

Cambridge Digital Humanities Graduate Programs

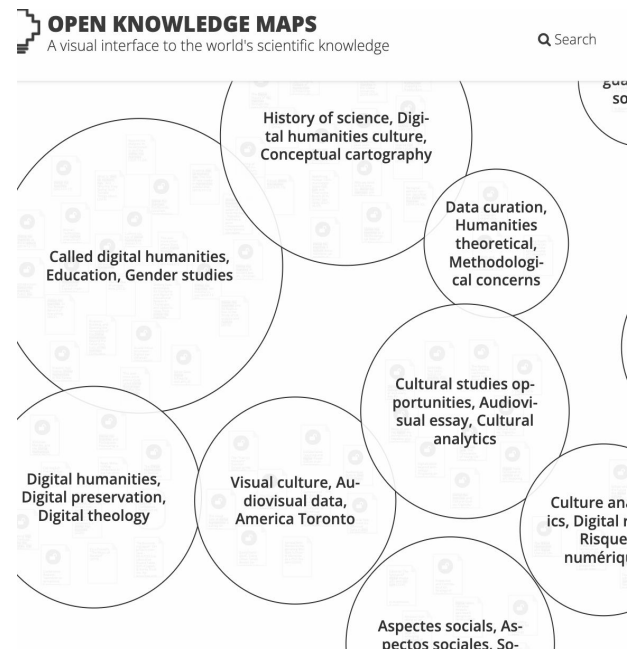
Information Session
Autumn 2023

What is DH

Digital Humanities:

→ encompassing **work on the cultural, social, and epistemic impacts of digital technologies** (around data, on everyday life, in relation to literary, cultural forms, medium studies, including issues of technocratic rationality, power and justice);

- digital research methodologies;
- computational humanities;
- digital libraries and archival-based research;
- digital performance and exhibition (including in cultural institutions);
- research exploring cultural and social impacts of emerging technologies – notably around data, and AI informed developments in, for example, face recognition, automatic writing and the social/cultural implications of robotics.



What is CDH

- **generate and develop Digital Humanities** scholarship across the arts and humanities
- **create and deliver research** projects
- **explore** emerging research areas
- **collaborate** with international partners
 - Cambridge University Library
 - Cambridge University collections
 - multiple faculties and research centres
 - international partners in Europe and the US

Our aim is to further an expansive form of Digital Humanities encompassing work with

- **Collections,**
- **literature** as digital humanities,
- **global digital** humanities,
- **critical media** theorization,
- digital **media**,
- **methodological advancement**,
- future and **emerging technologies** including **AI** and **machine learning**.



Cambridge Digital Humanities Graduate Research Community

Graduate research seminars

Professor Roopika Risam *Digital Borders, Digital Bodies: Postcolonial Digital Humanities in Practice*

Mercedes Bunz *On Digital Intelligence*

Shauna Concannon *Methodologies for mining meaning from text*

Ruth Ahnert *Networking Letters; Networking Archives*

Geoff Cox *Learning experiments in computer vision and visual literacy*

Tomasz Hollanek *The Ethico-Politics of Design Toolkits*

Louise Amore *Machine Learning Political Orders*

(2022-2023)

Lecture series

2023-2024

“Theories and
Frameworks of DH”

**Michaelmas
Term**

Friday 10-12.
13.10-10.11

Anne Alexander

Siddharth Soni

Giulia Grisot

Annja Neumann

Hugo Leal

Technology, automation and power

Colonial and digital archives

Geography of literature

Digital bodies, digital theatres

Networks and Complexity

Lent Term

Caroline Bassett

Anne Alexander

Caroline Bassett

Hugo Leal

Leonardo Impett

Theorising technology

Ghostfictions / writing and computing

Anti-computing

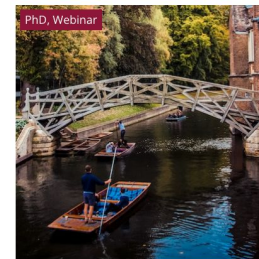
Technological Determinism

*DH and Artificial Intelligence: new
questions*

Wider resources

Cambridge is full of research events, talks, seminars, exhibitions...

- Departmental and faculty seminars, e.g.
 - <https://www.english.cam.ac.uk/seminars/>
 - <https://www.hoart.cam.ac.uk/seminars/the-visual-culture-seminars>
 - <https://www.mml.cam.ac.uk/film/research/seminars>
 - <https://www.hist.cam.ac.uk/research-seminars>
 - <https://www.hps.cam.ac.uk/news-events/seminars-reading-groups> ...
- Cambridge Talks (central repo): <https://talks.cam.ac.uk/>
- College events (e.g. "Darwin College Lecture Series")
- Library and museum events (University Library, Fitzwilliam, ...)
- CDH events (<https://www.cdh.cam.ac.uk/events/>)
- **Make use of the Cambridge ecosystem!**



27 Sep 2023

PhD in Digital Humanities:
information session for
applicants
(Session 1 of 2)



27 Sep 2023

MPhil in Digital Humanities:
information session for
applicants
(Session 1 of 2)



4 Oct 2023

Is that all there is? Digital Art
as Spectacle Critical Reflection
on Technology | Operator
(Ania Catherine and Dejha Ti)



11 Oct 2023

The Cultural Politics of Code
reading group: an
introduction to Critical Code
Studies

CDH Teaching Team

Anne Alexander

Senior Research Associate; Learning Director

Her research interests include **ethics of big data, activist media in the Middle East and the political economy of the Internet.**

Anne is interested in supervising doctoral projects in the following areas: Social movements and media activism, the political economy of the internet and data infrastructures (especially related to the Middle East or the Global South more generally), applied AI for knowledge production in the humanities and social sciences.



Caroline Bassett

Caroline supervises doctoral students across a wide range of areas – including in digital media arts/media practice fields, maker-spaces and galleries, **critical theory**, **automation anxiety and refusal**, **black history and the digital humanities**, algorithmic subjectivities, **feminism**, **big data and algorithmic justice**, Science fiction, media archaeology, net histories.

She welcomes applications across the field of digital humanities, digital media studies – particularly proposals for research exploring critical theories of technology, media archaeology, feminism and technology, utopianism, automatic writing, science fiction and futures, epistemic cultures and AI.



Jonathan Blaney

Jonathan is Digital Humanities **Research Software Engineer at CDH**. Previously he worked on Digital Humanities projects at the Institute of Historical Research, University of London, and before that at the Oxford Digital Library in the Bodleian. Going back even further, he worked as a **lexicographer** at Oxford University Press, across the range of English dictionaries and thesauruses.



Giulia Grisot

Giulia Grisot is Teaching Associate at CDH for the MPhil in Digital Humanities.

Her current research focuses on the investigation of **culture and identity in literary texts, using NLP and machine learning to examine represented space and encoded sentiments**. As an applied linguist, she is also interested in the mechanisms by which humans process and understand language and literature, and in the ways linguistic data can be explored computationally.



Leonardo Impett

Leo is interested in supervising doctoral projects in the following areas: **computational and quantitative approaches to art and cultural history; critical computer vision, critical AI studies**; historical/critical/cultural studies of training dataset and neural architectures; AI in image generation, contemporary art, and curation.



Huw Jones

Huw is the Head of the Digital **Library** Unit, Digital Humanities Coordinator and the first point of contact with many DH research projects through CDH Labs. He has a broad range of experience in **content-driven DH work**, including collaborations with the Newton Project, the Darwin Correspondence Project, the Casebooks Project and many others. He has a particular focus on **text encoding**, and co-convenes the TEI strand of the Oxford Digital Humanities Summer School.



Hugo Leal

Dr Hugo Leal is a Teaching Associate at CDH for the MPhil in Digital Humanities. He is also the Research Associate at the Minderoo Centre for Technology and Democracy (MCTD) based in CRASSH.

Hugo combines research and teaching activities at the intersection of **collective action and digital technologies**. He has been looking at the **networked diffusion of social movements and ideas**. His investigation on misinformation and conspiracy theories intends to trace the lifecycle of viral narratives, their strategic use and societal impacts in a variety of areas, from the emergence of nativism to science denial.



Annja Neumann

Annja Neumann is an Affiliated Lecturer in Modern German Studies and Isaac Newton Trust Post-doctoral Research Fellow in Digital Humanities. Her practice-based research explores the **staging of spaces and politics of embodiment**, with a particular interest in the theatricalisation of medical spaces.



Siddharth Soni

Siddharth Soni is the Isaac Newton Trust Research Fellow at CDH, and his work is largely within **comparative literature and comparative cultural studies**. He is currently writing a monograph on the anti-colonial Indian short story alongside working on the DH project World Short Story Index. His research and teaching within DH covers critical archive studies, literature as an archive, medium theory, and Indigenous and postcolonial digital humanities. He is the convenor of the 'Digital Afterlives' research network at CDH.



MPhil in Digital Humanities

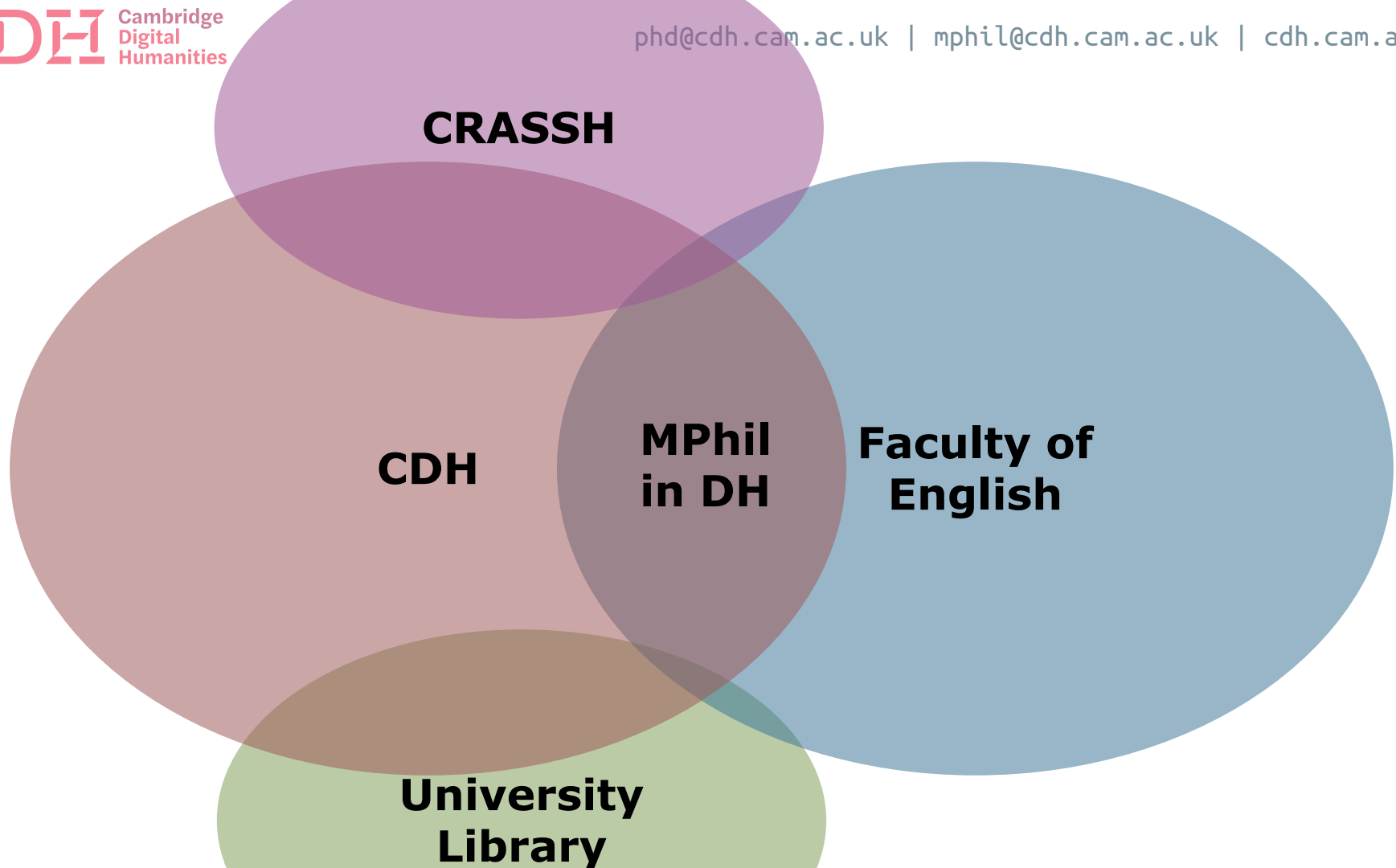
The program

Not a coding course: but a mixture of methodologies and concepts from the arts, humanities, social sciences and computer science

Individual flexibility: you decide the topics of your assessment and $\sim 2/3$ of the taught course content

Diverse disciplinary backgrounds: you could follow a technical 'computational humanities' path or you could sit squarely on the critique of technology

Research-led: in both the content and the style of teaching, and in what you are expected to do and learn



Applicant Background

Background

Digital Humanities is an intrinsically interdisciplinary field: we therefore will consider candidates with any academic undergraduate degree. You might have a grounding in **History, Archaeology, Literature, Linguistics, Art History, Economics, Computer Science, etc.**

The degree itself involves working with a range of materials from Cambridge Libraries, Museums and Collections and other disciplines. Whatever your background, we are looking forward to hearing from you.

Requirements

You must have a **good 2:1 Honours Degree** – an average mark of 67 or more for your undergraduate degree

Continuing

- Stay in DH! A fast-growing research area with opportunities both in the humanities and sciences
- Return to your 'home' discipline. DH skills are widely sought after.
- GLAM careers; galleries, libraries, archives, museums, creative industries, digital media industries and media arts
- Stay in Cambridge! Apply for the PhD in Digital Humanities - normally with a mark of 70+ overall and in the dissertation.

Michaelmas: 'Core' Courses

Core Course 1: Digital Humanities Methods and Orientations

provides a critical introduction to digital humanities methods and orientations with a focus on collections data. Digital technologies are transforming the ways in which collections and archives of all kinds are theorised, understood, collated, re-built and re-thought, and by using the lifecycle of a DH project as a framework, students will gain a thorough grounding in the selection, application and evaluation of DH methods

Core Course 2: Critical Technical Practice

If Computational Thinking teaches us how to think like a computer, this course tries to explore why and how computers 'think' the way they do. It is primarily a theoretical course, and will mostly not involve looking at or writing code. It will give students the opportunity to learn about the theories, technical principles, and assumptions behind the key technologies of computation.

Lent: Option Courses

Digital Forms: how can we theorise about technology?

Digital and Media Art: how do digital arts intersect with digital humanities?

Distant Reading: theory and practice of reading literature with computers

Emancipatory Digital Practices: how can technology free us from itself?

Digital Visual Cultures: from computers in art history to AI art

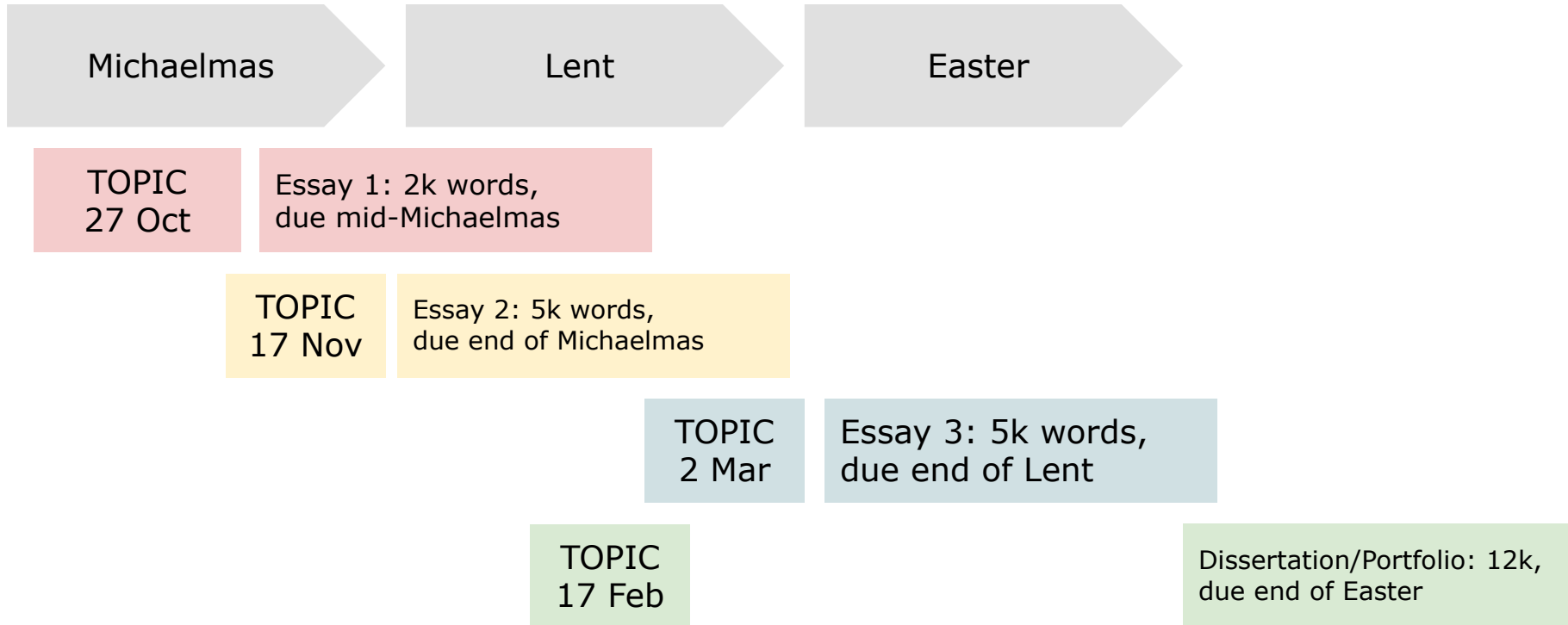
Global Digital Humanities: what is the colonial and postcolonial role of the digital?

Materialities of the Digital: how is cyberspace determined by physical, material infrastructure?

Components of the MPhil

<i>Michaelmas Term</i>	<i>Lent Term</i>	<i>Easter Term</i> 25 April - 16 June
Core Course 1 (Huw Jones)	Option Course 1	Individual supervision; Lots of research; Lots of writing!
Core Course 2 (Leonardo Impett)	Option Course 2	
MPhil Lecture series	MPhil Lecture series	
Individual supervision	Individual supervision	
Drop-in technical sessions	Drop-in technical sessions	
Cambridge Digital Humanities Research Seminars	Cambridge Digital Humanities Research Seminars	

Assessment



Assessment

Essay 1

- 2,000 words by 10 November
- Topic relating to your dissertation/portfolio
- Don't just write chapter 1 of your dissertation! You cannot resubmit material
- Pass/resubmit; doesn't count to your final grade

Essay 2 & Essay 3

- 5,000 words each, at the end of Michaelmas and Lent terms
- Topic of your choice, within the field of the digital humanities
- Each counts for 20% of your final grade

Portfolio/Dissertation...

Portfolio/Dissertation

Dissertation

- 12,000 words
- Substantial individual scholarly project; roughly 50% of your time in the course
- Sheds new light on a question in Digital Humanities scholarship/research; shaping that question is a key element in writing a successful dissertation
- May be the largest piece of work you have undertaken so far - structuring the argument and writing and good planning of drafts are essential

Portfolio

- Same amount of work; different format!
- Includes a smaller dissertation (8,000 words): reflects on theoretical/critical issues, wider context and implications within the discipline
- Also includes a project report (4,000 words): a description of what you did practically in the project: methodology, data, processes

Both dissertation or portfolio can include technical appendices; e.g. video, images, sound. Appendices are agreed with the Postgraduate Studies Committee. We **cannot mark code** (but we can mark projects which *use* code).

Example Dissertation Titles

Aping Aura: NFTs, Computational Capital and the Materiality of Digital Objects

The Edges of Tango: A Computational Analysis of Early 20th Century Tango Sheet-Music from Cambridge University Library

pov: you're reading a paper on internet aesthetics, playlisting practices, and superculture

Digital Repatriation: Critical Reflections on 3D Digital Projects for Museum Decolonisation

Resources at Cambridge and Example Projects

MPhil applicants who aren't familiar with resources at Cambridge might start by browsing the resources below. Descriptions are provided by Cambridge University collections specifically hoping to work with Digital Humanities students.

Cambridge University Library

Joseph Needham and Dorothy Needham papers

The Needham papers consist of travel diaries and photographs, predominantly of journeys in China in the mid-twentieth century. Diaries are largely transcribed and available as TEI XML. Photographs are also described in TEI, with short captions. There is potential for using NER to recognise names, dates, places in text and map the journeys themselves, and to relate diary entries to related photographs. There is also potential for visual search etc. to do automated enrichment of photograph captions.

Oliver Rackham notebooks

The notebooks of Cambridge Botanist Oliver Rackham span many decades and record his research into landscape history and plant species distribution, largely in the United Kingdom. A good number of the notebooks have crowdsourced transcriptions. Entries tend to be structured by date, place and species lists (with other information, plus maps, diagrams etc.). There is potential for Natural Language Processing to be used to extract dataset of plant species distribution over time/place from the text, and possibly to compare or combine with other datasets. Computer vision could be used to do something with the many illustrations and diagrams available.

Royal Commonwealth Society

PhD in Digital Humanities

Program structure

- Supervisor vs advisor
- Full time (3-4 years) or part time (5-7 years) option
- Examination by thesis: 80,000 words
- Classes and seminars throughout (graduate research seminars)
- Wider research community, including e.g. reading groups, united lectures etc
- Training and development sessions: from preparing a book proposal to specific technical DH skills

Applicant Background

Digital Humanities is an intrinsically interdisciplinary field: we therefore will consider candidates from almost any academic field. You might have a grounding in **History, Archaeology, Literature, Linguistics, Art History, Economics, Computer Science**, etc. The degree itself involves working with a range of materials from Cambridge Libraries, Museums and Collections and other disciplines.

Applicants for this course should have achieved a **UK Masters (Merit)**.

If your degree is not from the UK, please check International Qualifications to find the equivalent in your country.

Application details

Fees & Funding

Anyone who applies to a postgraduate course at Cambridge can also apply to be considered for funding.

Every year the University of Cambridge awards over £100m in scholarships to new postgraduate students. This money comes from many generous University and College endowments, as well as government Research Council (UKRI) funds. A lot of our students also fund their studies from external sources such as charities or government schemes and loans.

General information found at:

<https://www.postgraduate.study.cam.ac.uk/funding-overview>

Deadlines

Applications for the PhD in Digital Humanities open on 4 September 2023.

The deadline for Gates (US) scholarships is 11 October 2023 (<https://www.gatescambridge.org/apply/timeline/>).

The deadline for all other applications - including non-US Gates - is 4 January 2024.

Application process

1. Apply for the course (Winter 2023 - earlier if Gates)
2. Apply for funding (as above)
3. Admissions (Spring 2024)
4. Supervisor allocation (Summer 2024)
5. Welcome to Cambridge! (October 2024)

Application material

- Grades transcript
- Language requirements
- CV / Resume
- 2 academic references
- Cover letter
- Research proposal: 500 words (MPhil), 800 words (PhD)
- Sample of work: 3000-5000 words (MPhil), 5000-7000 words (PhD)

We look forward to seeing you in Cambridge!



Drop us a line

General Enquiries:

mphil@cdh.cam.ac.uk

Postgraduate Administrator (Suzanne Daley):

sd250@cam.ac.uk

Admissions Enquiries:

www.postgraduate.study.cam.ac.uk/contact-form

Twitter:

twitter.com/camdighum