MANAGING THE HUMANITIES

Research Data Management in the Arts and Humanities

Ateanna Uriri – INFO 5841

Introduction

Research data management – the organization, storage, preservation, and sharing of data collected and used in a research project – is a critical component for research in all disciplines in that this process allows for more organized, transparent, usable, and ethical data. Proper data management is especially important for researchers working in the arts and humanities (A+H) because those researchers may not consider their work "data." For those art and humanities researchers that may have some idea or understanding that their work (or parts of it) are considered "data," they are unsure of how to manage that data. It is imperative for researchers to know and understand – whether through assistance from their institution's research data services, from membership in an A+H research organization or committee or via their own curiosity and interests – that their processes and methods, among other things, are data and that the data produced from their work benefits from data management in a multitude of ways.

Definitions

- **Research Data Management (RDM)** – "Research data management concerns the organisation of data, from its entry to the research cycle through to the dissemination and archiving of valuable results. It aims to ensure reliable verification of results, and permits new and innovative research built on existing information“ (Whyte & Tedds, 2011).
- **Research Data Services (RDS)** – a network of services throughout an institution that assists researcher during all phases of the research data lifecycle. Examples of services include data management planning, data visualization, and preservation.

Definitions

- **Data Management Plan (DMP)** – "a written document that describes the data you expect to acquire or generate during the course of a research project, how you will manage, describe, analyze, and store those data, and what mechanisms you will use at the end of your project to share and preserve your data" (Stanford Libraries).
- **Humanities** – "academic disciplines that study aspects of human society and culture…[the humanities] use methods that are primarily critical, or speculative, and have a significant historical element—as distinguished from the mainly empirical approaches of the natural sciences. The humanities include ancient and modern languages, literature, philosophy, history, human geography, law, politics, religion, and art" (Wikipedia).
- **Digital Humanities** – choose your own definition: What is Digital Humanities?

Challenges/issues – *eloquently conceptualized* by Mey (2013)

- **Cross-disciplinary**
- Creativity/problem solving in A+H, specifically visual arts, is **not a homogenous process**
- Practices that posit **ephemerality**
- Providing future access (and possible **re-interpretation**) to data
- **Expectation of risk taking** in research that contest and rupture existing practices, paradigms and standards in order to provoke our senses and thoughts, educate and innovate
- The **'unknown unknowns'** may produce unexpected, unrecognised 'data' for which there are not (yet) policies and protocols

Challenges/issues, CON'T

To summarize the points introduced in Mey's (2013) presentation: the standardized or one-size-fits-all approach is a hard boundary to put around arts and humanities research data. How do you work to preserve data that was purposely created to last short term? Where do you draw lines of ownership for loosely collaborative works? The issues and challenges presented are reasons why special attention should be given to the arts and humanities in terms of research data management. Research data in the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) fields is well-defined, well-established, and largely studied with support and infrastructure in place for every part of the data curation lifecycle and for managing data. The work done with projects like KAPTUR and Visual Arts Data Skills for Researchers (VADS4R) are attempting to arm humanities researchers with the guidance and tools to better understand their data and how it can be managed within the context of their art and work.

A+H Data Management/Curation Projects

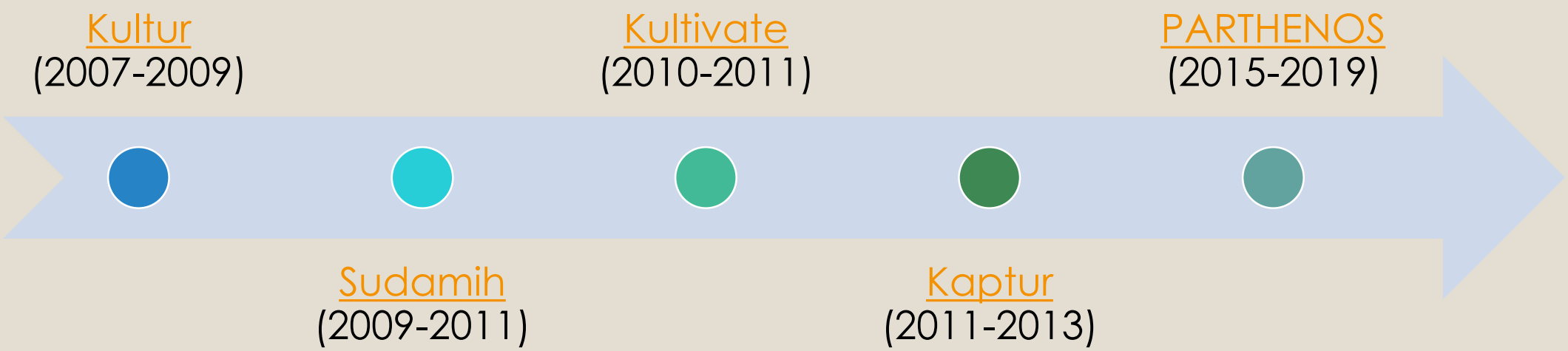
Many of the projects surrounding data management and curation, particularly the projects mentioned, are closely connected with many picking up where a previous project left off. A mostly European network of models, tools, systems, and processes has been created and maintained for A+H researchers.

- **Kultur** – "The aim of the Kultur Consortium is to **create a transferable and sustainable institutional repository model** for research output in the creative and applied arts, a discipline area where repository development is so far underdeveloped" (About the Project).
- **Kultivate** – "Building on the highly successful Kultur project, Kultivate will **share and support the application of best practice** in the development of institutional repositories that are appropriate to the specific needs and behaviours of creative and visual arts researchers" (Visual Arts Data Service).
- **Kaptur** – "KAPTUR will **discover, create and pilot a sectoral model of best practice** in the management of research data in the visual arts" (Visual Data Arts Service).

A+H Data Management/Curation Projects, CON'T

- **Parthenos** – "PARTHENOS is a **research infrastructure** whose objective is to strengthen the cohesion of research across a number of related fields associated with the humanities. This broad sector includes linguistic studies, cultural heritage, history and archaeology and existing research structures such as ***ARIADNE*** (archaeology), ***CLARIN*** (languages) and ***DARIAH*** (arts and humanities) are members of PARTHENOS" (PARTHENOS Project).
- **Sudamih** – "The Supporting Data Management Infrastructure for the Humanities (Sudamih) project aims to **address a coherent range of requirements for the more effective management of data** (broadly defined) within the Humanities at an institutional level" (Martinez-Uribe, 2009).

A+H Data Management/Curation Projects, CON'T



Resources

- Visual Arts Data Skills for Researchers (VADS4R)
- KAPTUR Outputs
- Jisc – Research data in arts, humanities and social sciences
- Designing Databases for Historical Research
- Digital Curation Centre – RDMF10: Research data management in the Arts and Humanities
- ArLiSNAP
- Data management in the arts and humanities – Martin Donnelly, Digital Curation Centre

Resources

- MANTRA – Research Data Management Training
- University of Houston – Digital Humanities and Data Storytelling
- Digital Humanities Data Curation
- Research Data Alliance (RDA) – Digital Humanities Working & Interest Groups
- Research Data Alliance (RDA) – Social Sciences Working & Interest Groups
- Open Social Scholarship Annotated Bibliography/Data Management
- Visual Arts Data Service

References

- About the Project. (n.d.). Retrieved from http://kultur.eprints.org/about.htm
- Martinez-Uribe, L. (2009, June 15). Welcome to the Sudamih website. Retrieved from http://sudamih.oucs.ox.ac.uk/index.xml
- Mey, K. (2013). *Research data-visual arts-presentation*. Presentation, Surrey.
- PARTHENOS Project. (n.d.). Activities. Retrieved from http://www.parthenos-project.eu/the-activities

References

- Stanford Libraries. (n.d.). Data management plans. Retrieved from https://library.stanford.edu/research/data-management-services/data-management-plans
- Visual Arts Data Service. (n.d.). About the KAPTUR project. Retrieved from https://vads.ac.uk/kaptur/about.html
- Visual Arts Data Service. (n.d.). Kultivate project. Retrieved from https://vads.ac.uk/kultur2group/projects/kultivate/index.html
- Whyte, A., Tedds, J. (2011). Making the Case for Research Data Management. DCC Briefing Papers. Edinburgh: Digital Curation Centre. Retrieved from: http://www.dcc.ac.uk/resources/briefing-papers
- Wikipedia. (n.d.). Humanities. Retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Humanities