Beyond the Archive: Mapping the Future of Digital Cultural Heritage

DIGHT-Net Research Seminar
4–6 June 2025
Tallinn University
Estonia

About the Seminar

This three-day seminar is a forum designed to take stock of where the field of digital cultural heritage stands today, and where it might head next. Over the course of 4–6 June, we will move from broad conceptual mapping, through practical digitisation case studies, to the challenges of working with digitised personal archives. Each day brings together scholars and memory institution professionals who have broken new ground – whether by building new research infrastructures, experimenting with AI tools, or negotiating the ethics and sustainability of digital archives.

By interweaving concise "inspiration talks" and academic presentations with extended roundtables, the programme is intended to inspire dialogue rather than broadcast monologues. The aim of the forum is to identify common bottlenecks – technical, legal, or conceptual – and to sketch collaborative solutions that can travel across national and disciplinary borders. Estonia's own fast-growing digital heritage ecosystem provides a living laboratory for many of the questions we shall debate. The event also serves as a launching pad for a prospective Digital Cultural Heritage Research Hub at Tallinn University – an initiative that seeks to consolidate scattered expertise and co-ordinate future grant applications.

Programme

4 June 2025 — Digital Cultural Heritage Studies: Where We Stand

Tallinn University, Mare building (Uus-Sadama 5), room M-648

14:00–14:05 **Marek Tamm** (Tallinn University): Opening words
14:05–14:20 **Daniele Monticelli** (Tallinn University): Introduction: How and Why to Build a Digital Cultural Heritage Research Hub?
14:20–15:20 Inspiration Talks I
    Alba Irollo (Europeana Foundation)
    Christian Olesen (University of Amsterdam)
    Ivan Kisjes (University of Amsterdam)
    Hannu Salmi (University of Turku)
15:20–15:45 Coffee break
15:45–16:30 Inspiration Talks II
    Johanna Lilja (National Library of Finland)
    Pille Runnel (Estonian National Museum)
    Indrek Ibrus (Tallinn University)
16:30–17:00 Coffee break
17:00–18:30 Roundtable: Digital Cultural Heritage in Estonia
    Participants: **Pille Runnel** (Estonian National Museum), **Kristlyn Liier** (The National Heritage Board of Estonia), **Eva Näripea** (Estonian National Archives).
    Chair: **Marek Tamm** (Tallinn University)
19:00 Dinner (for seminar speakers)

5 June 2025 — Digitising Cultural Heritage

Tallinn University, Mare building (Uus-Sadama 5), room M-648

10:15–10:30 **Ihab Saloul** (University of Amsterdam): Introduction
10:30–11:15 **Ivan Kisjes** (University of Amsterdam): Techniques for Cultural Heritage Digitization: Lessons from the Amsterdam Time Machine
11:15–12:00 **Christian Olesen** (University of Amsterdam): Unlocking the Jean Desmet Collection in the Media Suite: Approaches to Annotation and Critical Editions for AV Collections
12:00–12:45 **Johanna Lilja** (National Library of Finland): Digitisation and Sustainable Development: A Finnish Perspective
12:45–14:15 Lunch (for all participants)
14:15–15:00 **Alba Irollo** (Europeana Foundation): From Principles to Practice: Making FAIR Concrete in "Collections as Data"
15:00–17:30 Roundtable Discussion: Digitising Cultural Heritage

Participants: **Alba Irollo** (Europeana Foundation), **Ivan Kisjes** (University of Amsterdam), **Johanna Lilja** (National Library of Finland), **Christian Olesen** (University of Amsterdam)

Chair: **Mila Oiva** (University of Turku)

19:00 Dinner (for seminar speakers)

6 June 2025 — Personal Archives: Processes of Digitisation and Digital Research

Tallinn University, Mare building (Uus-Sadama 5), room M-648

09:30–09:45 **Hannu Salmi** (University of Turku): Introduction

09:45–10:30 **Outi Hupaniittu** (Finnish Literature Society): What is Possible and Reasonable, What is Unfeasible and Impossible? Perspectives on Digitisation of Private Archives

10:30–11:15 **Alois Pichler** (University of Bergen): Digital Research on Wittgenstein's *Nachlass*: From String Search to Generative AI

11:15–11:30: Short comfort break

11:30–12:15 **Anneli Kivisiv** (Arvo Pärt Centre): Daily Multitasking With a Living Person's Open Archive

12:15–13:00 **Merit Maran** (Tallinn University): Building the Digital Archive of Juri Lotman: Current Challenges and Future Perspectives

13:00–14:00 Lunch (for all participants)