

GIS in the Digital Humanities: An introductory workshop

Maximum Number of Participants: 30

Date: Tuesday, July 8, 2014 – 13:00 to 16:00

Facilitator(s):

Ian Gregory, Department of History, Lancaster University
Elton Barker, Department of Classical Studies, Open University
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Overview:

Geographical Information Systems (GIS) are becoming increasingly used by historians, archaeologists, literary scholars, classicists and other humanities scholars with an interest in the geographies of the past. To date, however, adoption of the technology has been hampered by a lack of understanding of what GIS is and what it has to offer to these disciplines. This introductory workshop, will provide a basic overview of GIS as both an approach to academic study and as a technology. Its key aims are: To establish why the use of GIS is important to the humanities; to stress the key abilities offered by GIS, particularly the capacity to integrate, analyse and visualise data from many different types of sources; to show the pitfalls associated with GIS and thus encourage a more informed and subtle understanding of the technology; and, to provide a basic overview of GIS software and data. The workshop combines an overview of what GIS and what it has to offer to the humanities. It presents contrasting case studies of its actual use, and will finish with a roundtable discussion of its potential and pitfalls. Please note that the workshop does not provide hands-on software training, this can be gained from longer courses such as the *Lancaster Summer Schools in Interdisciplinary Digital Methods* at Lancaster University (<http://ucrel.lancs.ac.uk/summerschool>), and the Digital Humanities Summer Institute (DHSI) at the University of Victoria (<http://www.dhsi.org>)

Audience:

The workshop is aimed at a broad audience including post-graduate students, members of academic staff, curriculum and research managers, holders of research grants and those intending to apply for them. The workshop is only intended as an introduction to GIS, so will suit people with no experience or those who want to brush up previous experience. It may also be of interest to people who know GIS well and want to learn about how it can be applied to the humanities.