Humanities and Data Science Turing Interest Group – annual update summer 2019

David Beavan, Barbara McGillivray, Bea Alex & all TIG members

Much anticipated, and equally overdue (DB: apologies), we (Bea, Barbara, Dave) thought it would be right to share some of the amazing successes of the Humanities and Data Science Turing Interest Group and what we collectively have enabled, both locally and together. Much of this is based upon updates given at our summer AGM, thanks to those participants. It's a real pleasure to see so much happening, keep it up!

For many, the networking opportunities the group has facilitated have been invaluable. This has led to numerous invited talks or panels, invitations to join collaborations or opportunities to reach wider audiences. Being able to frame and develop activities in the wider data science research landscape has helped inspire research, events and conferences. The Turing name gets noticed at senior levels and alignment with it brings respect and opens doors. It also allows for effective networking at each institution, where many Turing Fellows are in disparate, often non-Arts and Humanities, departments. It is also clear that thanks to our activities, the profile of non-STEM subjects in the Turing has been raised, and there is genuine excitement and interest in the challenges we bring. Watch this space for more!

Eight members of the Humanities and Data Science group put on a strong show at the premier, global Digital Humanities conference in Utrecht in July 2019. We put on a panel to a packed audience, featuring the diversity of views and perspectives we have and stimulating thoughts as to where we go next. The group obtained funding from the Turing to sponsor student bursaries.
https://dev.clariah.nl/files/dh2019/boa/0364.html

Started in the group's first AGM in Edinburgh, a sub-group has been working hard on a Data Science and Digital Humanities manifesto, or position paper. The group has identified 20 top priority challenges, and solutions. Discussion from the conference panel, above, helped to shape deliberations. Editing and organising will continue for a launch in 2020.

December was the culmination of 18 months of effort to develop a web archives challenge as a Turing Data Study Group. This week-long collaborative hackathon, 'Discovering topics and trends in the UK Government Web Archive' was made possible by the 12 team members from diverse areas, who volunteered to take part. The National Archives generously supported the challenge and dedicated many resources to the success.
https://www.turing.ac.uk/events/data-study-group-december-2019

The Teaching sub-group held a well-attended workshop, hosted by University College London. Discussed, amongst others, identity of Digital Humanities in terms of a curriculum and what it means to teach Digital Humanities, and the tension between computer

scientists doing humanities, and humanists doing data science. More meetings will take place.

The National Archives, in addition to being challenge lead on the Data Study Group (see above) are leading, with King's College London, the international Computational Archival Science (CAS) network. This network has hosted many fascinating workshops and hackathons during its AHRC funded phase, involving many from this group and held the final symposium and meeting at the Turing in January 2020.
https://computationalarchives.net/

The University of Edinburgh has attracted City Deal/Scottish Government funding for a new text mining platform infrastructure working with members of this group, being built by EDINA. Also, a local Transkribus project is digitising parts of the Scottish Sound Archive. All this in addition to advances in Creative Informatics and the Beyond Conference.
https://edina.ac.uk/our-work/text-and-data-mining/
https://creativeinformatics.org/

Staying north of the border, the National Library of Scotland continues to increase its network of practitioners and researchers to help shape the NLS's data offerings and to reach new audiences. This continues with data collections and the launch of Data Foundry, in addition to collaborations with the University of Edinburgh and further afield.
https://data.nls.uk/

Newcastle University have run various training workshops and digital skills building events. In addition, kindly hosted the Humanities and Data Science Turing Interest Group's Annual General Meeting in September and follow-on public event. Funded work on Animating Text Newcastle University (ATNU) continues to stimulate new collaborations.
https://research.ncl.ac.uk/atnu/

A new Digital Humanities lab is open in Manchester, with a new teaching programme, including learnings from this group. A new Digital Collections image viewer, in collaboration with Cambridge has launched.
https://www.digital-humanities.manchester.ac.uk/
https://www.digitalcollections.manchester.ac.uk/

Digital Humanities at Oxford Summer School goes from strength to strength, involving many from this TIG and highlights the increasing use of data science in the humanities. Oxford is leading music and AI events, featuring new collaborations with composers and the co-creation of music with machines. Strategic work to shape UKRI Research Infrastructure has solicited and represented the views of our network.
https://oerc.ox.ac.uk/news/orchestral-performance-co-created-with-artificial-intelligence-premieres-at-the-barbican/
https://www.infraportal.org.uk/

At the British Library, data science has helped shape their thinking, not least thanks to projects like Living with Machines and the network this group has opened up. A new

postgraduate certificate, Computing for Cultural Heritage, is being developed with The National Archives and Birkbeck University.
https://www.bl.uk/projects/computingculturalheritage/

A new Centre for Doctoral Training in AI and Music at Queen Mary University of London has launched, with 60+ PhD studentships, with the Turing being a partner. The AHRC flagship five-year research project Living with Machines unites QMUL, the Turing, the British Library, Exeter, UEA and Cambridge.
https://www.aim.qmul.ac.uk/
https://livingwithmachines.ac.uk/

The School of Advanced Study has pitted the work of human poetry against AI text generation in a public event 'Our Mutual Friend the Machine', part of the Being Human Festival, to stimulate public discussion. Cross-lingual Event-centric Open Analytics Research Academy (CLEOPATRA) Marie Skłodowska-Curie Innovative Training Network will bring 15 PhD studentships.
http://cleopatra-project.eu/

We have plenty of ideas for future activities and events, including the next annual meeting of the group in London and the publication of our position paper, along with focussed sessions to explore shared challenges with a view to funding bids. We would like to thank the group for contributing exciting conversations over the past year and we look forward to facilitating more exciting achievements in the future.