

Report for the “Ethics of Using Digital Media in Arts and Humanities Research Conference”, held on February 22, 2019 at the Graduate School of Arts, Languages and Cultures. The conference was organised by Maria Paula Arias, second-year PhD Museology student (mariapaula.arias@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk).

The event was a continuation of the 2017 Researching Digital Cultural Heritage conference (organised by the University of Manchester and Newcastle University), with an emphasis towards post-graduate researchers and early career researchers and academics. The goal was to have focused presentations and discussions on the ethical considerations we need to give to research that uses or studies digital media.

The event consisted of presentations, keynote, and workshop discussions. The presenters and keynote represented five academic institutions (University of Leeds, University of Oslo, University of York, Cardiff University, and University of Manchester). The presentation topics included: exploring the existing ethical frameworks for collecting social media content in museums (Arran Rees), the practicalities and impact of using social media for heritage research (Emily Oswald), a proposed framework for conducting ethical archaeologies within the immaterial spaces of online games (L. Meghan Dennis), a reflection on the potential impact of museological research based on a case study (Maria Paula Arias) and an exploration of the academic ethical approval processes and the potential barriers these may pose to conducting research.

Dr. Jenny Kidd gave the keynote presentation in which she asked “how might we begin to articulate and understand the harm that digital cultural heritage research can do? And who gets to decide what being ethical within these contexts actually means?”. Dr. Kidd reflects on the existing frameworks that we work with as part of our research and calls for a shift in our approach — in favour of one where ethical considerations and decisions are integrated from the outset and throughout research projects. Dr. Kidd’s keynote, and the subsequent question and answer period, was recorded — the video may be found here:

[https://youtu.be/Qd\\_gb0UeUJU](https://youtu.be/Qd_gb0UeUJU)

More information about the presenters and the keynote may be found on the conference website: <https://digitalheritageresearch.wordpress.com/conference-2019/abstracts-and-bios/> One of our volunteers from Digital Futures wrote a brief report of the conference: <http://www.digitalfutures.manchester.ac.uk/news/latest-stories-updates/ethics-of-using-digital-media-in-arts-and-humanities-research-conference/>

The workshop discussions were based on questions raised by participants during the registration process, where they were asked “What are the key questions/challenges/issues regarding the ethical considerations of using digital media in arts and humanities research that you’d like to discuss at the conference?” Although the discussion was lively we were unfortunately interrupted by a fire alarm.

The conference was advertised via email and marketed through Twitter — particularly through the use of the event’s hashtag [#digheritage19](#) and various accounts, including personal and institutional accounts (such as @ariasmariap, @UoMICP, @digheritage17).

Registration was free and participants were asked to register their attendance through Eventbrite: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/ethics-of-using-digital-media-in-arts-and-humanities-research-conference-registration-53725781258>

In total 44 individuals registered, 6 cancelled before the event, and only 13 attended (not including speakers and volunteers). Attendees came from the University of Glasgow, University of Graz, AIU Centre and Digital Futures at the University of Manchester.

The event was funded by arts@methods and The North West Consortium Doctoral Training Partnership. Please see the separate document for budget allocation and expenses.

Overall, the conference was a success. The delegates were engaged and participated wholeheartedly. At the end of the day it the participants decided that the best way to move forward is to create an online space where we could continue our conversations, share our knowledge, and organise any future events. As such, a [Slack channel](#) was created where we will have been sharing any photos and recordings of the conference, presentation slides (that are available), and any additional resources relevant to the conference.