Forming relationships in Digital Humanities
Building blocks for libraries

Digital Humanities (DH) is a collaborative discipline. Libraries engaging in this field must build connections with DH research communities to be successful. Our below illustration demonstrates 10 ways in which libraries can build such relationships and points to various useful readings on this topic.

**MIND YOUR LANGUAGE**
Language is key in articulating the library's role. Expertise such as metadata can and should be reframed for a DH context. Job titles and strategy documents also help position library offerings.
*Read: Cox*

**FIND YOUR LEVEL**
Tailor your approach to the stage of DH development your library is at. There is no one-size-fits-all approach. Look for incremental steps to progress in a sustainable way.
*Read: RLUK, LSE*

**BE LOUD, BE BOLD**
Overcome “library timidity” and broadcast the library’s expertise as an enabler of digital scholarship and a go-to for digital research projects. Be specific about offerings and expertise.
*Read: Vandegrift & Varner*

**KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE**
An environmental scan helps identify your local DH landscape and its focus areas. Knowing strengths and gaps can inform library strategy. It also can act as a useful ice-breaker with faculty.
*Read: ECAR*

**BE A TRANSLATOR**
Librarians' work with digital collections requires understanding both intellectual and technical aspects. This in turn equips them to act as DH ‘translators’ between research and technical partners.
*Read: Star & Griesemer*

**PLAY WITH STRUCTURES**
Different models of structured collaboration – such as DH fellows in the library or ‘embedded’ librarians working on faculty projects – can enable a more formalised approach.
*Read: Wilson & Berg, Locke & Mapes (8)*

**PARTNERSHIP VS SERVICE**
How is this DH collaboration framed? Is the library a partner or service? Local context can inform here. In some cases library collaboration itself is listed as a ‘service’ offered for digital projects.
*Read: Muñoz, Dinsman*

**HELP FROM ABOVE**
Strategic commitment is vital for long term sustainability. Adequate resourcing for aspects of advocacy, research, skills development along with acknowledgement of new measures of success.
*Read: Posner*

**WIN FRIENDS & INFLUENCE FACULTY**
Use any existing links with DH researchers as demonstrator projects or partnerships. This helps momentum and advocacy particularly if broader engagement is an early stumbling block.
*Read: Gerber et. al*

**STRENGTH IN NUMBERS**
Find external library colleagues. Working or technical groups (e.g. LIBER WGs, Carpentries) can offer shared expertise and augment teaching. RSE offers an ‘alt-ac’ parallel here.
*Read: RSE*

This poster came out of a group discussion of the Building Relationships sub-team of the LIBER Digital Humanities Working Group.