

What's Your Method? Understanding Digital Scholarship Through Ontologies

Maximum Number of Participants: 25

Date: Tuesday, July 8, 2014 – 09:00 to 12:00

Facilitator(s):

Prof. Panos Constantopoulos, Athens University of Economics and Business & Digital Curation Unit-Athena RC

Prof. Costis Dallas, University of Toronto & Digital Curation Unit-Athena RC

Prof. Lorna Hughes, University of Wales

Prof. Manfred Thaller, University of Cologne

Overview:

This workshop aims to engage participants in the theory and practice of developing an ontology for digital research methods in the arts and humanities, through an interactive modeling activity, led by a team of experts in humanities digital research methods and ontology building. It is part of a collaborative research project by NEDIMAH and DARIAH-EU, aiming to develop a formal conceptualization of digital research methods in the arts and humanities across the humanities research lifecycle, from the discovery, constitution and management of research data and resources to their representation, visualization and analysis, and from the formulation of research topics and hypotheses to scholarly publication and communication.

Participants will be introduced to the background and state-of-the-art regarding digital computational methods in the arts and humanities, as well as to the scholarly processes and “research primitives” associated with digital methods, tools and services. They will also be provided with a brief introduction to ontologies, to the main concepts and techniques involved in developing an ontology, and to a conceptual model of research scholarly activity suitable for representing the application of digital methods for arts and humanities research. They will then be invited to share and discuss short informal accounts of their own scholarly work, focusing on the use of digital sources, tools, and services, which will provide the basis for a conceptual analysis and ontology building hands-on exercise, based on identifying conceptual relationships and integrating the insights derived by individual digital research experiences into a shared conceptualization under the guidance of workshop facilitators.

Audience:

The workshop is of interest to both advanced digital humanities scholars and to digitally-enabled humanities researchers, or those not currently using digital tools and methods but interested to do so in the foreseeable future. It is open to those occupied with the study of textual and visual resources, material and intangible cultural heritage, quantitative and qualitative modes of analysis, and a variety of epistemological stances within digital humanities. In addition, the workshop may be attractive to STS scholars interested in understanding scholarly practice in the arts and humanities, as well as to computer scientists, information scientists and others

interested in the relationship between digital humanities and digital infrastructures. Participants are not required to have prior knowledge in the field of ontology engineering, but should be familiar with particular research methods in the arts and humanities, interested in reflexive analysis of humanities research practices, and prepared to engage, under the guidance of workshop facilitators, with formal methodologies of ontology modelling.

Benefits for participants include the opportunity to share experiences, reflect critically on, and discuss the methods employed in digitally-based humanities research; to conceptualize specific digital research methods in the context of particular kinds of research, types of resources, and digital tools and services; and, to enhance their understanding of and get acquainted with basic ontology building techniques useful in the domain of digital humanities.