



**Sustainable, Usable and Visible Digital Cultural Heritage:  
Twinning for Excellence (DIGHT-Net)**

# **DIGHT-Hub Action and Sustainability Plan.**

## **Statute of the DIGHT-Hub**

**Version 1.0 (September 2025)**

**Lead Institution:** Tallinn University

**Partners:** University of Bologna, University of Amsterdam, University of Turku

The DIGHT-Hub will be a research hub within the School of Humanities at Tallinn University, serving as a platform for international and interdisciplinary research on digital cultural heritage. It aims to connect researchers, practitioners, policymakers, and citizens to foster innovation in the field. Establishing the DIGHT-Hub at Tallinn University is crucial for enabling TLU to become an internationally recognized centre for digital cultural heritage studies.

### **Objectives of the DIGHT-Hub**

The DIGHT-Hub aims to support digital cultural heritage research, enable collaboration, and foster knowledge exchange. It:

- Serves as a network node connecting project partners by ensuring the continuous dissemination of information. DIGHT-Hub will serve as a platform where all participants can share and access information about the latest research, conferences, publications, funding opportunities, etc.
- Acts as a connection point for new joint projects and proposals.
- Integrates the interdisciplinary Digital Cultural Heritage course into TLU's MA in Contemporary Culture, and develops other training options for people working with digital cultural heritage in Estonia.
- Develops, tests, and disseminates practical guidelines and resources (e.g., for digitization, data management, AI usage) based on project findings and community needs analysis, making them openly accessible.
- Engages in outreach: public articles, policy briefs, international seminars, and collaborations with Estonian and international cultural and memory institutions.
- Organizes doctoral schools, thematic workshops, and online seminars, each focusing on a specific area within digital cultural heritage.

## **Sustainability**

The main cornerstones for the sustainability of the DIGHT-Hub are:

- The symbiotic partnership between the DIGHT-Hub, the School of Humanities of Tallinn University and the Juri Lotman Semiotics Repository, which stand as pivotal cornerstones in ensuring the sustainability of the hub.
- Perpetuating the dissemination of knowledge and findings with students and researchers.
- Fostering dialogue with fellow researchers – maintaining collaboration and exchange of experiences and methodologies.
- Maintaining the established collaboration with project partners beyond the DIGHT-Net project's end and foster new innovative collaborations and expand our network to encompass a broader array of endeavours.

## **Sustainability Measures**

To ensure that DIGHT-Hub continues beyond initial project funding and remains relevant:

1. Institutionalization: Embed DIGHT-Hub in the formal structure of the School of Humanities of Tallinn University, so that it's not seen as a "project" but as part of the core operations.
2. Capacity building: Train multiple people (not just one expert) in each key role (technology, documentation, outreach) to reduce single-point failures.
3. Open standards and interoperability: Use open, community-accepted standards for metadata, formats, APIs etc., to ensure that data held by the hub remain usable even if technology changes.
4. Sustainability of infrastructure: Maintain good digital preservation, backup, and migration strategies; plan for hardware/software refresh cycles; document all systems heavily.
5. Engagement and community: Maintain a community of users (students, researchers, cultural institutions) who contribute to, use, and advocate for DIGHT-Hub.

6. Financial diversification: Avoid relying solely on one source of funding. Mix grants, institutional budget, possibly paid services (e.g. consulting, training) if appropriate and aligned with mission.

7. Visibility and impact measurement: Regularly communicate outcomes, success stories, publications. Track impact (number of users, reuse of data, citations), to make the case to funders and institutional leadership for continued support.

### Action Plan: Goals of the Activities

- Develop and maintain mechanisms so that new findings, tools, methods are available to students, researchers, and practitioner communities by: (1) Establishing a publicly accessible online repository (using the European Open Science Cloud) to host project publications, datasets, code, and training materials. (2) Creating and maintaining a “DIGHT-Hub Knowledge Base” – a wiki-style platform where project partners, students, and community members can collaboratively document and share best practices, methodologies, and tool tutorials.
- Sustain and deepen cooperation with partner institutions, external stakeholders, cultural heritage repositories, and international networks by: (1) Formalizing partnerships with the identified stakeholders (universities, research centres, memory institutions, NGOs, policymakers) through Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) that outline specific collaborative activities and resource sharing arrangements. (2) Organize regular joint workshops and seminars with partner institutions, focusing on specific themes within digital cultural heritage and inviting external stakeholders (cultural heritage repositories, community members). This could be expanded further including the creation of new Twinned Digital Archive of Juri Lotman and Umberto Eco.
- Maintain, update, and secure the digital infrastructure – the repositories, databases, platforms – so they remain usable, accessible, and interoperable over time by: (1) Implementing a robust digital preservation plan that includes regular data backups, format migration strategies, and metadata enrichment to ensure the long-term accessibility and usability of DIGHT-Hub resources. (2) Allocating resources to regularly audit the DIGHT-Hub infrastructure for security vulnerabilities and implement necessary patches and updates to safeguard data and systems from unauthorized access.
- Identify funding streams (institutional, grants, service revenues) and embed the DIGHT-Hub within host institution’s support structure to ensure long-term viability by: 1) Conducting a funding landscape analysis to identify relevant national, European, and international funding opportunities for digital cultural heritage research and development; 2) On this basis, preparing a series of cooperative applications for funding of new projects connected with the DIGHT-hub; 3) Developing connections with the cultural heritage industry to identify potential points of collaboration.

### Actions and milestones

Action	Responsible Party	Timeline	Output / Milestones
<b>Develop an internal training programme</b> for students and early-career researchers on	Hub management + academic staff	Year 1 (months 1-12)	Regular workshops / seminars; training materials; feedback/evaluation reports.

Action	Responsible Party	Timeline	Output / Milestones
DIGHT-Hub tools, methods, and standards.			
<b>Set up regular researcher exchange fora</b> (e.g. monthly meetings or online seminars) to share experiences, use cases, best practices.	Hub + partner institutions	Year 1 onward	At least 2 fora per semester; published summary of lessons and refined methodologies.
<b>Ensure the repository / platform's technical maintenance</b> (software updates, security, backups, digital preservation).	Technical team / IT at TLU	Continuous	System uptime metrics; version upgrade log; disaster recovery plan in place.
<b>Implement a user-support and documentation strategy:</b> clear guides, FAQs, code documentation, metadata standards.	Hub + documentation specialist	Year 1 (months 3-12)	Up-to-date user guides; online help portal; metrics of usage / support requests answered.
<b>Forge and maintain external partnerships:</b> with cultural heritage institutions, museums, libraries, other universities.	Hub coordination; external relations office	Year 1-2	Formal MoUs or cooperation agreements; joint projects; partner feedback.
<b>Diversify funding sources:</b> apply for EU/international grants; seek institutional funding; explore service provisions.	Hub leadership; grant office	Year 1-3	At least 1 new grant proposal per year; institutional budget line established; perhaps revenue from training or consultation.
<b>Integrate DIGHT-Hub into TLU's institutional strategy</b> so that staffing, infrastructure, budgets are guaranteed.	Hub + TLU upper management	Year 1-2	Formal inclusion in the university's strategic plan; dedicated staff positions; recurring budget allocation.
<b>Monitoring and evaluation:</b> set KPIs for usage, participation, outputs, partner satisfaction.	Hub evaluation team	Every 6 months	KPI report; review meetings; adjustments to strategy as needed.

# Statute of the DIGHT-Hub

Version 1.0 (September 2025)

## 1. General Provisions

- 1.1. The DIGHT-Hub is an academic, research, and training network operating under the School of Humanities at Tallinn University (hereinafter referred to as the “School”).
- 1.2. The activities of the DIGHT-Hub are coordinated with the School’s administrative office.
- 1.3. The DIGHT-Hub is headed by a staff member of the School appointed by the Director.
- 1.4. The DIGHT-Hub contributes to the implementation of the objectives of the Tallinn University Development Plan 2023–2027 in the fields of cultural competences and digital and media culture.

## 2. Objectives and Functions

2.1 The mission of the DIGHT-Hub is to address the questions related to the potential use and sustainability of the digitised materials, providing better access to digital cultural content by implementing smart technologies and creating connections between various regions and institutions, educating a new generation of experts able to work with the digital preservation of cultural heritage and critically reflect upon our digitally mediated relationship with the past.

2.2. The objectives of the DIGHT-Hub are to:

2.2.1. Serve as a network node connecting project partners by ensuring the continuous dissemination of information. DIGHT-Hub will serve as a platform where all participants can share and access information about the latest research, conferences, publications, funding opportunities, etc.

2.2.2. Apply for and coordinate development and research projects in the relevant fields;

2.2.3. Teaching and training: integrating the interdisciplinary Digital Cultural Heritage course into TLU’s MA in Contemporary Culture, and developing other training options for people working with digital cultural heritage in Estonia.

2.2.4. Develop various guidelines and resources for digital cultural heritage practitioners (for example, guidelines for digitisation of scholarly archives, data management in digital archives, or AI usage in digital collections); continue expanding the e-lexicon of digital cultural heritage studies and curating the video collection of lectures and workshops on digital cultural heritage.

2.2.5. Engage in outreach: public articles, policy briefs, international seminars, and collaborations with Estonian and international cultural institutions.

2.2.6. provide development opportunities for the Early Career Researchers

2.3. The objectives shall be achieved, inter alia, through the following activities:

- 2.3.1. Maintaining and developing relations with the partners and finding new partners.
  - 2.3.2. Applying for development and research projects;
  - 2.3.3. Coordinating development and research projects in these fields;
  - 2.3.4. Developing methodologies for preserving, interpreting and understanding digital cultural heritage;
  - 2.3.5. Planning and organizing scientific conferences, seminars, public lectures, training courses, and other events;
  - 2.3.6. Publishing research results and other information and disseminating scientific information;
  - 2.3.7. Popularizing knowledge and research related to the digital cultural heritage;
  - 2.3.8. Preparing expert opinions and analyses on issues related to digital cultural heritage;
- 2.4. The DIGHT-Hub shall cooperate with:
- 2.4.1. Juri Lotman Semiotic Repository;
  - 2.4.2. with other research, development, and memory institutions, as well as scientific societies in Estonia and abroad

### **3. Organisation and Membership**

- 3.1. The Head of the DIGHT-Hub shall ensure the DIGHT-Hub's functioning, participant involvement, administration, reporting, organisation of joint activities, and the fulfilment of objectives.
- 3.2. Membership in the DIGHT-Hub is open to all researchers of Tallinn University or other universities and research and development institutions who are engaged in the fields of digital cultural heritage. Researchers wishing to become members of the DIGHT-Hub shall submit a short statement of interest to the Head of the DIGHT-Hub.
- 3.3. To organise its activities and decide on current matters, the DIGHT-Hub shall have a Management Board composed of at least five members, including the Head of the DIGHT-Hub, the Head of the Juri Lotman's Semiotic Repository, one representative from each area of the DIGHT-Hub's activities, and one external member appointed by the Director.
- 3.4. The regular working format of the Management Board of the DIGHT-Hub shall be a quarterly meeting.
- 3.5. The DIGHT-Hub shall have an International Advisory Board to provide advice on various aspects of its activities, including strategic development, research directions, and international cooperation.
- 3.6. The Head of the DIGHT-Hub shall submit to the Director of the School an annual action plan for the DIGHT-Hub and, after the end of each year, a report on the implementation of the action plan.