowdsourcing projects from Ireland, the UK, and Australia contribute to the public good. Working toward establishing a robust digital research infrastructure for both professional and civilian scholars, the digital humanists behind these projects strive to provide easy access to cultural information while preserving the historical and literary

complexity necessary for scholarship and for nurturing public interest. I argue that the directors of and participants in these projects are redefining what it means to be a “public intellectual.”

Despite major movements to the contrary among literary theorists world-wide, prominent scholars in the fields of literary criticism and history have argued that the twentieth-century definition of the public intellectual is not a concept that needs revision. They argue that disciplinary research and teaching as traditionally defined by universities and elite publishers already serve the public good and consequently deserve greater support and recognition. However, as has been recognized by the Dutch Research Council’s white paper “Room for Everyone’s Talents” – an analysis that justifies revamping University reward structures and, consequently, restructuring the twenty-first century university itself – the traditional idea of the public intellectual, I suggest, enshrines elitist hierarchies of power fatal to public engagement in intellectual discovery.

In contrast, the new public intellectuals, digital humanists, strive to democratize access to academic research, and most important, collaborate with people from across university divisions as well as in the public at large. Treated according to best practices as codified by a group led by Tanya Clement in “The Collaborators’ Bill of Rights,” participants in digital humanities projects are treated with dignity, their talents actualized and contributions recognized. Even more, they find gratification in creating equitable futures for knowledge work.

**Laura Mandell** is Professor of English at Texas A&M University where she founded, and for 12 years directed, the Center of Digital Humanities Research. Selected as a Texas A&M Presidential Impact Fellow in 2017, she authored *Breaking the Book: Print Humanities in the Digital Age* (2015), *Misogynous Economies: The Business of Literature in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (1999), and numerous articles. Her digital work includes the Digital New Variorum Shakespeare ([newvariorumshakespeare.org](http://newvariorumshakespeare.org)), TypeWright (a crowd-sourced OCR correction tool available at [18thConnect.org](http://18thConnect.org)), the Big Data Infrastructure Visualization Application ([bigdiva.org](http://bigdiva.org)), and the Early Modern OCR Project ([emop.tamu.edu](http://emop.tamu.edu)). She is general editor of The Poetess Archive ([poetessarchive.org](http://poetessarchive.org)) and founding director of the Advanced Research Consortium ([ar-c.org](http://ar-c.org)).

## **Keynote II**

Keynote II: *How Many Humanists Does it Take to Build a Research Infrastructure? Navigating the Challenges Technological and Cultural Change in Arts and Humanities*

Dr Toma Tasovac, Director of the Belgrade Center for Digital Humanities (BCDH) and Director of the pan-European Digital Research Infrastructure for the Arts and Humanities (DARIAH)

The adoption of new technologies is not merely a logistical challenge but, above all, a cultural one, requiring shifts in mindsets, methods, and practices among scholars, practitioners, and institutions. So what are we to do as humanities scholars who are sensitive to the questions of both technology and ideology? Can we — and should we — start to think infrastructurally? And if we do, how would that effect the way we conduct and disseminate research? While technology can be engineered, I will argue that the greater challenge — and reward — comes in cultivating a research culture that embraces

change while preserving and honouring our humanistic heritage. The path forward should not be focused exclusively on building shiny infrastructures but building a community consensus and a shared vision for the future of scholarly research.

**Toma Tasovac** is Director of the Belgrade Center for Digital Humanities (BCDH) and Director of the pan-European Digital Research Infrastructure for the Arts and Humanities (DARIAH). With an academic background in Comparative Literature and degrees from Harvard, Princeton and Trinity College Dublin, Toma's areas of scholarly expertise include historical lexicography and the development of language resources, data modelling, digital editions and research infrastructures. He is the co-creator of TEI Lex-0: A baseline encoding format for lexicographic data, which has received the 2020 Rahtz Prize for TEI Ingenuity from the TEI Consortium. He has served on a number of major international bodies such as the European Research Council (ERC), Europeana Research and JPI Cultural Heritage. He has played a leading role in numerous DH projects funded by national and international bodies, including Erasmus+, Horizon 2020, Horizon Europe and the National Endowment for the Humanities.