



UK-Ireland Digital Humanities Association

2026 Community Interest Groups Call for Proposals

Working Group Name:

Digital Infrastructures for Arts, Humanities and Cultural Heritage (DIAHCH)

Coordinators:

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Potential participants:

The Digital Infrastructures for Arts, Humanities and Cultural Heritage Community Interest Group is intended for anyone involved in building, sustaining, governing, or using digital research infrastructures across the UK and Ireland. We envisage participation from researchers at all career stages, research software engineers, librarians, archivists, museum and heritage professionals, data stewards, digital curators, project and community managers, collections specialists, policy and strategy leads, and professionals responsible for research support and digital innovation. The group also welcomes independent practitioners and researchers, community organisations, creative-sector professionals, infrastructure providers, and funders with an interest in the future of arts and humanities infrastructures.

The CIG is designed to be relevant across jurisdictions, governance models and scales of infrastructure. Alongside established HEIs, GLAMs and professional representative organisations the group actively seeks participation from collectives and community organisations whose perspectives are rarely centred in infrastructure mapping exercises. A particular priority is ensuring that infrastructure conversations include organisations and networks that are often overlooked by conventional infrastructure mapping exercises. Data/Culture, DARIAH-IE, and MAHP are well placed to coordinate this work since they provide direct access to an existing constituency of potential participants. Through MAHP's dataset of over 4,000 UK infrastructure records, Data/Culture's active ECR networks

developed through events such as the ScholarTHON series, and DARIAH-IE's established presence across the Irish and European digital humanities landscape, the CIG launches with a ready pipeline.

Abstract (<250 words max):

The Digital Infrastructures for Arts, Humanities and Cultural Heritage Community Interest Group (DIAHCH-CIG) brings together researchers, practitioners, infrastructure specialists, and stakeholders from the HEI, GLAM and creative sectors across the UK and Ireland to strengthen and connect the infrastructures that support arts and humanities research, innovation, and creative practice.

The first major challenge addressed by DIAHCH-CIG is the absence of standardised workflows, methodologies and tools used in the creation of infrastructure maps. The landscape mapping exercise – a common first step in most projects – invariably results in highly bespoke datasets that do not align with the FAIR Principles. This group seeks to address this by documenting methodologies, taxonomies and workflows that can be easily replicated, and the production of datasets that are both interoperable and reusable.

The second challenge the group addresses is the fragmented way in which arts and humanities infrastructures are documented and connected. Existing mapping initiatives often prioritise formally recognised, institutionally governed, and publicly funded infrastructures, leaving grassroots networks, community archives, interdisciplinary initiatives, and practice-based organisations underrepresented.

AHDI-CIG aims to create a community of practice around infrastructure mapping, bringing together those developing and maintaining infrastructures to share methods, promote FAIR and interoperable approaches, and encourage open licensing and sustainable workflows. By bringing together higher education, GLAM organisations, creative industries, independent practitioners, and research infrastructure providers, it seeks to improve understanding of the sector's infrastructure ecosystem while fostering long-term coordination and knowledge exchange.

Relevance (250-500 words):

The Digital Infrastructures for Arts, Humanities and Cultural Heritage Community Interest Group (DIAHCH-CIG) brings together researchers, practitioners, infrastructure specialists, and stakeholders from the GLAM and creative sectors across the UK and Ireland to strengthen the digital infrastructures that support arts and humanities research, innovation, and creative practice.

The group responds to two closely related challenges. First, existing infrastructure mapping exercises at national and European levels often fail to capture the diversity of arts and

humanities infrastructures. Frameworks such as [ESFRI](#), [MERIL-2](#), and [InfraPortal](#) typically prioritise formally recognised, institutionally governed, and publicly funded infrastructures, overlooking the grassroots networks, volunteer archives, community organisations, interdisciplinary initiatives, and practice-based groups that are essential to the sector. As a result, existing maps provide only a partial picture of the infrastructure landscape and are frequently tied to individual projects, limiting their long-term value.

Second, infrastructure mapping is often undertaken in isolation. Projects frequently develop their own metadata models, workflows, and documentation, resulting in duplicated effort, incompatible datasets, and resources that are difficult to discover, reuse, or sustain beyond the lifetime of individual grants. Rather than promoting a single platform or taxonomy, DIAHCH-CIG will foster a community of practice around infrastructure mapping. By bringing together those who build, maintain, and use digital infrastructure, the group will promote FAIR approaches, open licensing, and shared methods that enable future initiatives to build on existing work rather than repeatedly starting from scratch.

The CIG directly supports the UK-Ireland Digital Humanities Association's core values. Inclusivity is embedded through engagement with researchers and practitioners across all career stages and sectors, from independent practitioners and Research Software Engineers to GLAM professionals, academics, and infrastructure providers. Collaboration is fostered across higher education, cultural heritage organisations, creative industries, and research infrastructures, while sustainability underpins the group's commitment to long-term stewardship of data, communities, and infrastructure. Openness and transparency will guide the development of shared standards, documentation, and community resources, creating evidence to support future advocacy for arts and humanities digital infrastructures.

To catalyse this work, the CIG will organise a community edit-a-thon focused on infrastructure description, metadata, and classification, exploring shared vocabularies and approaches to interoperability. Complementary activities will be organised alongside in order to disseminate in formats appropriate to our audiences. Over the longer term, the group aims to establish a distributed network of regional infrastructure ambassadors and to support collaborative funding proposals that strengthen coordination across the UK and Ireland.

The impetus of this initiative builds on the complementary expertise of Data/Culture, DARIAH-IE, and the Mapping the Arts and Humanities Project (MAHP). Together, these initiatives bring the experience and expertise in infrastructure development, landscape mapping, community engagement, and international collaboration. DIAHCH-CIG will aim to provide the shared knowledge, networks, and practices needed to ensure that future infrastructure initiatives are more connected, interoperable, sustainable, and valuable for arts, humanities and cultural heritage communities.