Lectures that Link
Analyzing European Lecture Series as Nodes of Interaction in the Digital Humanities

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Abstract   This article aims to investigate the role of lecture series in Digital Humanities as a field of research within the European context over the past decade. Lecture series, widely used in higher education to facilitate scholarly exchange and to engage students, scholars, and broader audiences, have increasingly been adopted in DH since the late 2010s. By collecting and analyzing data from DH lecture series conducted across European institutions, we explore how they serve to connect institutions, researchers, disciplines, and research topics, employing quantitative data analysis.

Keywords   Lecture series. Twenty-first century. DH community. Data visualization. Europe.

Summary   1 Introduction. – 2 Data Collection. – 3 Analysis of Lecture Series. – 4 Conclusions.

1　　Introduction

For the Digital Humanities (DH) as an interdisciplinary field of research, scholarly exchange across disciplinary and institutional boundaries is essential. One type of event that is widespread in DH and that fosters scholarly exchange are lecture series, and these are the focus of this article.

A survey of the pertinent literature indicates that a 'lecture series' is generally characterized by a coherent thematic framework–ranging from a concrete topic to a broad question-delivered by a succession of speakers, who may come from different institutions and have diverse backgrounds. Each session addresses a sub-topic of the main theme (Linow, Führ, Kleihauer 2018, 177-9) and each speaker provides a specific point of view, thereby ensuring a plurality of perspectives on the overarching topic (Eberhardt 2010, 273). Moreover, Eberhardt emphasizes that lecture series are rarely confined to specialist audiences; they usually also address an interested public (273), and are therefore designed to be broadly accessible, requiring no prior disciplinary knowledge, and often function as an introductory platform for students across all fields as well as for non-university participants (276-7). Structurally, a lecture series most often spans one or more academic terms, with multiple sessions held at regular intervals (often weekly or monthly).

In research on higher-education didactics, lecture series have been conceptualized as a forum for discussion, an opportunity for self-improvement, or a format that supports the university's Third Mission (Eberhardt 2010; Dubs 2019; Nachtwei, Gierke 2023).[1] Overall, academic lectures have long been a cornerstone of scholarly life. As French and Kennedy observe, lectures remain "a valuable teaching method for both practical and pedagogical reasons" (2017, 640). Rooted in centuries-old university traditions, lectures bring learners together in a shared intellectual experience; as Palmer famously put it, "good teaching is always and essentially communal" (118). At their best, lectures excite curiosity and build community: students recognize themselves as part of 'something bigger' as they engage with a lecturer's expertise.

However, the majority of studies on lecture series debate the traditional lecture format, e.g. from a 'What value does it still have?' standpoint, criticizing it as a one-way transmission of information, prompting calls to make it more interactive, or shifting their focus to

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[1] The so-called 'Third Mission' refers to the social and economic mandate of universities, which lies beyond teaching and research. It includes the exchange of knowledge and technology between the university and society, further education and lifelong learning, as well as the university's engagement with the community.

more recent teaching practices such as e-lectures or hybrid lectures (Folley 2010; Dubs 2019, 18-37; Nørgård, Schreibman, Huang 2022). French and Kennedy report that for this reason in many institutions "the lecture has already evolved beyond the traditional idea of a unidirectional monologue" (2017, 640), incorporating active learning elements. In this light, lectures are understood not just as monologues, but as social, engaging events that adapt over time. Overall, aside from the occasional mention in higher-education research, lecture series have attracted surprisingly little attention regarding the wealth of information they offer. Explicit empirical investigations into lecture series are absent, in general and therefore also in the DH.

The traditional modes of public scholarship–including lectures and lecture series–may carry special significance for DH, which have often struggled with public perception and identity. As Nyhan (2016) has noted, despite numerous academic debates about 'What is DH?', the field is still frequently misrepresented outside its community. In this context, lectures and especially lecture series offer a format for showcasing DH work, for outlining its scope, for highlighting key areas, and for establishing and defining DH research communities inside of individual institutions and beyond. DH lecture series–typically cross-disciplinary but on a unifying theme–can serve as public forums where DH research is presented to students, scholars, and the public. Although such DH-themed series have proliferated across universities, they have not yet been systematically studied. In practice, these series usually bring together speakers from multiple institutions around topics such as, for instance, cultural heritage, computational analysis, media studies, or theoretical debates, so in principle they could reveal both the thematic contours of DH and the networks of scholars who participate.

Our hypothesis is that analysing the structure and content of DH lecture series can provide information about the state and development of this field of research, in a similar way to how contributions to DH conferences or DH journals have already been analyzed in national or international contexts to gain insights into the structure, networks, topics, and developments of DH.[2] Abstracts from conferences and journal articles are readily available as sources for such analyses, both in the form of the texts themselves, in addition to the corresponding metadata and bibliographies, depending on how they are published by conference organizers and journal editors. The fact that such sources are often made available in DH in open access and standard formats

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[2]   See Weingart, Eichmann-Kalwara 2017 for an analysis of ADHO conference abstracts and Henny-Krahmer, Sahle 2018, Cremer et al. 2024, and Guhr 2025 for analyses about contributions to the DH conference of the German-speaking area. Additionally, see Kirtania 2021, and Spinaci, Colavizza, Peroni 2022 for bibliometric analyses of DH journal publications.

could explain why they have already been used frequently to track trends in DH. However, such structured and comprehensive data sources were not previously available for DH lecture series. In this article, we present a collection of data on European DH lecture series that we have newly compiled to fill this gap. Due to the abundance of existing DH lecture series, we have limited ourselves to the European context and to a period of a good ten years, between 2014 and 2025. Although there were already DH lecture series before 2014, our observation is that they became more numerous from the mid-2010s onwards. The restriction to a period of just over 10 years also enables us to cover as many series as possible within this scope. Data on events such as lecture series is often not permanently available–so one of the aims of our data collection is to secure it, so that it can be analysed in a transparent and reproducible way and not only by us but by all researchers interested in these events.

We assume that the analysis of lecture series in comparison to conference abstracts and research articles can provide new insights into DH structures and topics, since lecture series have a different character than conferences and publication venues. Conferences focus on a short period of time. This is where those academics who already identify with DH as a subject come together to present their latest work. In the case of publication organs such as journals, there is usually no direct contact between those involved, except via email. Lecture series, as conferences, are a social event with direct contact between organizers, speakers, and the audience, whether in person or online. Unlike conferences, however, these take place over longer periods of time, at many different, individual locations and institutions, and, as stated above, they can also have a connection to university teaching or be offered to the general public. We therefore assume that an analysis of the lecture series will produce different results than an examination of the other sources and that lecture series are another important building block in the sociological structure of DH that is worth researching.

Each DH lecture series has its own topics, objectives, and forms of implementation, something that also became apparent when collecting the data. Some series are part of a teaching program with students, others serve exclusively for the exchange between scholars, and still others integrate these elements and also include a general public. The topics and objectives may also differ from series to series. From this perspective, qualitative studies on DH lecture series will also be beneficial. In our contribution, however, we focus on the unifying, structural elements of all series and strive for a quantitative analysis. Against that background, we formulate the following central research question, which we pose in this article when examining the collection of data on European lecture series: To what extent and how do DH lecture series contribute to the

networking of researchers, institutions, disciplines, and topics in the field? Are they isolated events at individual institutions or is there a high degree of interconnection? As the title of our article suggests, we believe that 'lectures link', the question is, to what degree and how exactly they do. Local embedding of lecture series, for instance, is not an obstacle to networking, on the contrary. It can connect local actors with other regional, national, and international participants and thus expand the entire DH network in a different way than, for example, specialist conferences do.

In the remainder of this article, we will examine the questions posed as follows: in section 2, we present the data collection of European DH lecture series that we created, explaining which sources we collected, how the data was modeled, and what the current state of the collection is. In section 3, this data is analyzed with quantitative methods to investigate the links between researchers, institutions, disciplines, and topics that can be found in the data collection. The final section 4 serves to discuss our findings, keeping in mind the limitations of our analysis and pointing out future possible directions for research on DH lecture series.

2 Data Collection

We collect our data on European lecture series in a public GitHub repository (Henny-Krahmer, Alvares Freire, Renz 2025). In the following, we explain which DH lecture series we selected for data collection, and how we captured and modeled the data to create the database for our analyses.

2.1 Collection Criteria and Considerations

Across European institutions, the same concept of a lecture series is referred to by different terms in different languages. In English-speaking academia, labels such as 'Lecture Series', 'Guest Lecture Series', 'Seminar Series', 'Webinar Series', and more flexible formulations like 'Seminars in …', 'Talks in …', or 'Lectures in …' are prevalent. In German, one encounters *Ringvorlesung* (literally 'ring lecture') or *Vorlesungsreihe*, as well as *Kolloquium*. In French, the equivalent is *cycle de conférences* (conference cycle), and in Italian, *ciclo di conferenze* (cycle of conferences). Spanish similarly uses *ciclo de conferencias* (sometimes *serie de conferencias*). In Scandinavia, the terms are aptly descriptive: Swedish *föreläsningsserie* and Norwegian *foredragsrekke* (both meaning series of lectures). Despite this linguistic variety, the structure and function of these series are broadly similar. Therefore, when conducting a multilingual analysis,

we treat all these terms as equivalent, as they are identified as the same type of academic event in our study.

One advantage for our collection and analysis purposes is that, in accordance with the lecture series' aim to be a forum of public discussion, information about their programs is usually publicly accessible, i.e. published on the websites of the institutions that host them. Even if these are not designed for long-term availability, they can usually still be found beyond the period of the events themselves, so that we can collect this data.

An important, practical question of definition is when several lectures become a series. For our data collection, it was crucial that there is a thematic connection, expressed for example by an overarching title of a series, that there are recognizable organizers who are not the sole speakers and that at least three lectures have taken place that are related in this sense. These events should also not have taken place over a short period of time, i.e. at least over several months and usually no more than one event per week. This is how we draw the line between lecture series on the one hand and conferences or other, shorter events with several lectures, such as individual workshops or thematic weeks, on the other hand.

Once we have established what we consider a 'lecture series', we still have to decide which ones are DH lecture series. Our criterion for this was that the keyword 'Digital Humanities' or closely related terms such as 'Cultural Heritage' or 'Digital Heritage' must appear either in the title or in the general description of the series, i.e. that there must be an explicit reference to the subject. For this, we have considered all linguistic variants, not only the English terms (e.g., *humanités numériques* in French or *digital humaniora* in Swedish). In this respect, the decisive factor for us is whether a series explicitly declares itself to be a DH series or a series that is situated under the 'umbrella' of DH and thus aims to contribute to the DH as a research field and community. In our collection and analysis, we concentrate on general DH series, i.e., those that address the field as a whole. Beyond that, there are more specialized series on specific subfields of DH, for instance, on digital history.[3] We assess these, as well, as long as they refer to DH as a field, but it has to be taken into account that

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[3] Examples for such series are the *Offenes Forschungskolloquium Digital History* organized at the Humboldt University in Berlin (see `https://dhistory.hypotheses.org/digital-history–forschungskolloquium`) or the series *Voices Unbound: Lecture Series on Digital Oral History,* co-organized by the Technical University of Darmstadt, the University College London, the Luxembourg Centre for Contemporary and Digital History (C²DH) and the Max-Planck-Institut für Wissenschaftsgeschichte (see `https://hdsm.hypotheses.org/3657`). In both cases, the series focus on digital history as a specific subfield of DH but 'digital humanities' is mentioned in the general description of the series as a point of reference.

the scope of such series is narrower than of the ones addressing DH in general, which has effects on the people and institutions involved and the topics addressed. To sum up, we include lecture series that, by their very self-conception, aim to contribute to DH.

At the outset of our study, we conducted a systematic survey of lecture formats relevant to our data collection. Guided by the structural characteristics outlined above, we focused on events held in European countries. We realize that there are DH lecture series all around the world and we quickly saw that we would not be able to capture them all in a manageable time, so the limitation to the European context is meant as a first step and a starting point, beyond which we ourselves or other researchers can expand later.

In our collection, we focused on series in those languages that we have at least a reading comprehension of. We are aware that our language skills are influenced by our origins, educational contexts, and personal backgrounds and that this limits the data collection in a specific way. So far, we have considered lecture series in English, German, French, Italian, Spanish, and Swedish. In each of these languages, we identified instances of lecture series that conformed to the defining features as outlined in the previous section, through free keyword searches on the web and considering announcements in DH mailing lists and blogs.

Our assessment of DH lecture series in the scope defined above revealed a sample of 60 series from 14 countries.[4] Germany is the most frequently represented country (with 33 series), whereas some other countries appear only once. In Germany, DH is well represented as a discipline and is already comparatively well established, even though it is still considered a 'minor subject' in terms of institutionalization. Temporarily, the series we found in our assessment have a notable concentration in the 2020s: 37 of the 60 series started in or after 2020. It is quite conceivable that the COVID-19 pandemic plays a role in this context, as many activities have moved online since then, including many DH lecture series, which are in part either hybrid or purely online.

Of the 60 series, we have captured 30 for analysis so far (Germany: 14, France: 3, Austria: 2, Italy: 2, Switzerland: 2, Portugal and Sweden: 1, Spain: 1, Sweden: 1, UK: 1, UK and Ireland: 1, Belgium: 1). As mentioned in the introduction, we have only recorded lectures that took place between 2014 and the end of March 2025, thus covering approximately the last ten years. There are also earlier lectures, existing series are currently continuing, and new series started in 2025. In this respect, our database can be expanded in the future.

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4   See the table in the appendix to this article listing the lecture series that are part of our data basis.

2.2 Data Capture, Data Enrichment, and Data Modelling

Our data model takes into account the following basic information for recording individual lectures, which can be found on almost all of the websites related to the events: the date of a lecture, its title, the name of the speaker or speakers and their institutional affiliation, and the name of the institution where the lecture took place. If available, we also include the following details, even though they are often missing or only partially or inconsistently provided: an abstract summarizing the content of a lecture, the academic degree or title of the speaker, and whether the lecture was held online, in person, or in a hybrid format. Although lecture series formats can generally be considered homogeneous, the information provided in the presentations on their websites often differs significantly from one another.

In addition to the information about individual lectures, we capture details about lecture series terms and the whole overarching series: the name of the whole series, a description of its goals, its theme, and topics, if available, and the time frame and organizers of the series terms. Wherever possible, we document our sources by providing links archived with the WaybackMachine to make sure that our data sources are secured and transparent. We archive websites of whole series descriptions, of the programs of individual terms of a series, and of individual lectures and their details, if available. Furthermore, if there are links to related blog posts or videos of the lectures and these are easily recognizable, we collect these, as well, even though we do not archive videos for practical reasons.

A typical example of how information about a DH lecture series term is presented on a corresponding website is shown below **[fig. 1]**. In this example from the series *DH-seminariet*, there is a box listing the lectures of a specific term, indicating the date of each lecture and their speakers. The names of the speakers are linked to individual subpages where more information on each lecture can be found.

Seminarieschema hösten 2021 ︿

1 oktober: Richard Rogers, professor i New Media and Digital Culture vid Amsterdams universitet och författare bland annat till boken Doing Digital Methods (SAGE 2019).

15 oktober: N. Katherine Hayles, författare till flera böcker om posthumanism, elektronisk litteratur och digital kultur. Hennes senaste bok *Postprint: Books and Becoming Computational* utkom på Columbia University Press i våras.

26 november: John Martin, Sustain Earth Institute University of Plymouth: Participatory walking methods and tools. I samarbete med Ekoseminariet.

3 december: Peter Leonard, föreståndare för Digital Humanities Lab vid Yale university.

Figure 1 Information about a term of the Swedish lecture series *DH-seminariet*[5]

However, we do not only collect information about the lecture series that we find on the corresponding websites, but also supplement this with information that we can derive from the directly visible data, with the aim of having an expanded basis for analyzing the lecture series. We add the following information:

- gender of the speakers: we interpret this from the names of the speakers and from further information that may be provided; possible values are 'female', 'male', and 'non-binary';
- authority data about the speakers: we add ORCID or Wikidata IDs for those speakers whose ID we can easily find;
- places of organizations: we connect the mentioned organizations (host institutions and speaker affiliations) with information about their locations (cities, which in turn are referred to the respective countries and continents);
- authority data of organizations: we add Wikidata IDs to organizations where we can find them;

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[5] For figure 1, see the website of the lecture series at: `https://web.archive.org/web/20250526140442/https://www.gu.se/digital-humaniora/aktuellt/dh-seminariet#accordion=0d914e3d-55d8-4923-a9cb-1c7f6393f7fa`.

- authority data of places: we add IDs of the Getty Thesaurus of Geographic Names (TGN);
- disciplines: we add information about the various disciplines to which the talks are connected for every lecture;
- topics: we add lists of topics that the talks address to every lecture.

In general, some of the above information is encoded at the individual lecture as a specific instance at a certain point in time, for example, the affiliation and titles of the speakers, which may change. In contrast, we capture the names and gender of people and the places of institutions in a general index, assuming relative (even if not absolute) stability of these values.

To add the information about disciplines covered by a lecture, we created a list ourselves that includes 'digital humanities' as well as disciplines that are part of or related to DH as a broader research field, for example, 'library and information science', 'computer science', 'literary studies', 'linguistics', 'history', 'archaeology', and so on. When assigning the disciplines to the lectures, we only list 'digital humanities' if this is explicitly mentioned in the title or abstract of the talk or if no other more specific discipline is appropriate. Furthermore, several disciplines can be assigned to each lecture.

When it comes to assigning topics, we generated them using the LLM Mistral AI via a custom Python script. Every talk was enriched with five topics generated by the LLM. All the topics are provided in English.[6] The LLM topics are not from a controlled list. However, they tend to capture the content of the lectures quite well and even provide contextual information from the language model. Assigning topics to the lectures is easier when abstracts are present and not only the title is available. We decided to use an LLM topic assignment because this could be done automatically and effectively. In a future version of our data set, we aim to complement this with a manual assignment using the TaDiRAH taxonomy.[7]

All the resulting data that we collected is encoded following the Guidelines of the Text Encoding Initiative (TEI). The collection methodology and details of the encoding are described in an ODD file, of which a formal data schema can be derived to control the data. For an example of how an encoded lecture looks like, see Code 1.

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6 The prompt for generating the LLM topics is documented in the corresponding script in the GitHub repository.

7 For a description of the TaDiRAH taxonomy, see `https://web.archive.org/web/20250624200607/https://de.dariah.eu/en/tadirah`.

```
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  <eventName xml:lang="en">Visual media analysis for Instagram and other online
    platforms</eventName>
  <ptr type="programme"
    target="https://web.archive.org/web/20250526155710/https://www.gu.se/evenemang/dh-seminariet-richard-rogers"/>
  <ptr type="video"
    target="https://play.gu.se/media/DH-seminariet%3A%20Richard%20Rogers%2020211001/0_4nl9nqre"/>
  <note type="abstract" xml:lang="en">
    <p>Instagram is currently the social media platform most associated with online images (and
      their analysis), but images from other platforms also can be collected and grouped, arrayed by
      similarity, stacked, matched, stained, labelled, depicted as network, placed side by side and
      otherwise analytically displayed. In the following, the initial focus is on Instagram,
      together with certain schools of thought such as Instagramism and Instagrammatics for its
      aesthetic and visual cultural study. Building on those two approaches, it subsequently focuses
      on other web and social media platforms, such as Google Image Search, Twitter, Facebook and
      4chan. It provides demonstrations of how querying techniques create online image collections,
      and how these sets are analytically grouped through arrangements collectively referred to as
      metapictures.</p>
  </note>
  <note type="keywords">
    <term type="discipline" corresp="#media-studies"/>
    <term type="topics-llm">image analysis, social media, instagram, visual culture, web
      platforms</term>
  </note>
  <note type="realization">
    <term type="speech">online</term>
    <term type="audience">online</term>
  </note>
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      <name>
        <roleName type="title">Prof. Dr.</roleName>
      </name>
      <affiliation corresp="#uni-amsterdam"/>
    </person>
  </listPerson>
  <org role="host-institution" corresp="#uni-gothenburg"/>
</event>
```

Code 1 Example of an individual lecture encoded in XML TEI

3 Analysis of Lecture Series

In our analysis, we aim to examine the lecture series as a means of scholarly communication with the aim of promoting cross-disciplinary interactions and establishing links within the field of DH, be it inter-institutional, regional, national, or international networks. To this end, we use the data about DH lecture series that we collected to measure the degree to which researchers (speakers and organizers), institutions, disciplines, and topics are linked through their participation and occurrence in the lectures. In addition, we have collected information about places and times: where and when the lectures took place, where speakers came from and when they intervened. We can now use all of this data to examine DH lecture series in Europe over the course of the last decade. We do this by quantitatively evaluating the data in the form of statistical visualizations.

When analyzing the various lecture series we have recorded, we must take into account that they are not structurally homogeneous phenomena. As can be seen in Figure 2, the scope of the series varies, which naturally also influences their connections. The number of terms per series ranges between only a single term up to 12 terms, which means that some series are only organized once, whereas others have a longer tradition and are regularly held. The median in

our data set is a duration of 2.5 terms. The number of lectures per term also varies and lies between only a single lecture in one term up to 44 lectures, the latter being an exceptional case where no real term-structure could be recognized. The medium number of lectures per term is 6, showing that term lengths and frequencies of lectures held in a term vary in the different lecture series.
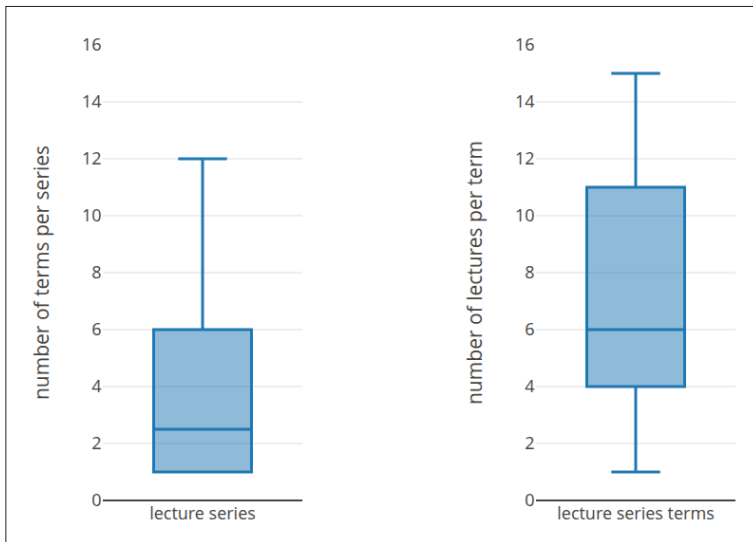

Figure 2a-b   Structure of the lecture series by: (a) number of terms per series; (b) number of lectures per term

The 30 lecture series for which we have captured the data so far include 863 individual lectures. 85 people were involved as organizers and 820 as speakers. There are 30 different host institutions and 305 institutions involved as affiliations of speakers. Regarding places, the lectures took place in 29 cities in 11 countries and speakers from 207 cities in 36 countries were involved in the events. These figures give an impression of the scope of our data set, but also provide initial quantitative insight into the diversity of the individuals, institutions, and locations involved. We can directly see, for instance, that some speakers are involved several times, as the overall number of speakers is lower than the total number of lectures given, even though there are some lectures held by groups of speakers. Figure 3 shows that most speakers only held an individual lecture. In our dataset, 134 speakers held two or more lectures in all the series. The speaker who was involved most held nine lectures. If we take a closer look at this individual case, the following picture emerges: all the lectures were held between 2020 and 2024, at six different lecture series in Germany (in the cities Berlin, Potsdam, Rostock, Stuttgart, and

Erlangen/Nuremberg). During this time, the speaker was affiliated with four different German universities (Hamburg, Darmstadt, Regensburg, Stuttgart). The most active speaker in our current data set is therefore very well networked within Germany. However, there are also speakers that establish connections internationally. One speaker in our dataset who is affiliated with the University of Victoria in Canada was involved in four lectures, one in Antwerp (2017), Cologne (2018), London (2020), and Venice (2021), respectively, of which the lecture in London was planned but canceled. In summary, it can be stressed that relatively few speakers are active in several lecture series and that each case can be considered individually, as well, to understand the kind of linking between institutions and places that took place through the speakers.
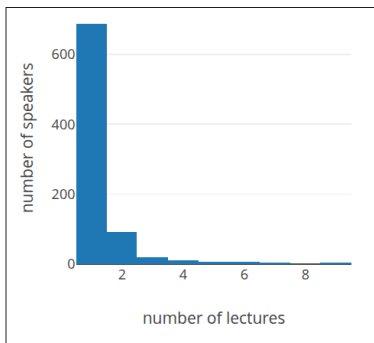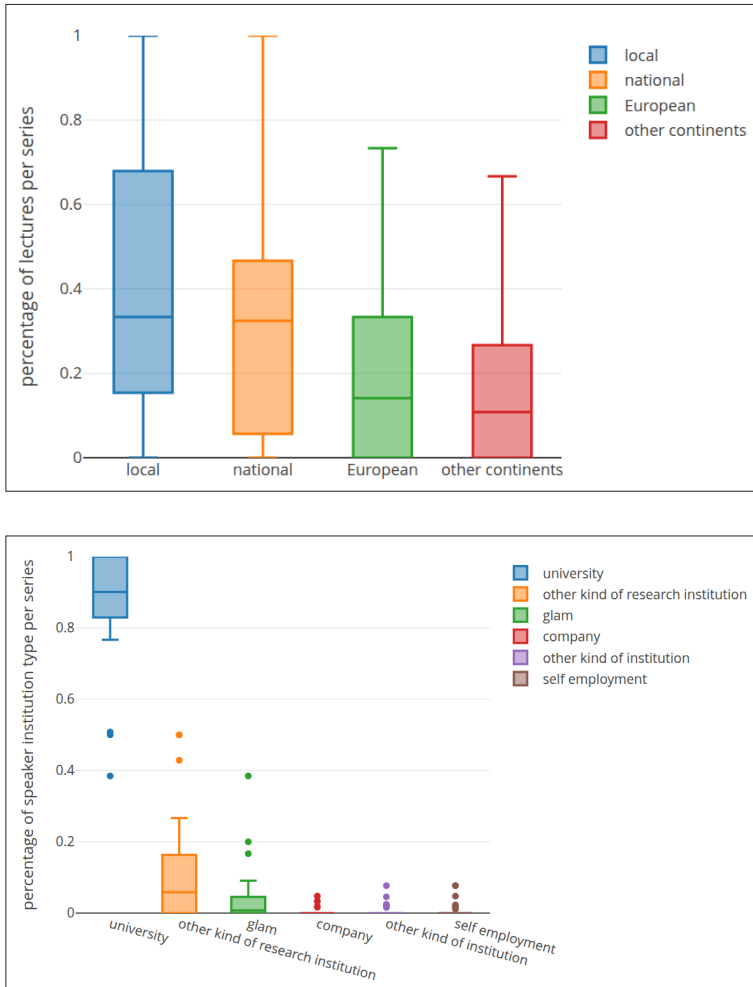

Figure 3
Number of lectures per speaker

Many speakers are invited from places other than the host institution, as the number of speaker cities (207) is almost seven times higher than the number of host cities (29). Speakers from 36 countries are involved in the lecture series organized in 11 different countries, which shows that international speakers are invited from a broader context. But how far does the reach of the lecture series extend in terms of location if we analyse the whole distribution of data? Figure 4a shows a series of box plots that visualize the percentages of lectures held by local, national, and European guests and by speakers invited from other continents. The shares are calculated per lecture series. We see that the lecture series primarily serve to connect various speakers from the same city and from other cities in the same country, with a median of 33% and 32% of invited speakers from these geographic contexts, respectively. Speakers from other European countries participate with a median of 14% throughout all the lecture series, and speakers from other continents with a median of 11%. The box plots show that there is some variance, especially in the proportion of local and national speakers. For instance, there are purely local series and series with no local speaker at all. Overall,

the degree of internationalization is relatively low throughout the lecture series, so that we can speak of 'lectures that link locally and nationally' in the first place.

Figures 4a-b Percentages of lectures held by: (a) local, national, European, and non-European speakers; (b) speakers from different types of institutions (both shown per lecture series)

Another type of information we captured in our dataset is the type of institution a speaker belongs to: university, other kind of research institution, GLAM, company, other kind of institution, or self-employment. Figure 4b shows a corresponding analysis of the percentages of speaker institution types per lecture series. With a

median of 90%, speakers are affiliated with universities; speakers from other kinds of research institutions are present with a median of only 6%, speakers from GLAM institutions with a median of less than 1%, and speakers from companies, other kinds of institutions (for instance, newspapers or foundations), and self-employed speakers are the exception. This shows that DH lecture series mainly take place within the academic field, at least as far as the invited speakers are concerned. In the sense of public humanities or a link to the non-academic professional environment, a further opening could take place here by inviting speakers from other areas more often.

Regarding disciplines, we analyze how disciplines are represented in the whole dataset of the DH lecture series and how strongly individual lecture series are influenced by specific disciplines. This serves to analyze to what extent the lecture series connects researchers and listeners in a highly interdisciplinary manner or only within specific research areas within DH. We recorded 36 different disciplines to which the lectures in the series contribute **[fig. 5]**. Most often, lectures can be associated with DH as a general field, followed by history, literary studies, computer science, and library and information science. Only individual lectures address specific fields such as Yiddish, African, Slavic, or Chinese studies, or connections between DH and mathematics or the natural sciences, for instance.
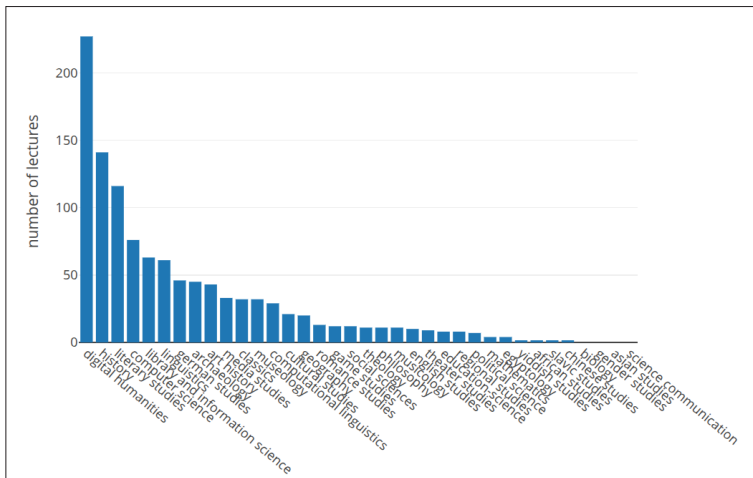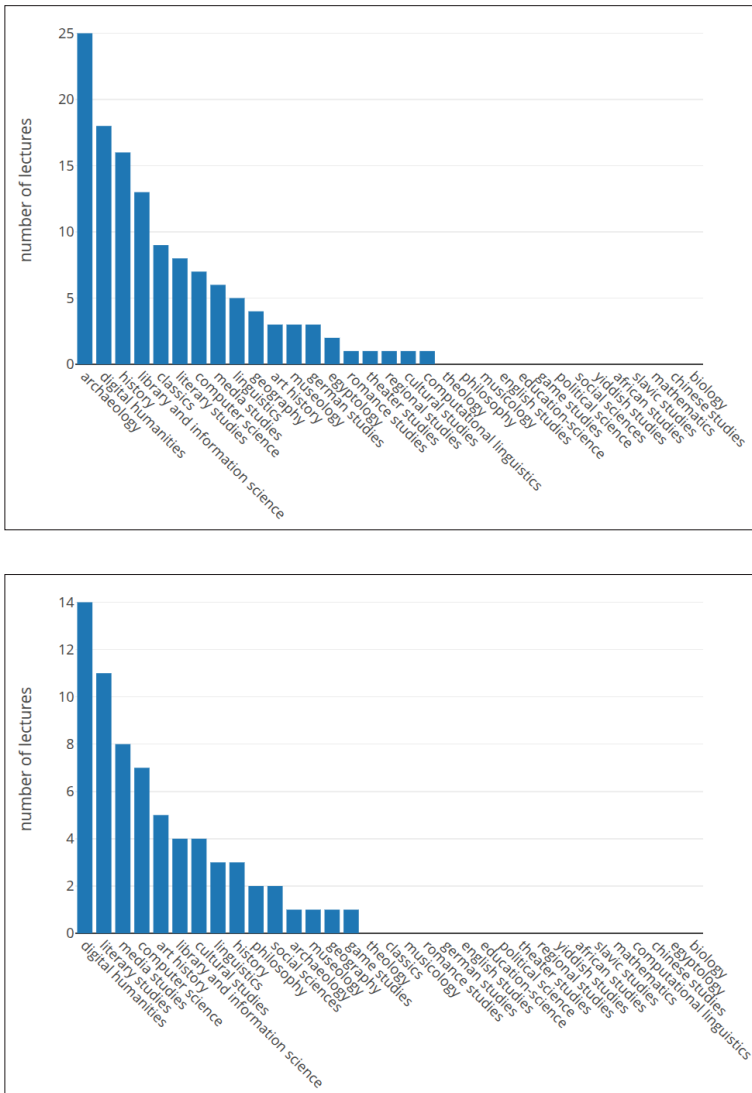

Figure 5   Disciplines of the lectures held in DH lecture series (overview)

Figures 6a-b   Disciplines of the lectures held: (a) in the series *Colloquium in Digital Cultural Heritage* (2018-25); (b) in the series *DH-seminariet* (2020-24)

Each lecture series has its own profile of disciplines that it covers. The series *Colloquium in Digital Cultural Heritage*, for instance, which takes place at the University of Cologne since 2018, has an inclination towards the field of archaeology **[fig. 6a]**, whereas the series *DH-seminariet*, which ran between 2020 and 2024 at the

University of Gothenburg, favors DH in general and literary studies [**fig. 6b**]. Overall, most series have specific disciplinary focuses, but also address general DH topics and other fields to a certain degree.

Regarding the topic keywords that we collected, they cannot be directly used as indicators for the degree to which a lecture series enables networks between researchers, but they may give insight into the degree of interdisciplinarity and thematic diversity of the DH lecture series. Since we had the thematic keywords generated by an LLM, the results are a non-standardized list of keywords. This must be taken into account in the analysis. In a first, non-exhaustive approach, we compare four thematic areas of DH: digitization and cultural heritage, digital edition, analysis, and artificial intelligence [**fig. 7**]. We analyze the proportions of lectures in each series that were marked with these topic keywords.[8] The results show that most lecture series are thematically diverse, which one would expect. The median proportion of lectures in a series concerned with digitization and cultural heritage is 4%, with digital edition 1%, with analysis 21%, and with artificial intelligence 16%, with some variance and outliers visible in the box plots. The fact that the fourth area is relatively strongly represented is quite striking. One hypothesis to be examined in more detail is that this topic area is currently being dealt with heavily in DH lecture series.
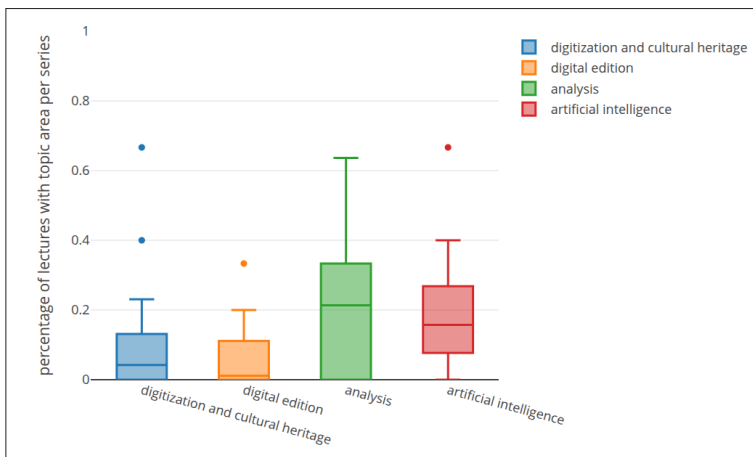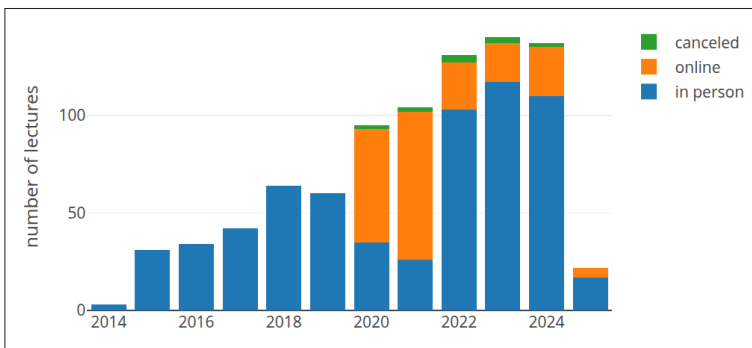

Figure 7 Percentages of topic areas per lecture series

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8 For this purpose, the following terms were searched for inside of the keywords: 'cultural heritage' and 'digitization'; 'edition', 'editing', 'editorial'; 'analysis'; 'machine learning', 'ai', 'artificial intelligence', 'llm'.
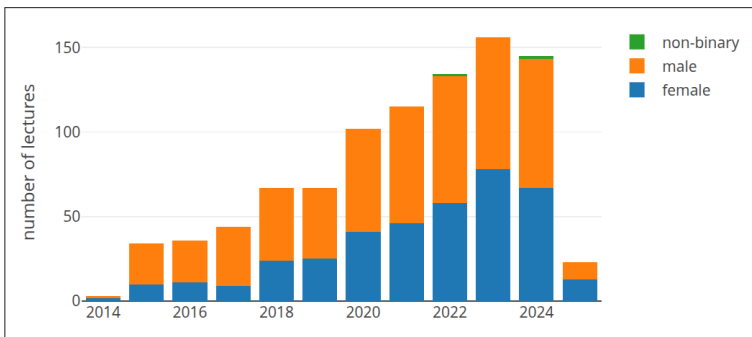
All the analysis we have done so far could also be considered over time, but there is no room for that in this article. We will therefore limit the analysis over time to two general aspects: how many lectures took place over time at all [fig. 8a], including the indication of the mode that the lectures were delivered in (in person, online, or canceled), and how many lectures were given by speakers of which gender [fig. 8b]. We clearly see that the number of lectures increases with the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in the year 2020, and online lectures begin to happen in the same year. After 2021, the share of online lectures decreases again but about one-fifth the lectures continue to be delivered online. The pandemic may have fostered DH lecture series because online formats became common as a result.[9] Obviously, the kind of 'linking' and 'networking' that takes place in the context of a lecture is influenced by the presentation mode. Overall, we see an increase in the number of lectures, reflecting the growth and further establishment of DH as a research field and an increase in public lecture series activities.

Regarding the gender distribution of speakers, has there been a trend toward greater balance over time? Figure 8b shows that this is the case, but only moderately. The number of lectures per year with female and male speakers was only the same in 2023 – in other years, there were more male speakers, and for 2025, we do not have any reliable results yet. Non-binary speakers, as far as we could assess, are a minority.[10]

9 The question of how the presentations were delivered can also be examined from the perspective of the audience, for whom we recorded the values 'in person', 'online' or 'hybrid'. Even if speakers presented on site, there may have been an additional online broadcast. However, for reasons of space, we will not pursue this further here.

10 A possible extension of the analysis of gender distributions would be to analyze the genders of the lecture series organizers.

Figures 8a-b   Number of lectures per year categorized by: (a) mode of delivery (in person, online, canceled); (b) gender of the speakers (female, male, non-binary)

4   Conclusions

The structural, quantitative evaluations of the series have shown, on the one hand, that each series has its own character in terms of its structural scope and composition. Speakers from different places and institutions are invited, referring to different disciplines and topics within the 'big tent' DH. On the other hand, there are some general characteristics that can be observed. The extent to which local, national, or international guests are invited shows that the lecture series tend to primarily connect local and national actors in the field. Only some speakers are repeatedly present in different lecture series, and most speakers are affiliated with universities, not other types of institutions. Through our insights into how these series are currently organized and realized, we can learn how they could be implemented differently in a targeted manner, for instance, to be more international and more open beyond academia. By organizing lecture series, we can actively shape DH networks.

With this study, we presented a large dataset on European DH lecture series, showing how such data can be collected and modeled as a basis for quantitative analyses of lecture series as events that bring together researchers, students, and the public in an interdisciplinary setting, enabling community-building and networking in and beyond individual institutions. The dataset still needs to be completed, though, to include all the data that we could identify as relevant for our study, and it can also be expanded to cover lecture series from further countries and in more languages. Our analysis is only an initial exploration of how a dataset on DH lecture series can be researched and what insights it can bring. Further types of analyses are possible: Future steps could, for instance, focus more on developments over time, which we have only done marginally

in this article. All analyses could also be refined by looking at the situation for individual countries, locations, institutions, or lecture series. Many perspectives and focuses between distant and close examination of the data are possible. Further options for displaying the relationship between places, institutions, and people involved in the lecture series include the use of maps and networks. In addition, audience information could be collected: currently, we have no data on participant numbers or backgrounds, and it remains unclear whether audiences primarily consisted of students, fellow scholars, or laypersons. The data on DH lecture series that is usually publicly available does not provide this information. Going beyond what can be easily collected, quantitative analysis could be combined with qualitative investigations by focusing on individual lecture series more in-depth and by including other sources of data. For instance, interviews could be conducted with organizers, speakers, and participants. This would provide a clearer picture of how different stakeholders experience the lecture series and how they can be further developed as networking events for the community of DH researchers, students, and the public.

Appendix

Table 1   List of lecture series in the data collection

No.	Lecture Series	Countries	Venues	Years
1	*ACDH-CH Lectures*	Austria	Vienna	2015-
2	*The Digital Humanities Guest Lecture Series / Introduction to Digital Humanities*	Austria	Vienna	2019-
3	*Platform{DH} Lecture Series / platform{talks}*	Belgium	Antwerp	2014-22
4	*Cycle de conférences – Humanités numériques*	France	Rouen	2021-22
5	*Les humanités numériques au coeur du patrimoine culturel*	France	Corte	2021-22
6	*Rendez-vous du Centre des Humanités Numériques*	France	Paris	2022-23
7	*Einführung in die Digital Humanities*	Germany	Münster	2022
8	*Digital Humanities: Anwendungsbereiche, Möglichkeiten, Werkzeuge*	Germany	Tübingen	2024-
9	*Digital Humanities – Theorie und Methodik*	Germany	Leipzig	2014-
10	*Digital Humanities – Aktuelle Forschungsthemen*	Germany	Cologne	2015-
11	*Digital Humanities in den Geisteswissenschaften / Digitale Geisteswissenschaften*	Germany	Stuttgart	2015-20
12	*DH-Kolloquium an der BBAW*	Germany	Berlin	2017-
13	*Colloquium in Digital Cultural Heritage*	Germany	Cologne	2018-
14	*Phänomenologie der Digital Humanities*	Germany	Berlin	2021-
15	*Grundlagen und anwendungsorientierte Methoden der Digital Humanities*	Germany	Dresden	2022-
16	*Kulturwissenschaften und Digital Humanities. Konzeptionelle Annäherungen*	Germany	Vechta	2023
17	*Digital Humanities im Fokus: Methoden, Anwendungen und Perspektiven*	Germany	Rostock	2023-
18	*DHSS Vortragsreihe*	Germany	Erlangen / Nuremberg	2023-24
19	*Offenes Master-Kolloquium Digital Humanities*	Germany	Stuttgart	2024-
20	*Vortragsreihe „Code & Kultur"*	Germany	Potsdam	2024-
21	*Seminars in Digital and Public Humanities*	Italy	Venice	2019-
22	*Doing digital humanities @ DiSSGeA*	Italy	Padua	2020-22
23	*Knowledge Organisation and Digital Humanities: An International Webinar Series*	Portugal / Sweden	Porto / Växjö / Kalmar	2021
24	*Ciclo UC3M de Humanidades Digitales*	Spain	Madrid	2024
25	*DH-seminariet*	Sweden	Gothenburg	2020-24
26	*Einblicke in die Digital Humanities*	Switzerland	Bern	2020-
27	*Cultural Heritage in the Digital Age*	Switzerland	Basel	2023-
28	*The Susan Hockey Lecture in Digital Humanities*	United Kingdom	London	2015-19
29	*The Digital Humanities Lecture Series*	United Kingdom	London	2022
30	*Trust and Authority in the Digital Age*	United Kingdom / Ireland	Birmingham / Dublin	2021

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