

## British Library Labs Project Showcase and Ideas Lab (University of Cambridge)

A workshop organised by British Library Labs and the Cambridge Digital Humanities Network (University of Cambridge) as part of the British Library Labs Roadshow (2016).



**Cost:** FREE and open to all.

**Location:** Lecture Room 5, Mill Lane Lecture Rooms, Mill Lane, University of Cambridge.

**Date:** Monday 15th February 2016.

**Event start:** 13:30 (Prompt). **Event ends:** 16:00

**Technical Requirements:** We recommend that you bring a laptop to the event if you would like to access the Labs digital data (see: <http://goo.gl/E8aRyQ>). If you bring a mobile device such as an iPad, Galaxy Tab and Mobile Phone, you will need to install a File Explorer application in order to browse our digital content!

Live tweeting is encouraged using **@BL\_Labs**, **@CamDigHum** and **#bldigital** hashtags.

### BL Labs Roadshow (2016)

Hundreds of thousands of digital items and objects are being created and collected for researchers to use such as digitised manuscripts, sheet music, newspapers, maps, archived websites, radio, performances, TV news broadcasts, and artworks, as well as the more expected items like scanned versions of books.

This wonderful cacophony of content is having a significant effect on how institutions like the British Library support the research needs of their users. Will people discover new information when they are no longer restricted to viewing a single page from a single book at a time? How can the BL build systems that provide a coherent route across its content, regardless of whether it is a televised news report or a unique signature drawn in the margins of a map? How can we use crowd-sourced information, computer vision and machine-learning techniques to provide people with better tools to better judge and interpret the context of illustration or work? How can we exploit animations and interactive infographics to better convey the information found in our holdings?

This is the research space that British Library Labs explores and we want to encourage researchers and scholars to work with us and share their research questions and innovative ideas around this. This informal workshop will showcase some of the British Library's digital content and data and then to get delegates to think ideas for innovative uses of these unique digital data collections.

### Programme\*

(\* Programme and timings subject to change).

#### 13:30 Introduction

*Anne Alexander, Coordinator, Cambridge Digital Humanities Network*

#### 13:40 Doing digital research at the British Library

*Mia Ridge, Digital Curator at the British Library*

The Digital Research Team is a cross-disciplinary mix of curators, researchers, librarians and programmers supporting the creation and innovative use of British Library's digital collections. In this talk, Mia will highlight how we work with those operating at the intersection of academic research, cultural heritage and technology to support new ways of exploring and accessing our collections through; getting content in digital form and online; collaborative projects; offering digital research support and guidance.

## 14:00 British Library Labs Competition and Awards

*Mahendra Mahey, Manager of British Library Labs.*

The British Library Labs project supports and inspires scholars to use the British Library's digital collections in exciting and innovative ways for their research, through various activities such as competitions, awards, events and projects.

Labs will highlight some of the work that they and others are doing around digital content in libraries and also talk about ways to encourage researchers to engage with the British Library. They will present information on the annual BL Labs Competition, which closes this year on **11th April 2016**. Through the Competition, Labs encourages researchers to submit their important research question or creative idea which uses the British Library's digital content and data. Two Competition finalists then work in residence at the British Library for five months and then showcase the results of their work at the annual Labs Symposium in November 2016, where they will receive their prize.

Labs will also discuss the annual BL Labs Awards which recognises outstanding work *already* completed that has used the British Library's digital collections and data. This year, the Awards will commend work in four key areas: Research, Artistic, Commercial and Teaching / Learning. The deadline for entering the BL Labs Awards this year is **5th September 2016**, useful links below:

- Competition (<http://labs.bl.uk/British+Library+Labs+Competition>)
- Awards (<http://labs.bl.uk/British+Library+Labs+Awards>)
- Events (<http://labs.bl.uk/Events>)
- Projects (<http://labs.bl.uk/Other+Uses+of+Collections>)

## 14:15 Overview projects that have used British Library's Digital Content and data

*Ben O'Steen, Technical Lead of British Library Labs.*

Labs will further present information on various projects such as the 'Mechanical Curator' and other interesting experiments using the British Library's digital content and data. He will highlight some of the challenges and issues faced with using the digital content and data and importantly what the British Library has learned.

## 14:45 Accessing British Library data

*Labs Team*

Labs will be coming along with terabytes of the British Library's digital data on the day which the team will briefly show how to access some of it through their Mini Network Area Storage (NAS) device, a guide is available at: <http://goo.gl/E8aRyQ> (case sensitive).

## 14:50 Questions and Discussion

## 15:00 Ideas Lab

*Labs Team*

Delegates will be encouraged to work together and think of ideas of what they might do with the digital collections and data in light of some of the challenges of working with it. The Labs and Cambridge teams will be on hand to help and advise.

Things to think about:

1. Consider your own expertise and interests.
2. Browse some of our digital collections online: <http://labs.bl.uk/Digital+Collections> and on our Mini NAS <http://goo.gl/E8aRyQ> and **choose at least one 'thing'!**
3. See previous ideas submitted to the Competition - <http://labs.bl.uk/Ideas+for+Labs> and projects submitted to the Awards - <http://labs.bl.uk/Other+Uses+of+Collections> for inspiration and to ensure your idea / project **hasn't already been submitted as a similar one before!**
4. *If you are considering entering your idea or project to the Competition or Award, you will need to consider some of the criteria it will be assessed on (see page 3):*
  - For the Competition - <http://labs.bl.uk/British+Library+Labs+Competition+-+Judging>
  - For the Awards - <http://labs.bl.uk/British+Library+Labs+Awards+-+Judging>

## Competition

### How ideas are assessed:

1. The value and clarity of the research question posed.
2. The extent to which the entry showcases British Library digital content and its potential for wider use.
3. The quality of the research approach and methods proposed.
4. The entrant(s) can demonstrate the skills, knowledge and expertise to successfully carry out the project by working with the BL Labs team at the British Library.
5. The project entry is realistic.
6. The project idea is achievable in terms of technical, curatorial and legal factors (see below):

### Technical factors

- Whether the project is technically feasible.
- Whether the technical skills required to complete the project and who will be required to implement them have been clearly identified.

### Legal factors

- Whether the legal terms of use for the digital collections identified have been checked and compliance demonstrated in the proposal.
- Whether the entry contains information that ensures the project does not in any way infringe intellectual property rights or any other rights of any third party.

### Curatorial factors

- Whether the entrant(s) can demonstrate that the digital content is available.
- Whether the entrant(s) has/have identified the curator(s)/person(s) responsible for the digital content.
- Whether the digital content is easily accessible.
- Whether the digital content can be realistically used for the project.
- Whether any extra worked required to make the digital content usable for the project has been clearly identified (where appropriate).

## Awards

### How projects are assessed:

1. The value and clarity of the research question, problem and / or challenge posed.
2. The extent to which the work showcases British Library digital content and its potential for wider use.
3. The quality of the research approach and / or methods used.
4. The challenges the work faced and how these were overcome.
5. Whether the legal terms of use for the digital collections identified have been checked and compliance demonstrated in the work.
6. Whether the work contains information that ensures that it does not in any way infringe intellectual property rights or any other rights of any third party.
7. The appropriateness of the entry to the category under which it was entered (see below):

- **Research** - For work that has been carried out in the context of a research project or activity. It should show the development of new knowledge about the British Library's digital content, research methods, or tools.

- **Artistic** - For work that uses the British Library's digital content in the context of artistic or creative endeavours. It should inspire, stimulate, amaze and provoke.

- **Commercial** - For work that delivers or develops commercial value. It could be in the context of new products, tools, or services that build on, incorporate, or enhance the British Library's digital content to produce commercial value.

- **Teaching / Learning** - For work that has been created in a teaching and / or learning context using the British Library's digital content / data. It would clearly show how it has been used to provide quality learning experiences to learners of any age and ability.

## **15:40 Pitching and Feedback**

*Cambridge and Labs Team*

Return to main group and give a 2-3 minute presentation from each group on your idea and get feedback from the teams.

## **16:00 Goody bag and Finish!**

A goody bag will be given to the best idea decided by the panel.

Please complete the online feedback form: <https://goo.gl/yQURdW> (case sensitive)

## **Speaker Biographies**

***Dr Mia Ridge, Digital Curator at the British Library, see, <http://www.bl.uk/people/experts/mia-ridge>***

Mia has worked as a business analyst, digital consultant and web programmer in the cultural heritage/commercial sectors, and was formally Lead Web Developer at the Science Museum Group. She has held Fellowships at Trinity College Dublin/CENDARI (Ireland, 2014), the Polis Centre Institute on 'Spatial Narrative and Deep Maps' (USA, 2012) and the Roy Rosenzweig Centre for History and New Media 'One Week|One Tool' program (USA, 2013). She is Chair of the Museums Computer Group (MCG) and a member of the Executive Council of the Association for Computers and the Humanities (ACH). Mia holds a PhD in digital history.

***Mahendra Mahey, Project Manager of British Library Labs***

Before Labs he was at UKOLN (University of Bath) working for 4 years on the Jisc funded the UK Developer Community Supporting Innovation (DevCSI) initiative (organising several Developer Happiness" conferences (dev8d.org)) and 5 years together on a project focussing on how academic institutions could manage their research information using a common metadata standard and one supporting research in digital repositories of scholarly outputs. He was an adviser for the Jisc Regional Support Centres encouraging academics / librarians to use electronic learning resources and make effective use of e-learning technologies and techniques in their practice. He also worked as a lecturer for over 10 years in Social Sciences, Computing, Multimedia and English for Speakers of Other Languages in Further and Higher Education in the UK and internationally.

***Ben O'Steen, Technical Lead of British Library Labs.***

Previous to working for Labs he was a freelance developer in the academic sector. While his expertise lies in solving interesting problems using computers, his formal training is in chemistry. He has authored a Physics GCSE training course, created electronics for art installations, co-founded the "Developer Happiness" conference (dev8d.org), and he was the lead developer in the Bodleian Library's Research and Development department building their Resource Description Framework (RDF) - powered repository and digital asset management systems. In previous years, he has worked on Jisc funded projects (OpenBibliography, OpenCitation), wrote reports for funders on topics such as text-mining and sat on technical advisory boards for the Web-service Offering Repository Deposit (SWORD) protocol, ORCID and other groups.