The Digital Methods Initiative (DMI) develops medium-specific methods for internet research. It achieves that aim, first, by building software tools for collecting, analysing and visualising online data for researchers worldwide. Secondly, it organises workshops for empirical research projects and to train students and scholars in using the tools. Thirdly, DMI researchers disseminate their work by publishing widely in scientific journals and academic presses, exhibiting at media arts spaces and galleries, writing reports, making presentations and providing workshops for governmental, non-governmental and academic audiences.

Research themes

- Links, likes and other natively digital objects
- Website as archived object
- Engine critique and search as research
- Cross-spherical analysis as comparative media studies
- National web studies
- Wikipedia as cultural reference
- Social media data and post-demographics
- Digital methods for issue mapping
- Digital methods theory

DMI has nine research themes, each of which comprises PhD and post-doc projects, software tools, and ongoing academic or field projects with governmental and non-governmental organizations. Digital methods is also taught in MA courses titled Digital Methods for Internet Research and Issue Mapping for Politics. Additionally, DMI members contribute to EU and other funded research projects.

ENVISAGED RESULTS

DMI develops tools and methods for social and cultural research with the web, which are applied worldwide by scholars and practitioners. Much of DMI’s research focuses on mapping social issues, such as climate change, censorship, counter-jihadism and ageing, and is used by academics, funders, governmental agencies, non-governmental organisations, artists, issue professionals and journalists.

WORKPLAN & TIME SCHEDULE

The Digital Methods Initiative organises annual Winter Schools in January and Summer Schools in June/July, together with occasional Fall and Spring data sprints and symposia. The Winter School includes a mini-conference and a workshop. The Summer School offers training in online data collection, software tool use, data visualisation and communicating research results.

SOCIETAL RELEVANCE

DMI has a national and global reach, with a focus on mapping social issues, such as climate change, censorship, counter-jihadism and ageing, and is used by academics, funders, governmental agencies, non-governmental organisations, artists, issue professionals and journalists.

Members

Dr. Almila Akdag Salah, PhD candidate
Dr. Anat Ben-David, PhD candidate
Dr. Tommaso Venturini, PhD candidate
Prof. Dr. Richard Rogers

Sahin Niederer, PhD candidate
Simona Petkova, PhD candidate
Dr. Bernhard Blonder, Associate Professor
Natalia Sanchez Querubin, EU-funded researcher
Nadja Dreesch-Lambert, PhD candidate
Dr. Carolin Gerlitze, Assistant Professor
Anne Holmwood, PhD candidate
Erla Kihlauusen, PhD candidate

Facts & Figures

Current PhD projects: 10
Current Post-Docs: 2
Summer Schools: 6
Founded in: 2007
Winter Schools: 5
Publications: 40+
Visualisations: 250+
Nationalities: 13
Boat trips: 7
Tools created: 60+