

Supporting TEI-enabled projects through **cross-institutional** collaboration



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Faculty of Arts



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Library



LIBRARY



Digital Humanities
Innovation Lab



The Team

Simon Fraser University

Rebecca Dowson

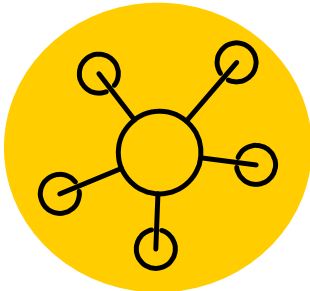
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SFU Library, Digital Humanities Innovation Lab

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DEVELOPER

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Other collaborators along the way

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Adaptive TEI Network



Presentation **Outline**

- ◎ The Opportunity
- ◎ The Plan
 - Goals
 - Structure
- ◎ Life Happens!
 - Challenges
 - Lessons Learned
- ◎ Looking Ahead



The Opportunity

What does a cross-institutional collaboration to support the development of digital projects look like?



The problem

1 Digital Scholarship support is complex and cross-disciplinary, using methodologies that extend traditional boundaries in a given discipline

2 Building developer support locally is financially and structurally challenging

3 Exploring ways to share resources between institutions that balances financial benefit with capacity limits



SFU Goals

- + Explore sustainability models for the Digital Humanities Innovation Lab
- + Experiment with mechanisms to pool regional expertise and resources in support of DS specialities
- + Leverage opportunity to support local TEI projects through fostering research communities between institutions
- + Potentially contribute back to the larger TEI academic community through infrastructure development



UBC Goals

- + Foster partnerships with the Faculty of Arts through Digital Scholarship in Arts
- + Activate the campus wide UBC Library Digital Scholarship service as an entry point for DS needs for Faculty of Arts scholars
- + Extend capacity of local supports via Research Commons and DiSA
- + Identify infrastructure needs to improve baseline offerings
- + Assess the benefit and impact of a developer role dedicated to supporting an area of digital scholarship (for this project, TEI) with the goal of informing the development of a future position
- + UBC had a temporary availability of funding and wanted to test run a proof of concept before seeking permanent funding lines



Background

1 Public Humanities Hub + UBC Research Commons + Digital Humanities Innovation Lab (DHIL)

- + PHH Research Cluster
- + Newly relaunched UBC Library Research Commons

2 UBC Research Commons + SFU Research Commons

- + Past grant ambitions
- + Canadian Digital Scholarship Librarians CoP
- + Discussions about shared resources around training and resources

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The Plan

What we originally imagined



The Plan

1 Structure

- + DiSA partners with projects and facilitates connection with DHIL
- + DiSa grants offer support in the form of graduate student workers

2 Audience

- + Faculty and graduate students engaged in Digital Scholarship
- + Partnership focus on TEI projects due to DHIL expertise

3 Resourcing

- + DiSA had temporary funding from VPRI to pay for resources
- + UBC Library provided in-kind support via librarian hours
- + DHIL built DiSA hours into project planning cycles

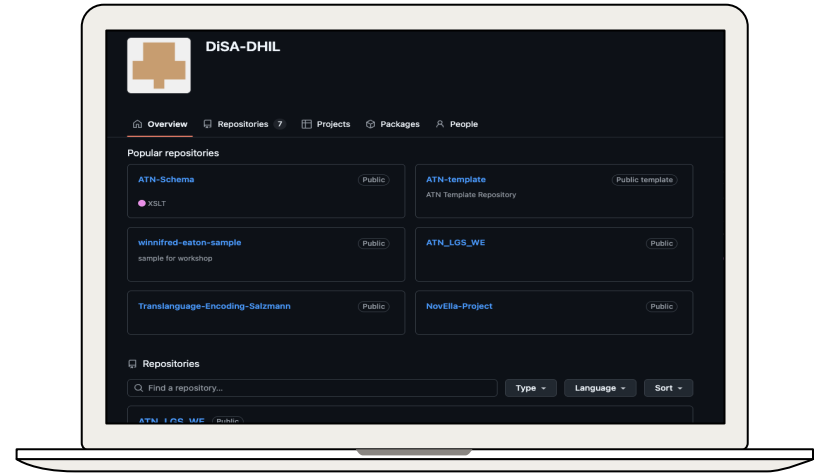
4 Timeline

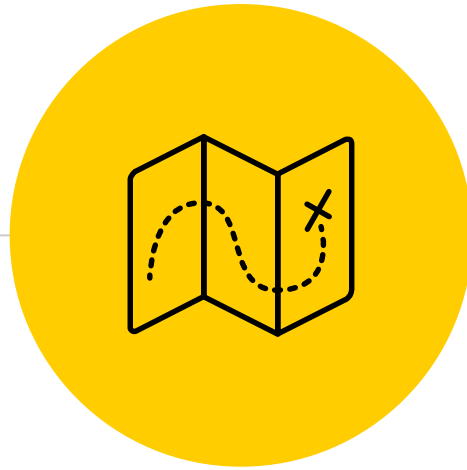
- + Fall 2023 - 2024 (Logistics); Spring 2025 - Summer 2026 (project support)



TEI Projects

- Adaptive TEI network
 - CoLab grant
- Computational Dostoevsky
 - SSHRC
- Lackington 18th Century Bookseller's Catalog
 - Thesis project by UBC faculty member
- Decolonial Wolfgang Paalen Online Archive
 - Grant consultation support





Life Happens

And that changes the plan!



Challenges

- + Scheduling
- + Blurred boundaries
- + Administrative oversight
- + Financials
- + Focus on particular methodology / tool
- + Overlaps with grant requirements
- + Where funding comes from affects which strings are attached. Avoid knots.



Successes

- + Administrative connection was enabling in some cases
 - + Close working relationship and active engagement on TEI development led to SSHRC Grant to host TEI 2026 conference in Vancouver (August 2026)
- + UBC was able to identify core needs and workflows and identify gaps for supporting mature TEI projects
- + SFU was able to test configurations for shared support and identify administrative structures necessary to engage with external projects.



Successes

- + Researcher Engagement:
 - + TEI Summer Sessions: one session had 100% attendance from 3 universities for a 4-hour workshop! 13 attendees total (5 faculty members; 5 graduate students; and 2 undergrads).
- + Ripple Effects:
 - + Student training and opportunities; growth in the regional TEI research community; all sorts of serendipitous encounters.



Lessons Learned



Lessons

- 1** Circumstances need to align to take advantage of partnership
- 2** Defining and targeting areas for each institution to build capacity and areas that are more amiable to a shared resource approach
- 3** When sharing resources across institutions, being part of individual project is easier to administer and functionally accomplish vs. being part of a group



Looking Ahead

- + We will continue to explore ways to collaborate!
 - + Including mechanisms to support the growing TEI research community developed through the partnership.
- + For project in need to advanced TEI support connection with DHIL as a formal grant partner will be recommended
- + DiSA is exploring a next phase



Get in Touch

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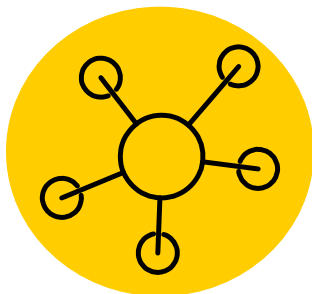
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Resources

- + Visit the [DiSA-DHIL GitHub](#) for the Adaptive TEI Network pilot projects
- + TEI Summer Sessions Build a Hub for Text Encoders, <https://disa.arts.ubc.ca/tei-summer-sessions-build-a-hub-for-text-encoders/>
- + SFU Digital Humanities Innovation Lab, <https://www.lib.sfu.ca/help/publish/dh/dhil>
- + UBC Library Research Commons, <https://researchcommons.library.ubc.ca/>
- + UBC Digital Scholarship in Arts, <https://disa.arts.ubc.ca/>
- + TEI 2026, <https://tei2026.tei-c.org/>