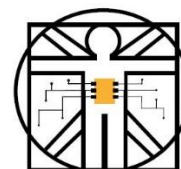# LUCDH Newsletter – 21 February 2022

## The Digital Lab in P.J. Veth 1.07 & Studio 1.06

Yes! The Digital Lab and Studio are now open again!

**Digital Lab – drop-in sessions.**

The digital lab is open every afternoon from 13:00 to 17:00 for drop-ins. There is seating for 25 people, and you do not need to book beforehand, but email us if you have questions. See [lucdh.nl/lab](lucdh.nl/lab) digital for a list of all research resources.

**Digital Lab – larger groups**

For larger groups to organize a gathering or to book space, please do email: [digital-lab@hum.leidenuniv.nl](mailto:digital-lab@hum.leidenuniv.nl). The mornings in the digital lab are available for teachers to reserve.

**Interested in starting a podcast? Podcast Prep!**
Every first Thursday of the month, 15:00-15:30 in PJV 1.06.

Join Angus Mol for a mini-tour of the Studio (P.J. Veth 1.06), and a run through of recording equipment. When you're ready to create your podcast reserve time slot(s) with an email to [digital-lab@hum.leidenuniv.nl](mailto:digital-lab@hum.leidenuniv.nl) The Studio is set up for 4 people to use the mics, and space for 3 guests. The apparatus is very user friendly so we hope to see you all soon!

» [Read more](#)

## Congratulations! Small Grant Awardees 2022

Many congratulations to Karwan Fatah-Black, Ramona Negrón; Nivja de Jong; Anne-Isabelle Richard; Jenneke Van der Wal, Paz González González; Susana Valdez and Ana Guerberof-Arenas for their excellent DH projects awarded a small grant this year. Thank you to everyone applying this year.

Further details about these exciting projects will soon be updated to [Small Grant Research Projects](#).

## Events 2022

**LUCDH Lunchtime Speaker Series: MacBERTh:**
**A Historically Pre-Trained Language Model for English (1450-1950)**
Lauren Fonteyn and Enrique Manjavacas Arevalo
Wednesday 2 March 2022 at 12:00 - 13:00 (CET)
(Postponed from February)
Location PJ Veth 1.07 and online via Kaltura
Register with email to: [lucdh@hum.leidenuniv.nl](mailto:lucdh@hum.leidenuniv.nl)

Researchers who interpret and analyse historical textual material are well-aware that languages are subject to change over time, and that the way in which concepts and discourses of class, gender, norms and prestige function in different time periods. As such, it is quite important that the interpretation of textual/linguistic material from the past is not approached from a present-day point-of-view, which is why NLP models pre-trained on present-day language data are less than ideal candidates for the job. In this talk, Fonteyn and Manjavacas Arevalo present "MacBERTh -- a transformer-based language model pre-trained on historical English -- and exhaustively assess its benefits on a large set of relevant downstream tasks. Our experiments highlight that, despite some differences across target time periods, pre-training on historical language from scratch outperforms models pre-trained on present-day language and later adapted to historical language.

More information on MacBERTh can be found on their website: https://macberth.netlify.app/
» Read more

**DH Minor at the Minor Market**
29 March 2022 at 15:30 – 17:20 Online (CET)
Further details to be announced on lucdh.nl. Sign Up: lucdh@hum.leidenuniv.nl

**The 'Humanities and AI' Symposium**
New Date: Thursday, 7 April 2022 (morning)
Tentative location: Kijkhuis, Leiden

We will keep you posted on the confirmed times and locations for this exciting program on the 'Humanities & AI' to be held in Leiden. The program will include external speakers, artists and panel discussions.

# Workshops

New dates will be found for the 'Nodegoat' and 'Introduction to R' workshops.

# New Staff

### Introducing Jakub Sindelar

Jakub is a first year PhD student at LUCAS under dual supervision between LU and Charles University in Prague, where he teaches courses on modern and contemporary history of (mainly Western) Europe in audiovisual media. Currently he is working on how to apply distant reading analysis of YouTube videos' (Let's Plays) comments to determine how they can be used for the reception analysis of popular historical representations and narratives around WW1 in video games.

# Opportunities

**Project: Tool for measuring speaking dynamically**
**Vacancy:** [Student assistant for 2 months, 0.2fte](#)

We are looking for a student assistant to help build a protocol for tagging speech data on a number of aspects, combining automatic with manual steps in the protocol. For this, we will combine existing tools to create PRAAT-Textgrids that are aligned with orthographic transcripts (webMAUS) existing measures of fluency in PRAAT, and existing tools to calculate linguistic complexity (Coh-metrix, CHAT). To create this protocol, we are looking for a student assistant who can combine (Python/PRAAT-)programming skills to build the automatic steps in the protocol, with some background in linguistics to code/tag aspects manually that cannot be measured automatically. Finally, the protocol will be used for future research into dynamic aspects of speaking.
For questions, contact Nivja de Jong ( [n.h.de.jong@hum.leidenuniv.nl](mailto:n.h.de.jong@hum.leidenuniv.nl) ).