

# Annual Report

2021 - 2022



GC Digital  
Initiatives



“I CREDIT THE GCDI FELLOWSHIP FOR HELPING ME TO LAND MY FIRST TENURE-TRACK JOB AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TAMPA. I HAD THIS INTERESTING PART OF MY CV THAT WAS ALL ABOUT TRYING TO EXPLORE THE INTERSECTION OF PHILOSOPHY AND TECHNOLOGY AND DIGITAL HUMANITIES. I KNOW THAT THE PEOPLE WHO HIRED ME THERE SPECIFICALLY MENTIONED THAT THEY FOUND THAT INTERESTING.”

~LAURA WILDMAN KANE  
FORMER GC DIGITAL FELLOW  
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF PHILOSOPHY  
WORCESTER STATE UNIVERSITY



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# GCDI Staff & Fellows



**PARAM AJMERA**  
GC DIGITAL FELLOW



**WENDY BARRALES**  
MANIFOLD FELLOW



**FILIPA CALADO**  
DH PROGRAM  
ADVISING FELLOW



**RAFAEL DAVIS  
PORTELA**  
DATA VIS ADVISING  
FELLOW



**LEANNE FAN**  
GC DIGITAL  
FELLOW



**BETH FERA**  
PROGRAM SOCIAL  
MEDIA FELLOW



**MATTHEW K. GOLD**  
DIRECTOR



**REBECCA KISEL**  
GC DIGITAL FELLOW



**CHELSEA LANE**  
GC DIGITAL FELLOW



**ZACH LLOYD**  
GC DIGITAL FELLOW



**YUXIAO LUO**  
GC DIGITAL FELLOW



**RILQUER  
MASCARENHAS**  
GC DIGITAL FELLOW



**JESSIE MCCORMACK**  
PROGRAM  
COORDINATOR



**ROBIN MILLER**  
EDUCATIONAL  
TECHNOLOGIST



**MIRYAM NACIMENTO**  
MANIFOLD FELLOW



**LISA RHODY**  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR



**MAYA ROSE**  
PROGRAM SOCIAL  
MEDIA FELLOW



**BE STONE**  
PROGRAM SOCIAL  
MEDIA FELLOW



**PARISA SETAYESH**  
PROGRAM SOCIAL  
MEDIA FELLOW



**DI YOONG**  
GC DIGITAL FELLOW

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# Mission

Graduate Center Digital Initiatives (GCDI) builds and sustains an active community around the shared idea of a “Digital GC,” where scholars and technologists explore new modes of inquiry that integrate digital tools and methods into the research, teaching, and service missions of the institution.

# Highlights

## FUNDING

GCDI raised \$460,000 in additional external funding during 2021-2022. The Carnegie Educational Technology Fellowship Program: Helping Faculty Transition to Online Course grant raised \$300,000 and supported 8 graduate fellow positions. Meanwhile, \$160,000 in supplemental funding for our NEH Digital Humanities Research Institutes supported 8 graduate student summer positions and extended funding for the project an additional year.

## STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

The GC Digital Research Institute, hosted by the Digital Fellows, accommodated more students than ever before, with 40 students participating in two curricular tracks based on students' research needs. Masters and doctoral students from more than 10 different programs participated.



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# Changing the doctoral student experience

MEET CHELSEA LANE, A MUSIC PERFORMANCE DOCTORAL STUDENT WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE 2021 GC DIGITAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE. BY 2022, SHE BECAME A GC DIGITAL FELLOW, AND IN 2022-2023 SHE WILL BE A POSTDOCTORAL FELLOW LEADING SEMESTER-LONG WORKSHOPS ON PYTHON AND JAVASCRIPT WHILE APPLYING FOR POSITIONS IN ACADEMIA AND TECHNOLOGY.

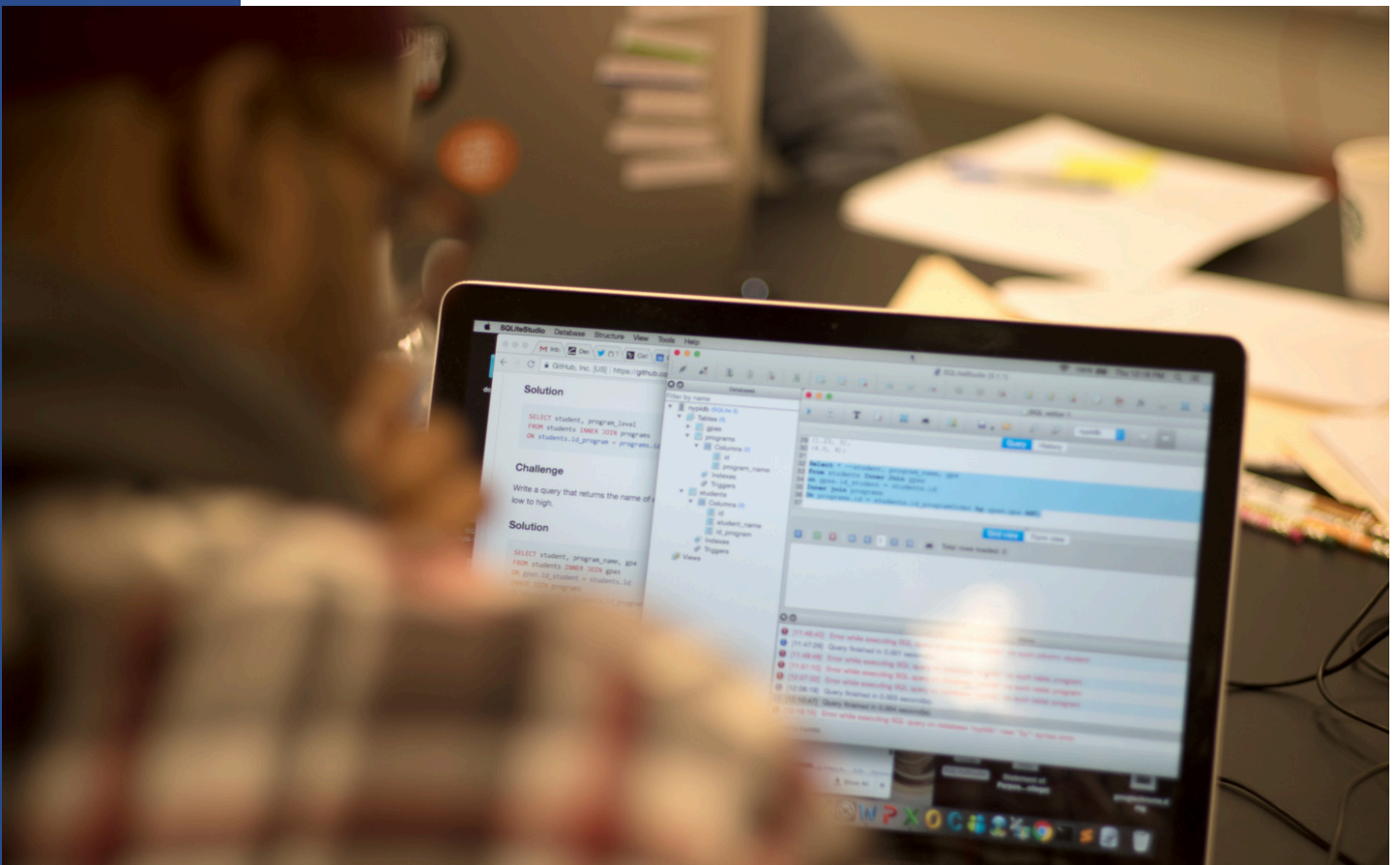
"When I began the Digital Research Institute in winter 2021, I knew I had discovered something special: brilliant student-led workshops and engaging conversations about ethical data practices and technological applications to research projects replaced the long, monotonous days of COVID-19 quarantining. A relative neophyte to digital humanities, I was able to build a framework for applications of my newfound skills during the Institute.



At the end of several intensive weekends, I knew that I wanted to become a part of this special cohort of Digital Fellows. This past January during the 2022 DRI, I had the great pleasure of leading my own workshop on Introduction to Python. My background as a previous participant made me feel enormous empathy for those who were starting out on their tech journeys, and I was elated to find that such perspective positively influenced the experience of others during the events I led!"

~Chelsea Lane

# ADVANCING GRADUATE EDUCATION & RESEARCH



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DIGITAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE  
WORKSHOPS  
CONSULTATIONS  
GC DIGITAL SHOWCASE  
TESTIMONIAL

# The GC Digital Research Institute

The Digital Research Institute empowers students and faculty to incorporate new tools into their research, practice the skills needed to creatively problem-solve, and survey the vast applicability of digital resources to the humanities and beyond. Furthermore, the Institute strengthens inter-collegiate ties by allowing the CUNY community a chance to connect with those outside their programs and schools. Lastly, the DRI serves as an introductory guide to finding continued support through in GCDI, whether by participating in working groups, consultations, or other events.

A resurgence of COVID-19 meant continuing to offer the DRI remotely over Zoom. We responded by rethinking our digital pedagogy to continue to improve student experiences. We added a "Choosing your track" section to our website to help applicants choose the most appropriate programming track (Python or R), and provided a curriculum guide and schedule further in advance to help participants prepare. Daily office hours, one-on-one installation support, and small group facilitation on Discord increased students' access to help and to building community among the cohort.

## 17 master's and doctoral programs participated



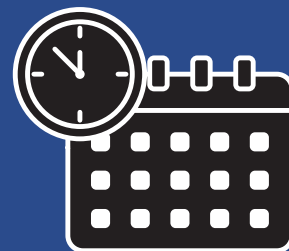
Almost half of our participants came from different programs at the GC.

## 16 total workshops offered



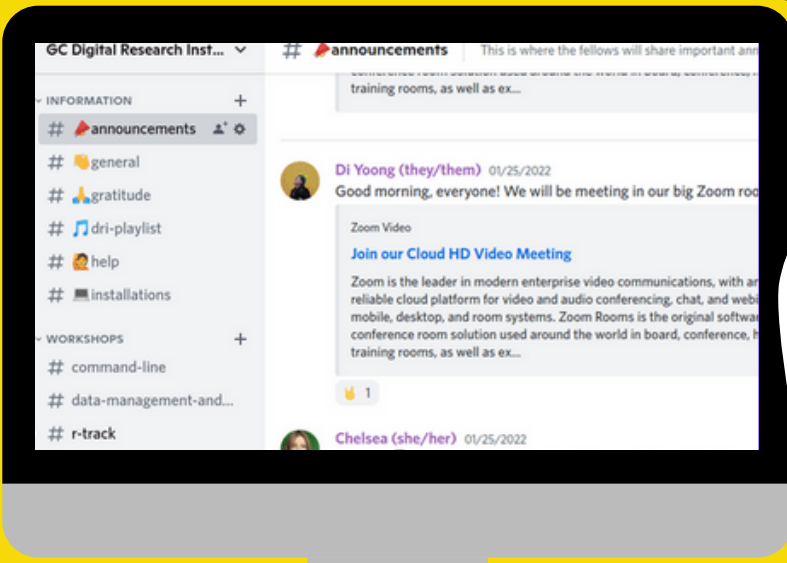
Four new advanced  
workshops created

## Over 30 hours of synchronous instruction



# WHAT STUDENTS AND FACULTY ARE SAYING ABOUT THE JANUARY DIGITAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE

*"I have expanded my digital skills and vocabulary and have already started toying around with various ways to use them in projects I'm working on."  
 –GCDRI Participant*



*"It was a unique opportunity to explore digital methodologies, build skills, and get introduced to an active community of scholars."  
 –Faculty respondent*



# WORKSHOPS

More than 300 registrants  
across our 15 workshops!

While we continue to offer our workshops online, we saw an increase in registrations, indicating a strong continuing interest in our programming. This year, we introduced two new workshops to meet the needs of intermediate users, which represents a growing number of students at the GC. New workshops included topics such as Predictive Modeling in R, and Beginning Game Design with Python, and a Beginner's Guide to Web Scraping. As demand for intermediate and advanced workshops increase in pace with the ever-growing interest in introductory workshops, GCDI continues to revisit and expand our offerings.

## NEW THIS YEAR...

### Intro to Educational Game Design

The workshop introduced concepts and techniques that can be used to incorporate games, game-like experiences, and game design into teaching and research.

### Word Embeddings

This example-based workshop introduced participants to basic word embedding techniques, which are frequently used when researching large text corpora.



#### Intro to GIS

Online event  
Wednesday, November 17, 2021 at 1:00 PM EST



#### Intro to Educational Game Design

Online event  
Thursday, October 28, 2021 at 3:00 PM EDT



#### Basic Audio Editing with Audacity

Online event  
Thursday, October 21, 2021 at 11:00 AM EDT



#### Foundations of Microsoft Excel

Online event  
Wednesday, October 20, 2021 at 4:00 PM EDT



#### Creating interactive, visual, data driven websites in Wordpress

Online event  
Thursday, October 7, 2021 at 2:00 PM EDT



#### Intro to R and RStudio

Online event  
Friday, October 1, 2021 at 3:00 PM EDT



#### Intro to Python

Online event  
Thursday, September 23, 2021 at 11:00 AM EDT

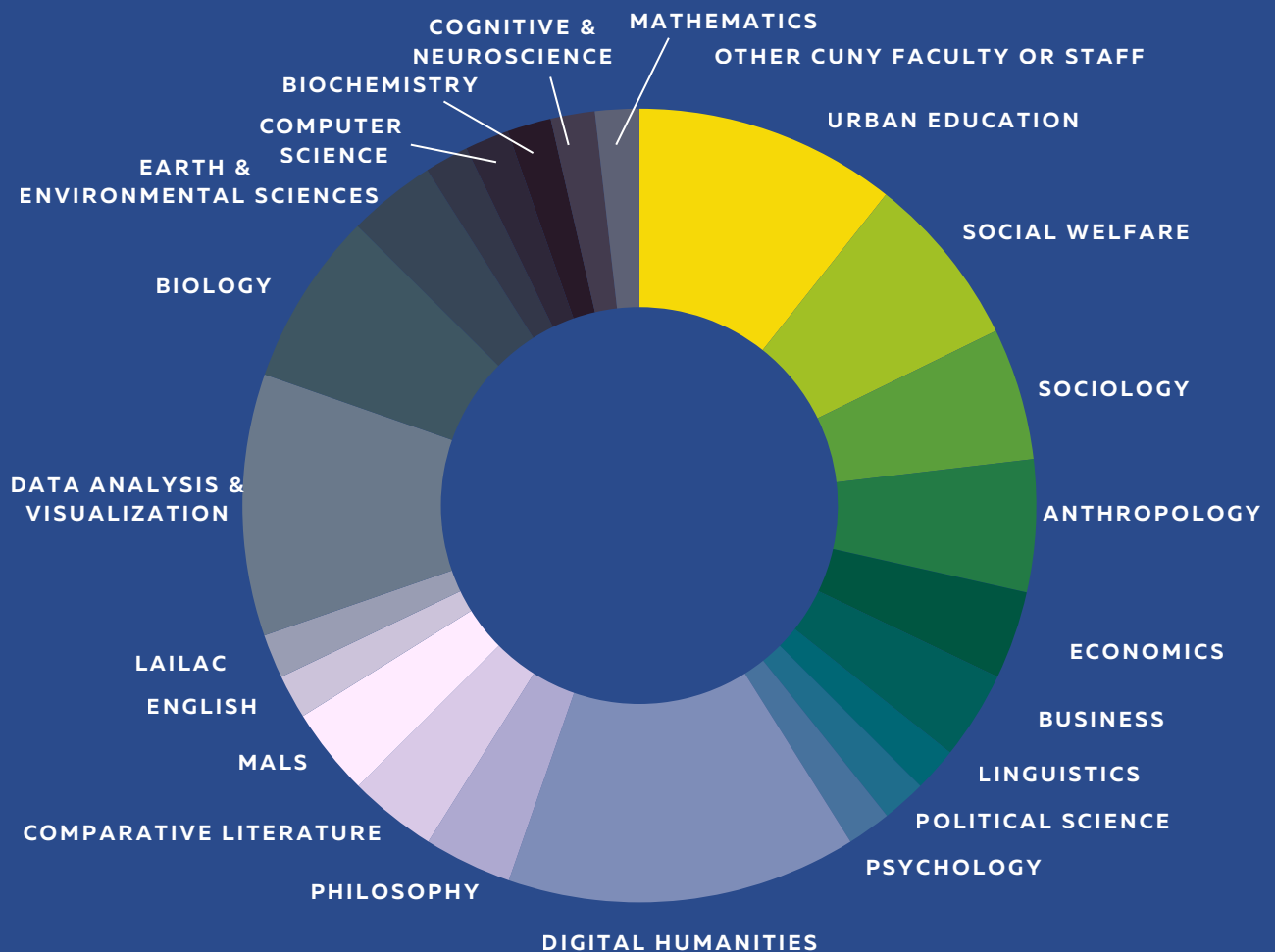


#### Tools for the Digital Humanities

Online event  
Friday, September 17, 2021 at 1:00 PM EDT

Representing over 20 programs across The Graduate Center and reaching from Master's students to faculty, 70.4 % of participants find the pacing of our workshops to be just right and 94.6 % are very likely to recommend them to others. This is a great sign that we are continuing to meet the needs of our communities and our strong programming serves their growing interests in digital tools and skills.

## Reaching wide audiences



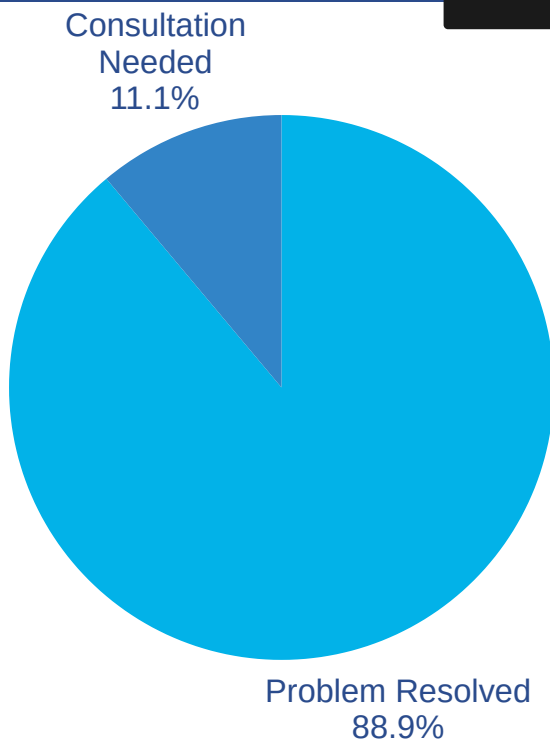
# CONSULTATIONS

OUR FELLOWS STRIVE TO ENSURE THAT STUDENTS AND FACULTY COME AWAY FROM CONSULTATIONS WITH THEIR ISSUE RESOLVED AND A PLAN FOR WHAT'S NEXT.



"The fellow was really friendly, supportive and patient. She really tried to fully understand my problem and had suggestions, as well as resources to try and help me."

"I will certainly engage again - Yuxiao was great and patient (I did ask a lot of basic questions), which helped a lot to resolve the issues I was facing."



94%

Of respondents reported they had a productive consultation

40+

Consultations this year

# GC Digital Showcase

The Digital Showcase presentations create opportunities for students, faculty, and others to present their digital projects, research, and initiatives and to receive feedback from the wider GC community.

**15+**  
**PRESENTATIONS**

**50+**  
**ATTENDEES**

## Some of the presentations:

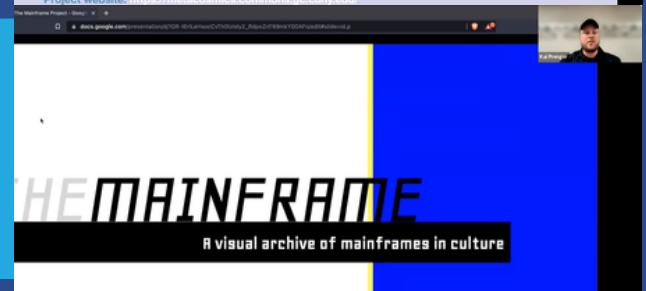
### Modeling Value in the Anthropocene

AUTOMATIZED READING AND WRITING FOR  
A DIS-AUTOMATIZED FUTURE



### The Mainframe Project

A VISUAL ARCHIVE OF  
MAINFRAMES IN CULTURE



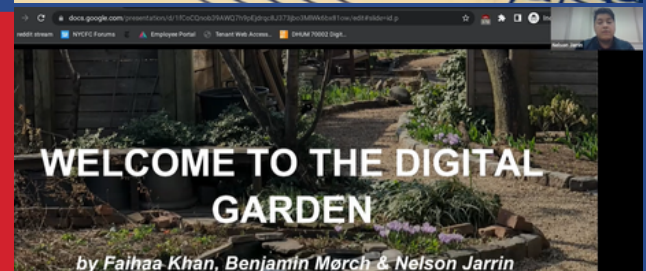
### Sounds of Music

VIRTUAL MUSICAL ENRICHMENT AND  
SOCIAL CONNECTION FOR ELDERS



### Welcome to the Digital Garden

A WEB PROJECT EXPLORING WHO,  
HOW AND WHAT IS ACCESSIBLE IN  
COMMUNITY GARDENS



# My most memorable consultation...

MEET LEANNE FAN, A DOCTORAL STUDENT IN SOCIOLOGY AND A GC DIGITAL FELLOW. GC DIGITAL FELLOWS IDENTIFY WAYS IN WHICH DIGITAL TOOLS CAN ENRICH STUDENT AND FACULTY RESEARCH AGENDAS. THIS YEAR SHE CHAIRED THE PYTHON USER GROUP, TAUGHT WORKSHOPS, AND PROVIDED ONE-ON-ONE CONSULTATIONS FOR STUDENTS.



"The Digital Fellow approach to consultations with the GC community is rooted in values of collaboration, exploration, and creativity. My most memorable consultation this year was working with a critical psychology student to develop her Twitter project. She had a clear idea of her research question, but had little experience with coding. We nevertheless worked together to get an academic API access and played around with different packages that suited her Twitter-scraping needs. Along the way, we ensured that the data could be collected in an ethical way (one that probed the question, but still maintained anonymity of users). When she was feeling overwhelmed by the topic modeling choices of analysis, we decided it made more sense to split the project into two distinct portions: data gathering and analysis. We concluded the meeting with her having clear steps to gathering data first and parameters for scraping Twitter."

~Leanne Fan

GCDI'S

# INTERDISCIPLINARY COMMUNITIES

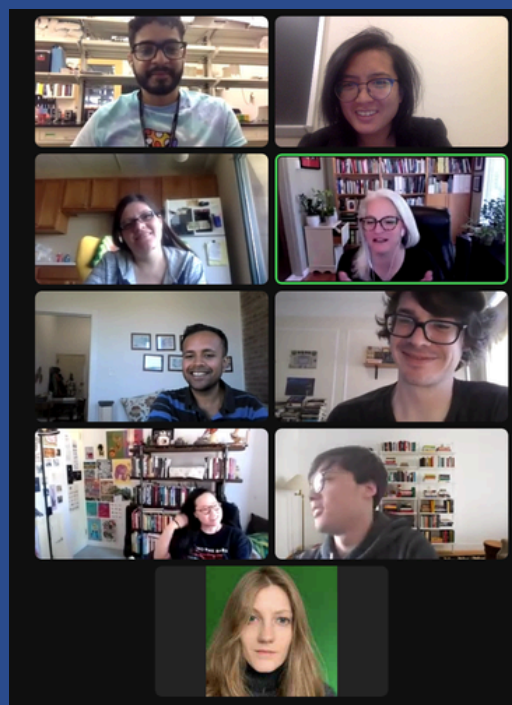


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GIS WEEK & CUNY DHI  
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TESTIMONIAL

# GC DIGITAL FELLOWS



The GC Digital Fellows program is a selective, employment-based, graduate assistantship located in the GC Digital Scholarship Lab at the CUNY Graduate Center. Since its inception in 2012, there have been 43 GC Digital Fellows selected from 22 different academic programs. Fellows work collaboratively to build community for Graduate Center students, faculty, and staff who want to integrate emerging technologies into their scholarship, teaching, and service. They lead workshops and institutes, host open office hours and consultations with faculty, help students develop digital projects, and create valuable resources and content about the use of technology in scholarship. For this reason, GC Digital Fellows are selected from multiple programs, with particular attention paid to two skills: the ability to communicate complex technologies in clear, relatable ways and a proven interest in working across disciplines. The group's ability to communicate clearly and effectively, and to relate multiple technologies to specific disciplinary and interdisciplinary research questions results in a broad institutional impact.

# Program Social Media Fellows

## 2021-2022 Programs:

- Criminal Justice
- Earth & Environmental Science
- Educational Psychology
- Political Science

## Year achievements:

- Digital public identity workshops for students and faculty
- Increased online engagement for admissions and program outreach
- Led social media advertisement campaigns for program admissions

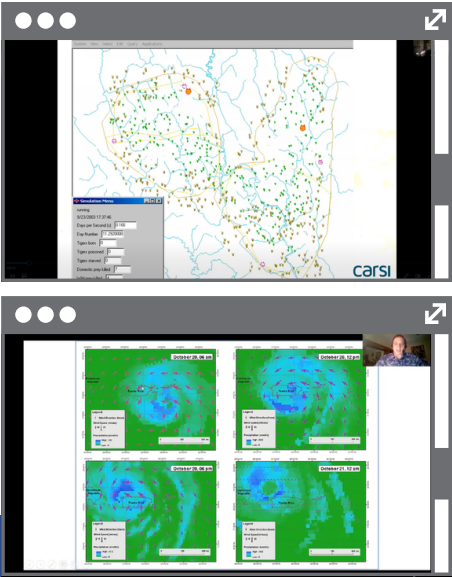
The Social Media Fellowship made it possible for me to complete my dissertation in a timely fashion by giving me the needed financial support as well as a supportive community of fellows and faculty leadership who encouraged me to the finish line. With the training I received as a Fellow, I created a thriving social media presence for the department and a strong professional web and social media presence for myself as a scholar. I feel confident sharing my research and growing my network via social media platforms, knowing that I'm reaching my target audience with my posts and proudly displaying my work and personality on my professional website. Fellows fill an essential role in astutely managing their program's social media presence by bringing their disciplinary expertise and practical know-how to these sometimes daunting platforms. Fellows also provide essential training for students to learn how to create and manage their digital professional identity, a must-have on the competitive academic job market. I know that my standing in the job market has been strengthened by the experience I've gained through this Fellowship, and I hope it is available for students in all programs in the years to come.

Be Stone  
Political Science



# GIS Week

During the week encompassing GIS Day (Nov 16), the GC Digital Fellows organized the GIS Week, a three-day event focused on showcasing the use and teaching of digital tools related to mapping activities and GIS analyses. Around 50 attendees were present across the three days, coming from 19 different departments within the GC community.



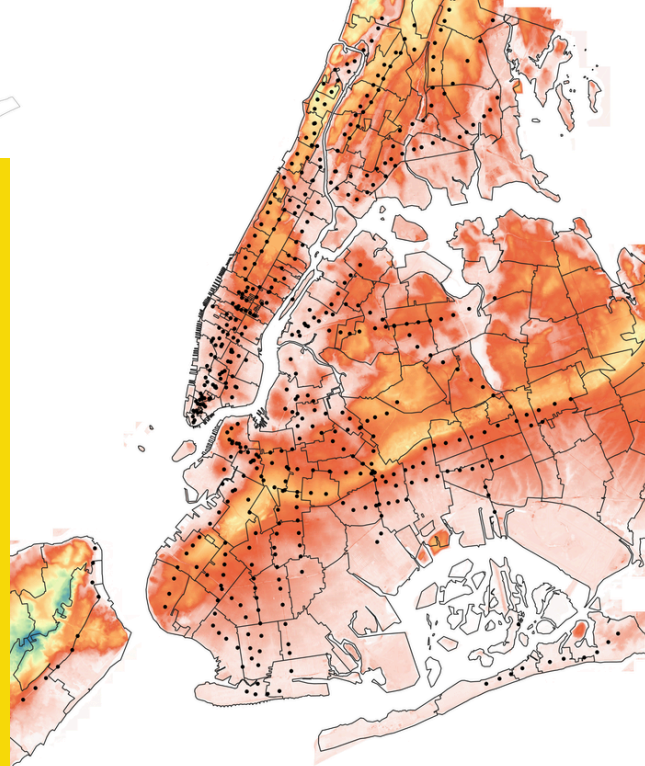
# Digital Humanities Initiative

The CUNY Digital Humanities Initiative is a community-building event hosted by the Digital Fellows. The event aims to build connections and community among those across CUNY who are applying digital technologies to research and pedagogy in the humanities. In Fall 2021, the CUNY DHI event featured 8 presenters from the Graduate Center, Lehman College, and City Tech, who discussed a variety of projects, including digitally archiving feminist Latinx experiences, teaching digital skills to people with disabilities, exploring the use of alternative platforms to enhance online learning, and studying the impact of public humanities at CUNY. Over 30 people attended the event.



# User Groups

An important pillar of the ethos of the GCDI community is collective, collaborative inquiry. With this in mind, we support a number of different working groups and digital communities. These specialized communities of interest, hosted on the CUNY Academic Commons, allow students to connect directly with peers, explore digital tools, and share relevant information and events.



## DARC/Sound Studies

The Digital Archives Research Collective is a platform that aims to address the needs of students, faculty, and communities working on archival research. The Sound Studies and Methods Working Group explores theories, methods, and techniques related to doing qualitative and quantitative research, teaching, storytelling, and creating art with sounds and audio files.

## GIS/ Mapping user group

The Geographic Information System User's Group comprises a network of CUNY students, faculty and staff who are interested in sharing methods and techniques, and finding support from others about ways GIS can be used to further research and teaching.

## PUG



The Python User's Group is an open and informal collaborative space for experimentation and exploration with the Python programming language for complete beginners to advanced users.

## RUG



The R User's Group is a place for newbies and experts alike to learn and work together on projects using the statistical programming language, R.

# User Group Engagement

44

Total Zoom meetings

50

Hours of discussion

632

Members in our user groups on **CUNY ACADEMIC COMMONS**

153

Active Slack users in RUG and PUG

7

Digital fellows facilitating groups

18

Different topics covered

# Summer Sprints

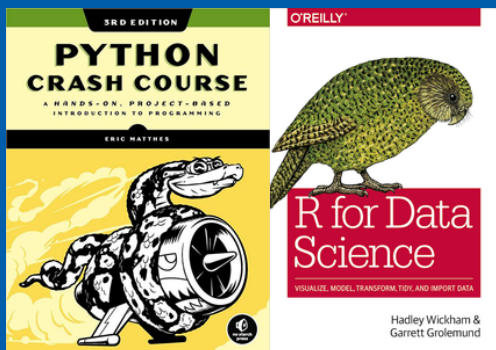
# 25

Hours of summer instruction in R, Python, and GIS

The summer is often a time during which students build skills and require ongoing support in their burgeoning projects. To answer this need, RUG, PUG, and GIS User Group facilitators led three respective intense study programs online synchronously for interested GC students and faculty. Such programs were made possible by unique summer funding opportunities offered to the GCDI.

The textbook for RUG was R for Data Science by Garrett Golemund and Hadley Wickham. For PUG, the instruction was lead with Python Crash Course by Eric Matthes. The pedagogical materials for GIS were created by Digital Fellow Rilquer Mascarenhas.

"My fellow ITP certificate classmate and I got low stakes exposure to something new; the PUG bootcamp build upon our class exposure to R, stats, and quantitative research methods, and helped us to imagine new digital projects in line with our program's goals and growth plans. So overall it was complementary, and very student-centered in the approach."



**Ian Williams**  
PUG Sprint Participant

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# Creating Opportunities for Professional Growth

MEET FILIPA CALADO, A DOCTORAL STUDENT IN ENGLISH WHOSE WORK AS A GC DIGITAL FELLOW LED TO SERVING AS THE INSTITUTE COORDINATOR FOR AN NEH-FUNDED PROJECT CALLED THE DIGITAL HUMANITIES RESEARCH INSTITUTE. IN THIS ROLE FILIPA LEARNED GRANT WRITING, BUDGETING, AND PROJECT DESIGN. SHE IS NOW A MASTER'S PROGRAM ADVISING FELLOW.

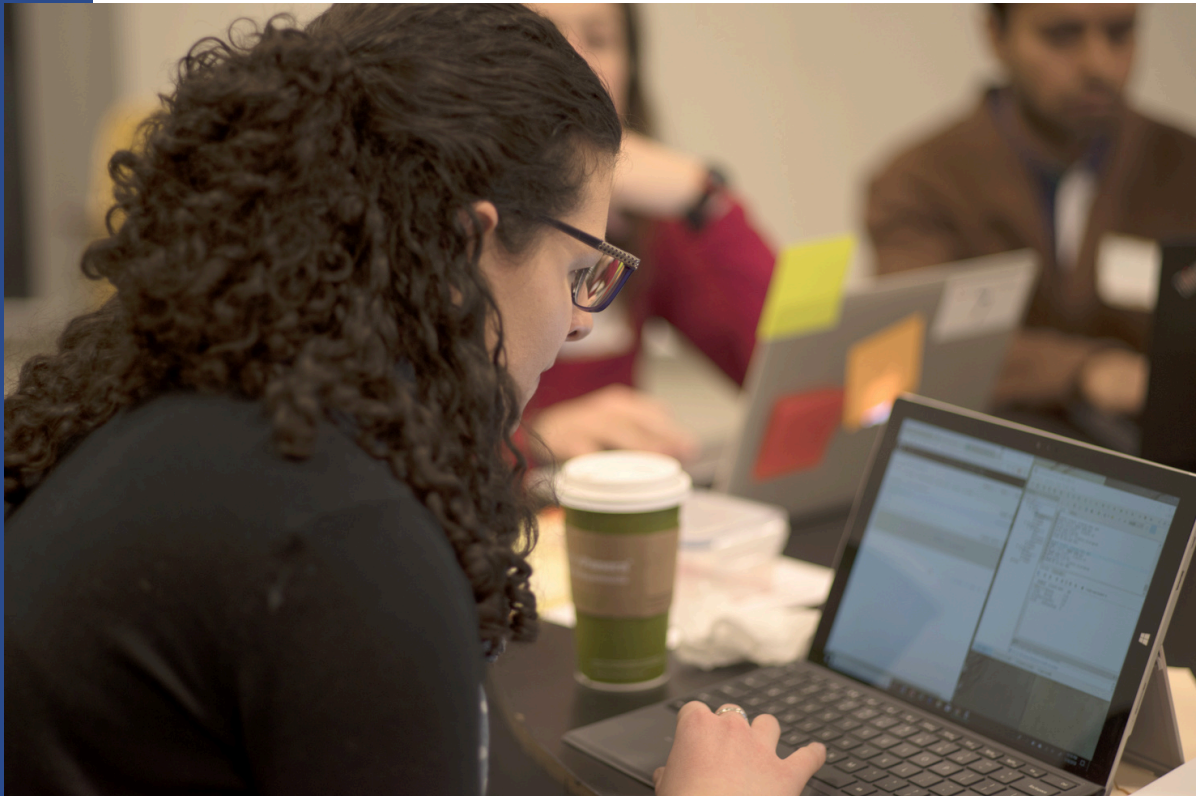


"The biggest benefit from working with GCDI was getting connected to faculty and students from across the country who are similarly working toward incorporating foundational digital skills into their scholarship and teaching. During my years teaching workshops and co-leading research institutes, I saw the urgency for developing this kind of curriculum and the eagerness of academics to learn it. My work in the Digital Humanities Research Institute expanded the work of DH beyond the confines of what I knew, which is New York City, and the resources contained here. I was able to see how other institutions, even prestigious institutions, could benefit from my work at the Graduate Center, both as a Digital Fellow and also as an academic, expanding the ways we use technology in scholarship and teaching. It was an enlarging and eye-opening experience, and it left me with a feeling of possibility about the future of my academic career."

Filipa Calado

GCDI'S

# GRANTS, PROJECTS, AND PUBLIC-FACING COLLABORATIONS



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GRANTS BY THE NUMBERS  
SOCIAL MEDIA



# Digital Humanities Research Institute

In July 2019, GC Digital Initiatives won its second National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) Advanced Topics in Digital Humanities grant to support an in-person, 10-day institute for humanities scholars and researchers selected from a national pool of applicants. The global pandemic in summer 2020 caused GCDI to reimagine the event, based on our own GC Digital Research Institute, as a fully online experience.

With nearly \$160,000 in supplemental funds, GCDI supported 8 graduate students in the summer of 2020 to redesign our curricula for online implementation, and in summer 2021, GCDI led a 2-week remote institute. We received over 120 applications for 32 available seats. During the 2021 - 2022 academic year, participants from the DHRI summer institute led their own local versions of digital humanities training events. All in all, more than 300 humanities faculty, students, and staff received some form of digital skills training based on GCDI's model.

The revised curriculum developed with NEH funds enabled the GC Digital Fellows to lead a fully online January institute for GC students.

**DHRI PROVIDED  
OVER \$200,000  
OF SUPPORT TO  
GRADUATE CENTER  
STUDENTS DURING  
THE COVID-19  
PANDEMIC.**



**NATIONAL  
ENDOWMENT  
FOR THE  
HUMANITIES**



2015

GC Digital Initiatives receives \$611,000 in CUNY Strategic Investment Initiatives funds to support digital scholarship.

2016

GCDI hosts the first two GC Digital Research Institutes.

2017

Building on the GC DRI, GCDI receives \$245,000 to run institutes nationally for humanities scholars.

2018

First NEH-funded Digital Humanities Research Institute welcomes with 16 participants from across the U.S.

2019

First DHRI cohort runs 14 local versions reaching over 200 humanities professionals.  
GCDI wins 2nd NEH grant for \$250,000.

2020

COVID pandemic prevents in-person event & GCDI receives \$161,000 in supplemental funds to create online curricular materials for remote learning.

2021

88 applications received from humanities scholars in 29 states. Thirty-two were selected to participate in 48 hours of remote instruction from July 6 - 15.

2022

2021 cohort leads 15 local institutes reaching over 300 additional humanities practitioners.  
GCDI receives NEH grant to develop DHRIFT: Digital Humanities Research Infrastructure for Teaching Technology.



Trinity College  
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT



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# Manifold

AN OPEN-SOURCE PUBLISHING PLATFORM

Manifold is an intuitive, collaborative, open-source publishing platform for interactive scholarly publishing created by a collaborative team from the CUNY Graduate Center, the University of Minnesota Press, and Cast Iron Coding. Funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and National Endowment for the Humanities, it enables publishers to create media-rich, interactive digital publications that take advantage of the full capabilities of the web and extend the educational benefits and access of digital scholarship to more communities. The CUNY instance of Manifold focuses on the publication of Open Educational Resources (OER) and has been supported by the CUNY Office of Library Services and the State of New York.

**MEET WENDY BARRALES, A PHD STUDENT IN URBAN EDUCATION WHOSE WORK AS A MANIFOLD FELLOW HAS ALLOWED HERTO IMMERSE HERSELF IN THE FIELD OF DIGITAL HUMANITIES AND GAIN EXPERIENCE PUBLISHING DIGITAL SCHOLARSHIP.**

"In the Manifold team, I have learned how digital technologies can help enrich pedagogical activities and increase student engagement. I have also learned how digital publishing can contribute to disseminating social sciences and humanities research. I am now more aware of the promises and challenges of digital publishing and Open Education."

~Wendy Barrales



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# Social Media

## GCDI on Twitter

The GC Digital Fellows manage two Twitter accounts, @cunygcdi and @Digital\_Fellows. Both accounts alert GC students and faculty to upcoming events, workshops, and working groups, which were primarily conducted virtually this past year, as well as share relevant technological news and tutorials, often in the form of internal blog posts on the GCDF's "Tagging the Tower," as they pertain to digital research practices and interests with the broader social community. Both Twitter accounts combined reached over 33,000 people between August 2021 and April 2022.

**GC Digital Fellows** @Digital\_Fellows

Hey **@GC\_CUNY** students and faculty! Are you interested in archival work? Want to learn more about digital archiving? Then come join DARC, tomorrow at 12pm [...]

**TOP TWEET**  
OCTOBER 2021

**1,151** IMPRESSIONS


**33** ENGAGEMENTS

**TOP TWEET**  
NOVEMBER 2021

**1,063** IMPRESSIONS

**15** ENGAGEMENTS

**GC Digital Fellows** @Digital\_Fellows

 Don't sleep on this opportunity to learn the basics of Python for free! Open to the entire **@GC\_CUNY** community!  
👉 Apply here: [...]

LEARN MORE ABOUT GC DIGITAL INITIATIVES  
ON OUR WEBSITE: [CUNY.IS/GCDI](https://cuny.is/gcdi).

