20/21
Annual Report
GC DIGITAL INITIATIVES

"I was very fortunate to participate in the GC Digital Research Institute in 2021. As a faculty member, the DRI has introduced me to new research skills and tools that will be very useful in my career and provided the foundation to continue learning on my own. The organization of the workshop and the dedication of the organizers and fellows was outstanding, what a tremendous team!! The workshop was online this year, which makes teaching this content extra challenging, particularly to a large and diverse group like ours; it was evident how much effort went into it and I greatly appreciate it. The DRI is an excellent model to teach and learn in a supportive and interdisciplinary environment that extends beyond the workshop itself, providing extensive resources to participants and the opportunity to engage with others interested in digital research and practice over the long-term. I hope many others have the opportunity to participate."

Professor Elia Machado
Earth and Environmental Sciences

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SECTIONS

GCDI develops and leads workshops, institutes, consultations, and other forms of formal and informal training programs, helping students and faculty acquire cutting-edge skills to enhance their research, teaching, and service.

GCDI fosters spaces where scholars connect and collaborate through working and user groups, interdisciplinary events, and fellowship programs.

GCDI provides a model for interdisciplinary digital programming inside and outside CUNY, through projects and events, publications, and other resources.

Letter from the Director

Having persevered through a year marked by a pandemic, I'm tempted simply to share my relief that we made it through the 2020-2021 academic year. But GC Digital Initiatives did not just make it to the end -- we positively flourished as our amazing staff, led by Deputy Director Lisa Rhody and the GC Digital Fellows, played a crucial role in helping the GC's research and teaching missions thrive in new contexts. From our Digital Research Institute, which we moved online for the first time, to community events like the CUNY Digital Humanities Initiative, which gathered DH practitioners across CUNY to share their projects, GC Digital Initiatives continued to provide professional development services to GC faculty and students, and to the CUNY system as a whole. As one small measure of our success, Graduate Center students swept the NYCDH Graduate Student Project Awards, an unprecedented feat that speaks to the power of the imagination, creativity, and digital skills of GC students.

Our work was made possible not only by continued strong support from the GC Provost's Office in the midst of difficult budget circumstances, but also by funding agencies such as the National Endowment for the Humanities Office of Digital Humanities, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the Carnegie Corporation, and the CUNY Office of Library Services, whose support of GC Digital Initiatives staff, projects, and institutes is further confirmation of the leading role the GC plays in the fields of digital humanities and data studies. Taken together, GC Digital Initiatives received grants totaling $1,787,000 to support projects such as Manifold, the Digital Humanities Research Institute, and The CUNY Academic Commons.

On a daily basis, our GC Digital Fellows offer workshops, lead working groups, consult with faculty and students on their digital projects, and share guidance with the many members of the GC community who seek to incorporate digital methods into their research, teaching, and service. Though our work over the past year took place over platforms such as Zoom, Slack, and Discord, our GC Digital Fellows found inventive ways to transition their work online amidst challenging circumstances. I am so proud to work with such an inspiring group of colleagues who are committed to sustaining the Graduate Center's history of research excellence and encouraging experiments with new forms of work. In this year, especially, the relationships that we have built with each other and with the larger GC community have sustained us, and they will continue to propel us forward into the next academic year.

Matthew K. Gold
Advisor to the Provost for Digital Initiatives

GCDI By the Numbers

This year, we kept our Digital GC community connected and moving forward on their research and teaching through programming, outreach, workshops, and external funding.

5 out of 5

STUDENT WINNERS

GC students swept all 5 of the NYC Digital Humanities graduate student awards and presented their work at the February annual kickoff event.

Over 30

PROGRAMS REACHED

GCDI workshops, events, institutes, and other programming reached masters, doctoral, and certificate programs across the GC this year, keeping us moving forward together even while we are apart.

$1,787,000

EXTERNAL FUNDING

GCDI brings in external funds to support graduate students, supplementing their fellowships, providing professional development, and connecting them to new careers.

GCDI Staff & Fellows

Director
Matthew K. Gold

Deputy Director
Lisa Marie Rhody

Digital Fellows
Param Ajmera
Di Yoong
Olivia Ildefonso
Connor French
Yuxiao Luo
Rafael Davis Portela
Stefano Morello
Filipa Calado

GCDI Staff
Jessie McCormack
Program Coordinator
Wendy Barrales
Manifold Fellow
Robin Miller
Instructional Technology Specialist

Social Media Fellows
Beth Fera
Criminal Justice
Maya Rose
Educational Psychology
Parisa Setayesh
Earth and Environmental Sciences
B. Stone
Political Science
Sejung Sage Yim
Sociology

Advancing Graduate Education

Workshops, Institutes, Consultations

Workshops...

TOOLS FOR DIGITAL HUMANITIES

An overview of digital methods & tools
Filipa Calado | 20 Registered

INTRO TO PYTHON

Learning fundamentals of Python programming language
Rafael Davis Portela | 22 Registered

INTRO TO THE COMMAND LINE

Learning fundamentals to the UNIX command line
Stefano Morello | 15 Registered

When asked if the workshop met their expectations
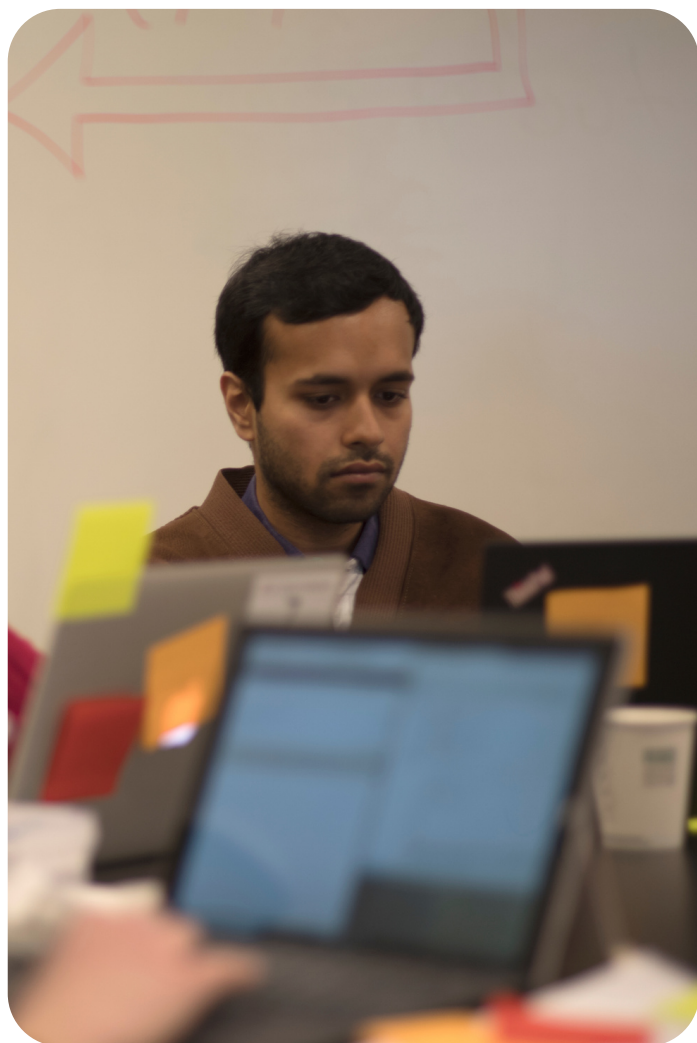
97%

said **YES!**

1 INTRODUCE NEW TOOLS, METHODS, AND MODES OF THINKING TO THOSE JUST STARTING OUT.

INTRO TO R & RSTUDIO

Learning the fundamentals of the R programming language and RStudio IDE
Connor French | 19 Registered

GETTING GOOD (ENOUGH) AUDIO RECORDING

Learn good practices and how to create a home studio for recording
Di Yoong | 20 Registered

INTRO TO QRDA & TEXT ANALYSIS IN R

RQDA (R qualitative data analysis) in R
Yuxiao Luo | 18 Registered

INTRO TO MAKING AN INTERACTIVE MAP

Learning mapping methods & tools
Olivia Ildefonso | 37 Registered

Workshops...

Workshops...

WORKING WITH HATHITRUST DATA

Learning how to use the world's largest digital library for data analysis
Param Ajmera | 22 Registered

CHOOSING THE RIGHT PLATFORM FOR YOUR DIGITAL ARCHIVE

Overview of tools and platforms ito create a digital archive
Stefano Morello | 30 Registered

INTRO TO PREDICTIVE MODELING IN R

Supervised learning (regression & classification) in R
Yuxiao Luo | 24 Registered

91%

said the workshop "balanced discussion and hands-on practice just right."

3 CONNECT NOVICES AND EXPERIENCED DIGITAL SCHOLARS TO GCDI'S RESOURCES & TUTORIALS.

4 ENGAGE INTERDISCIPLINARY SCHOLARSHIP THROUGH INTERACTIVE WORKSHOPS, EXPOSING LEARNERS TO NEW MODES OF RESEARCH AND PUBLICATION.

INTRO TO TEXT ANALYSIS IN R

Wrangling & analyzing unstructured text in R
Connor French | 25 Registered

BASIC AUDIO EDITING WITH AUDACITY

Cleaning and editing audio recording
Di Yoong | 25 Registered

DATA ANALYSIS IN WITH PYTHON

Python for analyzing quantitative data
Rafael Davis Portela | 35 Registered

WEB SCRAPING WITH PYTHON

Python for downloading data from the web
Filipa Calado | 39 Registered

Workshops...

GC Digital Research Institute

This year's DRI participants included an interdisciplinary group of **28 students** from **18 different programs** at the GC.

Since 2016, the GC Digital Fellows, led by Lisa Rhody, have hosted a four-day GC Digital Research Institute (DRI), an intensive series of workshops for interdisciplinary scholars to learn necessary skills for 21st-century research.

This year's DRI, took place virtually, and GC Digital Fellows piloted six online workshops (funded by NEH) over the first five weeks of the Spring semester.

This year's DRI focused on a subset of our usual offerings in order to accommodate the online format. Focusing on effective, online pedagogy, the institute included synchronous and asynchronous activities, online discussion with Slack, working in small teams to build interdisciplinary conversation, cohesion, and accountability, and dedicated time to creating a project plan by drafting a proposal.

Data Literacies

What is data? What counts as data? These are questions we will explore throughout the workshop.

Data is foundational to nearly all digital projects and often help us to understand and express our ideas and narratives. Hence, in order to do digital work, we should know how data is captured, constructed, and manipulated. In this workshop we will be discussing the basics of research data, in terms of its material, transformation, and presentation. We will also engage with the ethical dimensions of what it means to work with data, from collection to visualization to representation.

**Key terms** Data   Data   "Raw" Data   CSV (file format)   JSON (file format)   Open Data Formats   XML (file format)   Tidy Data   Descriptive Analysis   Inferential Analysis   Qualitative Analysis

Above: As part of the NEH Digital Humanities Research institutes, GC Digital Fellows piloted their revised online workshop curricula with the GC's faculty and students. **Right**: GC Digital Fellow Olivia Ildefonso connects with students on Slack, building interdisciplinary communities of practice.

Olivia   Friday, February 26th ⌄
Hi all! mapping projections are in the news. Im curious what your reactions are to this new projection.
https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/24/science/new-world-map.html?campaign_id=9&emc=edit[...]egment_id=502&te=1&user_id=5306288f83a3b4c19ee0568aa7f229

𝕋 **The New York Times** | By Joshua Sokol
Can This New Map Fix Our Distorted Views of the World?
You're going to need some double-sided tape.

👍 2   🤯 1   😊

DISTRIBUTION OF DISCIPLINES WITH FACULTY AND STUDENTS APPLYING TO THE GC DIGITAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE

Bench & Professional Sciences

Humanities

Social Sciences
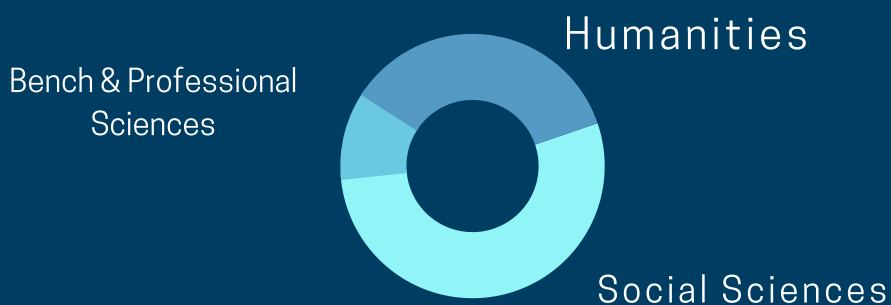
"The Digital Research Institute helped me to understand what I want for my dissertation and being able to put it into words. Now I understand the skills I need to further develop and where in the GC to find the support for further learning."

FROM A STUDENT EVALUATION AT THE GC DIGITAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE

Faculty & Student Consultations

YEAR IN REVIEW

54

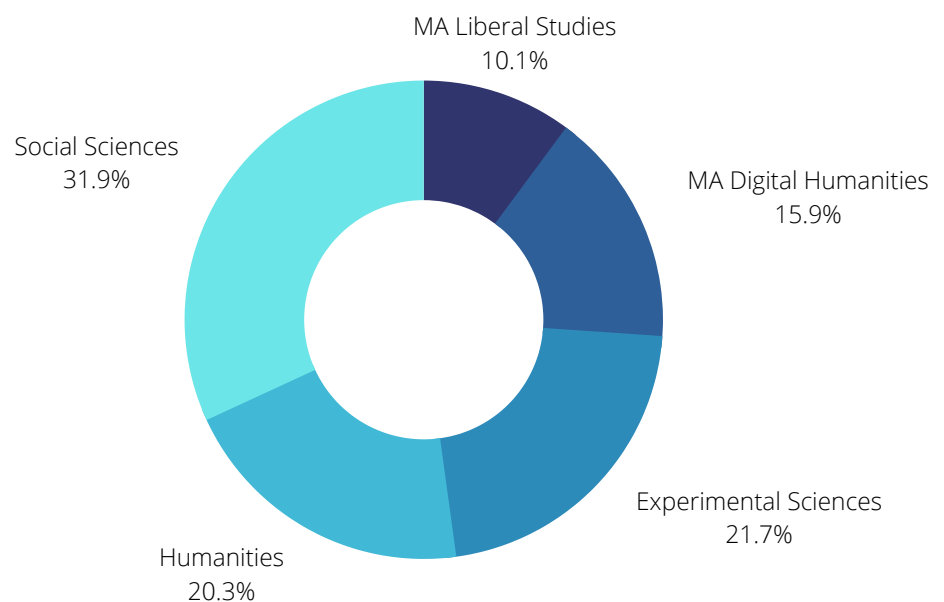students requested consultations with GC Digital Fellows.

83%

of the respondents to our post-consultation evaluation form reported success after one consultation.

14

programs had students who benefitted from access to working one-on-one with a GC Digital Fellow to help with a digital project or course.

In order to better meet the needs of the GC community, GC Digital Fellows switched from offering weekly open office hours to scheduling online, individual consultations. Requests for consultations offer insights into changes in curricula, student interests, and the future of academic research. GC Digital Fellows fielded requests for help in developing mapping projects, podcasts, personal and academic websites, digital archives, and help with resolving issues with Python and R scripts, project design, and data collection.

PERCENT OF GC DISCIPLINES MAKING USE OF CONSULTATIONS

MA Liberal Studies
10.1%

MA Digital Humanities
15.9%

Experimental Sciences
21.7%

Humanities
20.3%

Social Sciences
31.9%

Creating Interdisciplinary Communities

User Groups, Events, Fellowships

[Python Users' Group] is an important resource for students who are interested in applying digital methods to their research, and it is my firm belief that it should continue to be made available, particularly at a time when many disciplines are shifting towards an increased focus on digital sources of data.

JACKIE SCOTT, PHD STUDENT IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Working and User Groups

DATA FOR PUBLIC GOOD

A collaboration between the library and GCDI, this year's cohort of 8 masters and doctoral students partnered with The COVID Tracking Project (https://covidtracking.com/), a mostly volunteer organization of about 300 weekly active members supported by *The Atlantic* and dedicated to collecting and publishing the data required to understand the COVID-19 outbreak in the United States. Students received training in data collection and management, collaboration, and open data publication. Organizations that have used CTP's data include: *The Atlantic, The New York Times*, *CBS News*, *NPR*, *ProPublica*, *POLITICO,* and more.

PYTHON USERS' GROUP

During PUG's biweekly meetings, students, faculty, and staff using Python in their research connect with one another to ask questions, learn new skills, or discover new tools or methods.

This year the group focused on text and data analysis and practiced collecting, cleaning, analyzing, and plotting data through informal workshops on Jupyter notebooks, data scraping from the web, data analysis packages such as Pandas, and natural language processing.
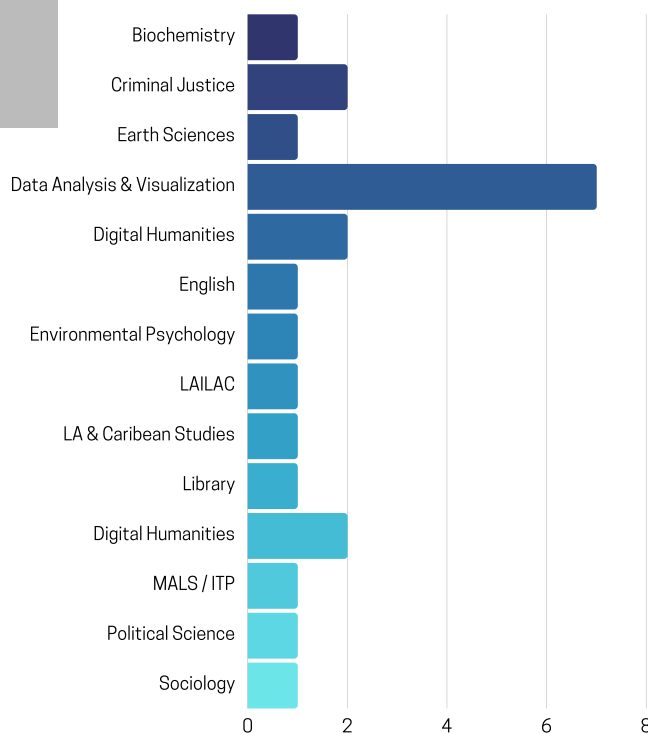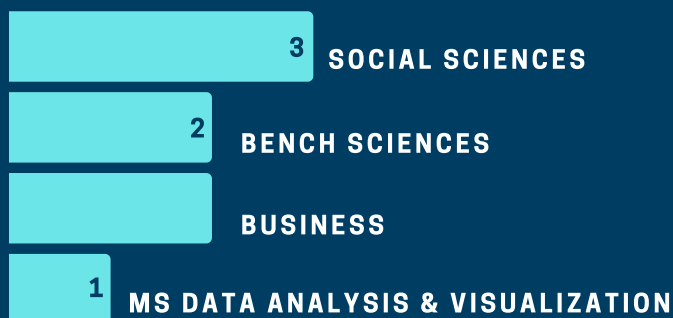

PROGRAMS REPRESENTED AT PUG MEETINGS

R USER GROUP

8
DEPARTMENTS
Active members from across the Graduate Center participated in RUG. 14 members attended at least one meeting with an average of 5 per meeting.

- **3** SOCIAL SCIENCES
- **2** BENCH SCIENCES
- BUSINESS
- **1** MS DATA ANALYSIS & VISUALIZATION

MACHINE LEARNING

TEXT ANALYSIS

GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS

Themed series
Kept members from across disciplines engaged and excited throughout the year. In addition, code was hosted on a cloud service to increase accessibility and make remote troubleshooting easier.

DATA VIZ GROUP

Getting started
DURING A PANDEMIC
DVG found that tailoring to individual member's interests best served the GC data visualization community during the pandemic. Participants were encouraged to discuss their ongoing projects and share the tools and methods they used. The leading digital fellow acted as an organizer and a presenter to keep the flow of conversation going and introduce new topics through coding demos.

6
TOPICS COVERED

- UNSTRUCTURED DATA
- STRUCTURED DATA
- GGPLOT2 IN R
- MAPPING IN R
- STATISTICS TABLES FOR JOURNAL PUBLICATION
- PDF TOOL IN PYTHON

SOUND @ THE GC
GROWING COMMUNITIES

100% INCREASE
IN COMMONS GROUP MEMBERSHIP
Since the Sound Studies & Methods working group restarted this year, membership doubled that of previous years.
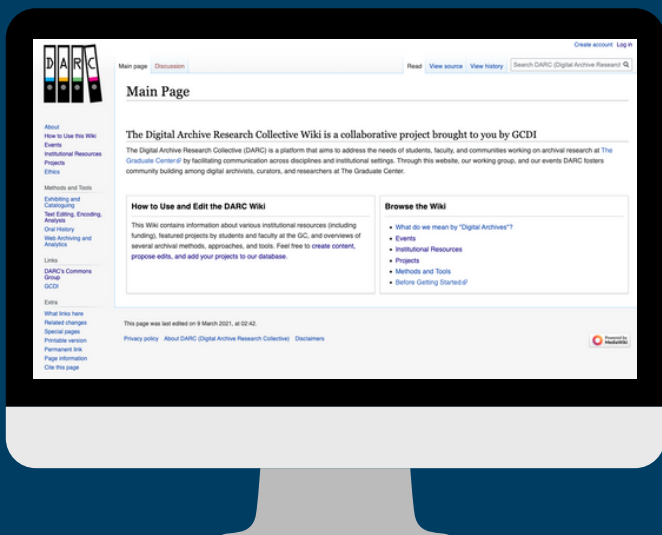
DIVERSE COMMUNITY
SERVING MULTIPLE DISCIPLINES ACROSS THE GC
Through monthly co-working sessions, we've reached faculty and students from disciplines in the sciences, social sciences, and the humanities (e.g. Speech-Language-Hearing Sciences, Sociology, and English).

DIGITAL ARCHIVE RESEARCH COLLECTIVE (DARC)

HELPING STUDENTS CONTINUE THEIR WORK FROM HOME

GC Digital Fellows expanded the DARC Wiki, a crowd-sourced repository that features resources to build and access digital archives.

In monthly meetings, fellows strategized with students over ways of making progress on their research with limited access to archives during the pandemic.

48% INCREASE

IN COMMONS GROUP MEMBERSHIP

In the past year the GIS Working Group grew from 62 to 119 members.

COVID MAPPING PROJECTS

As the first wave of COVID hit New York City, the GIS Working Group got to action and organized a brainstorming session to discuss what maps could be made to help assess the pandemic's effect on vulnerable communities. Two projects were completed as a result. COVID and Cages studied how the pandemic affected incarcerated people and the Food Chain project studied food insecurities and built a network of volunteers to deliver food from farms to food pantries.
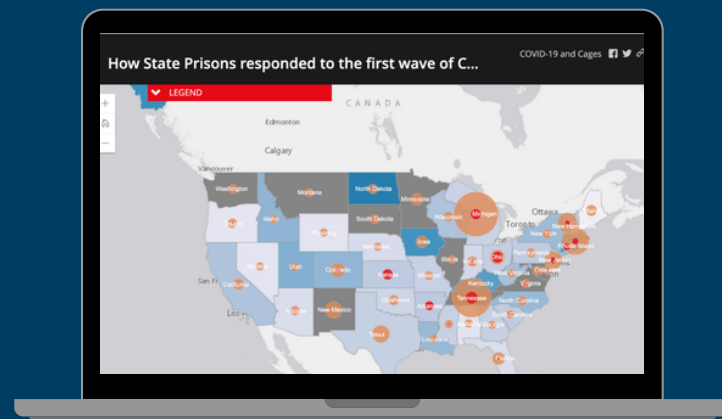
GIS Day

WHO PRESENTED?

7 Faculty and Staff

4 Graduate Students

GIS Day is a unique opportunity for students and faculty from across the Graduate Center to come together to present their mapping projects. This was the third time the GIS Working Group hosted this event and the first time that it was held virtually over Zoom.

CUNY Digital Humanities Initiative

GC Digital Initiatives hosts two community-building events annually, the CUNY DHI Lightning Talks and the GC Digital Showcase. Each connects students, faculty, and staff from the GC and across CUNY.

The CUNY DHI Lightning Talks featured 14 short talks on Digital Publishing, Digital Archives, Data Visualization, and Digital Pedagogy to an audience of 39 engaged CUNY colleagues. Slides can be found on the CUNY DHI website (cuny.is/cunydhi).
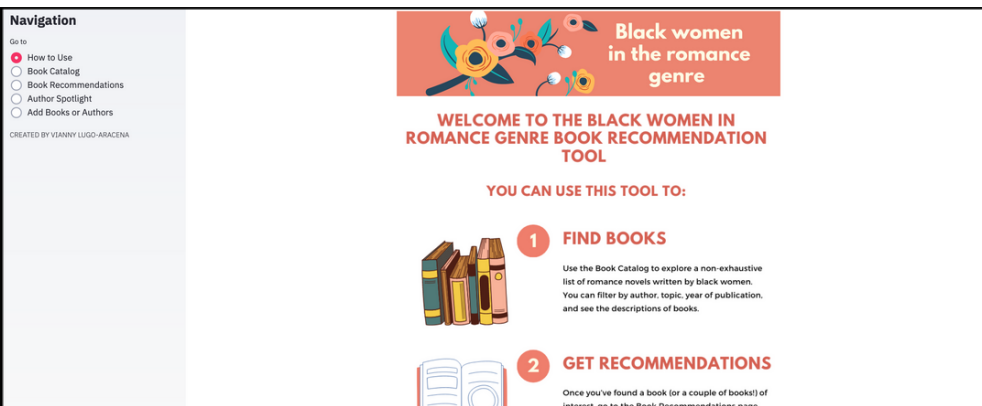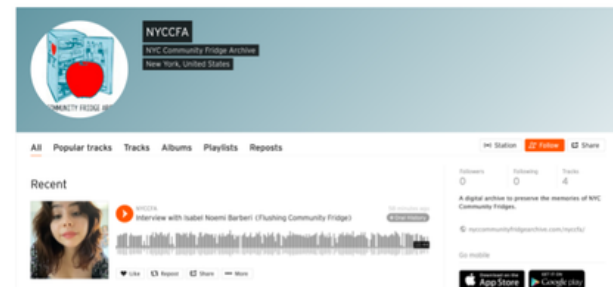
Student projects presented a the Showcase engaged with the NYC community through a variety of digital methods: oral histories about COVID-19, community fridges, and public resource creation. Over 100 people registered and more than 80, including external audience members attended the event.

& GC Digital Showcase

GC Digital Fellows

INTERDISCIPLINARY SCHOLARSHIP
TRAINING THROUGH PRACTICE

The GC Digital Fellows provided 16 online workshops this year on technical skills that are in high demand across most academic programs and offered more than 100 hours of consultation through one-on-one and group meetings. They facilitate working groups in vital, interdisciplinary research technologies, including GIS and mapping, Python, and R.

Since 2016, GC Digital Fellows have led 6 annual digital research institutes for which they typically receive twice as many applications as they can accommodate. The DRI curriculum, written largely by GC Digital Fellows under the supervision of Deputy Director Lisa Rhody, is a nation-wide model recognized through funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

"When I met with Param, my toddler was being his usual busybody self in the background, but that didn't bother Param at all. Super thankful for his patience, thoughtfulness, and assistance! I was a little overwhelmed with the concept of a digital project, but Param's input and directions calmed me and now, I have a comprehensive plan not only for this project, but for my thesis overall!"

STUDENT CONSULTATION EVALUATION

Program Social Media Fellows

792,000

COMBINED TWITTER IMPRESSIONS IN 2020-2021

The Graduate Center Program Social Media Fellows (PSMFs) assist programs in raising their public profiles through the use of social media. Fellows draw on their disciplinary knowledge and familiarity with scholarly trends in their fields to develop and implement social media strategies that foster community engagement with the academic work of the students, alumni, and faculty of their programs. As a team, the fellows explore best practices for creating scholarly networks and develop resources and workshops for the Graduate Center community.
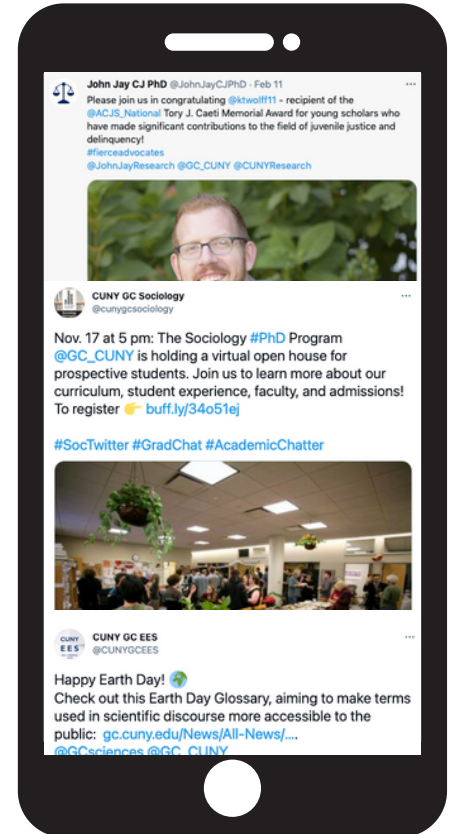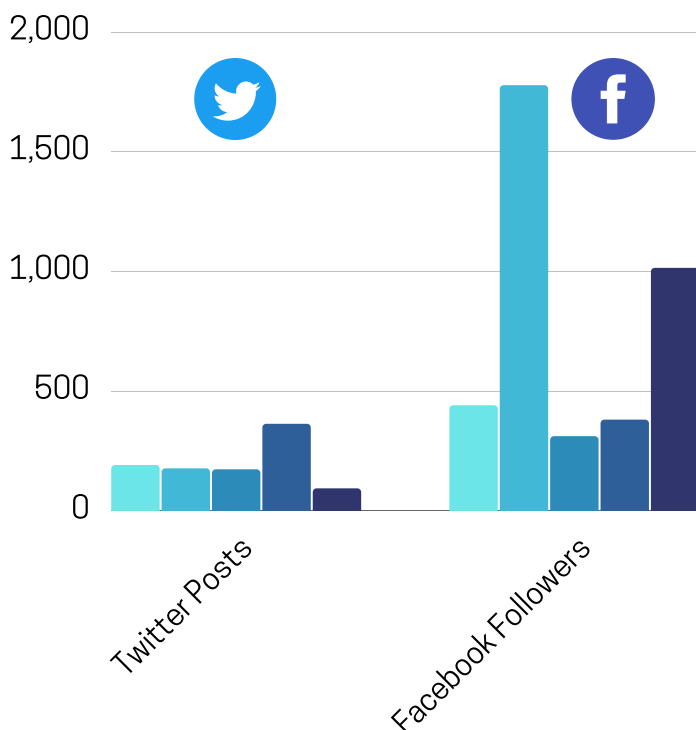
Criminal Justice
VIDEO INITIATIVE
Collecting video submissions from current faculty and students on their current research. to post.

Earth & Environmental Science
WORKSHOPS AND COLLOQUIA
Held two workshops on Academic Digital Identity and Online Portfolios and Promoted the department's Virtual Colloquium series.

Program Social Media Fellows

The Educational Psychology program used LinkedIn to create a targeted campaign to advertise their specializations with curated content and to feature specific faculty. Ads included lead generation forms (LGFs) which allowed viewers to submit questions to the program or featured professors. The ads garnered just under 18,000 impressions. In future, the program will use data gathered from this campaign to inform next future campaigns that will specifically target prospective students working in the NYC Department of Education and will reduce confusion from future applicants.
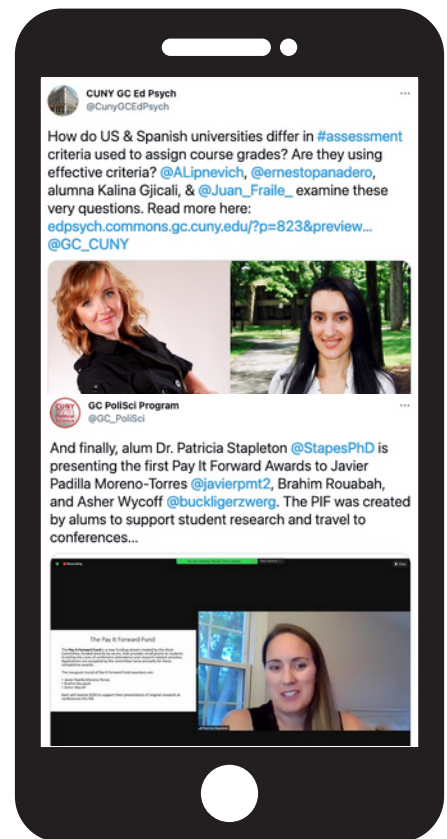
Sociology
EVENT RECORDINGS
Created another Commons page for students to conveniently watch recorded department event videos

Political Science
VIRTUAL EVENTS
Supported the program in maintaining a virtual intellectual community by promoting 54 events, including live-tweeting the annual awards night.

Educational Psychology
BLOG HUB SITE AND LINKEDIN ADS
Created a blog hub site which featured blogs about faculty/student/alumni scholarly accomplishments and served as a resource for students teaching remotely and/or creating online experiments.

Leading Through Innovation

Projects, Publications, Resources

$412,000

TOTAL NEH FUNDING

The face-to-face institute was sidelined due to the pandemic, and in 2020, GCDI applied for and received $162,000 supplemental funds to transition their NEH-funded institute to an online model.

8 New Online Workshops
CURRICULUM.DHINSTITUTES.ORG

28 States

ACROSS THE US

Applicants from across the country look to GCDI as a leader in digital humanities professional development.

122 Applicants

26% ACCEPTANCE RATE

During the 3-week open application period, we received 102 applications from faculty, librarians, technologists, graduate students, and independent scholars to participate.

$110,000

CARES ACT FUNDS FOR STUDENTS

CARES Act funding provided summer funding and additional salary for graduate students during the COVID-19 pandemic. Students wrote curricula, led workshops, and networked with humanities scholars.

Digital Humanities Research Institute

Resources

The GCDI's websites, including our news page, Tagging the Tower, and Social Mediums offers numerous tutorials and guides to help students.

1400
USERS/MONTH (AVG)

Tagging the Tower, the Digital Fellows' blog reached a large number of DH practitioners inside and outside the Graduate Center.

Open Access Resources
FOR OPEN SOURCE TOOLS

The Fellows created resources—in the form of open access tutorials and best practice and troubleshooting guidelines—focusing on a wide range of topics, including mapping, data analysis and data visualization, digital publication platforms, working with sound, digital archives, and text analysis. Nearly all of the resources developed by the Fellows center on open source, and hence accessible, tools.
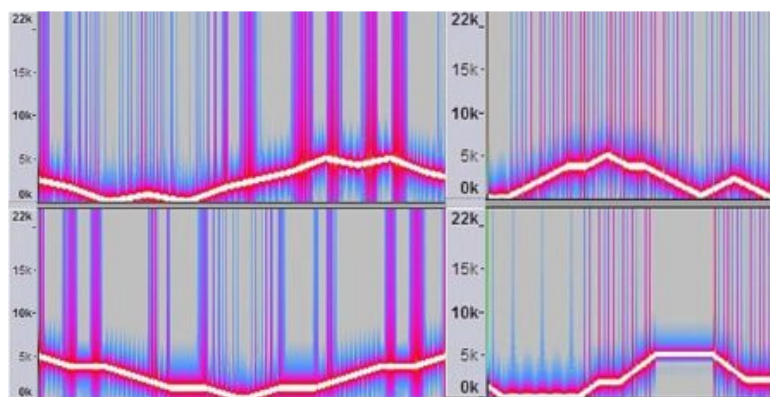
Manifold Scholarship

Manifold, the digital publishing platform co-created by the CUNY Graduate Center, the University of Minnesota Press, and Cast Iron Coding, expanded widely in 2020 both within CUNY and outside of it. In the CUNY system, faculty from over 20 CUNY campuses created projects on the CUNY instance of the platform, publishing everything from Audre Lord's syllabi and journals to books for Queensborough Community College's great books course, reducing textbook costs for students and making an increasing range of reading material open access.

Outside of CUNY, Manifold flourished. **Brown University asked all incoming first-year students** to collectively read and annotate an important report on Slavery and Justice at Brown that had been published on the university's Manifold instance. Elsewhere, publishers ranging from the University of Minnesota Press to Cornell University Press to the University of Washington Press to Indiana University Press to Arte Público Press used Manifold to publish open-access books.
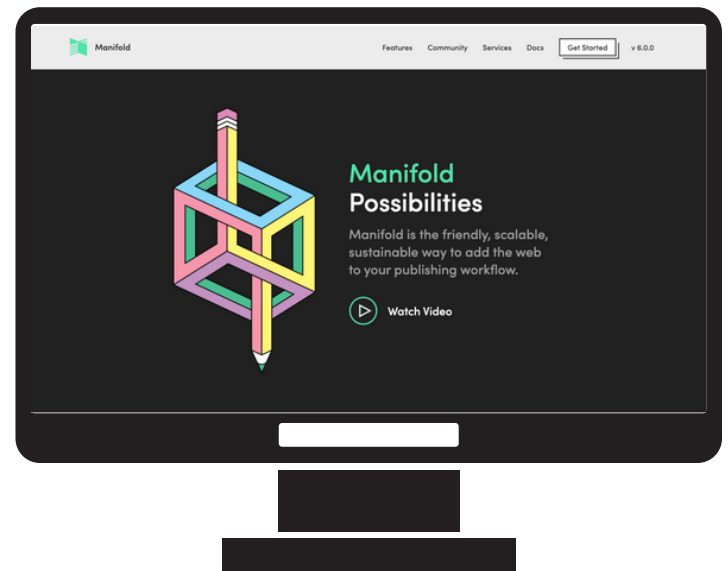
Manifold received **two** major grants in 2020-2021: a **$750,000 grant from the Mellon Foundation** to develop new features and create a business plan for Manifold, and a **$375,000 grant from the NEH Office of Digital Humanities** to build OER features for Manifold in the classroom.

Manifold Scholarship

"Manifold has been particularly important to my online classes since the pandemic began because creating course texts that not only include supplementary materials like videos, links to articles, and explanatory notes, but also host our class discussions allows me to streamline weekly activities that would previously have involved separate reading guides, reading questions, and discussion boards."

Krystina Michael
Assistant Professor
Hostos Community College

The Graduate Center, the CUNY Office of Academic Affairs, and the CUNY Office of Library Services have supported Manifold through the employment of Robin Miller, an open educational technologist based at GCDI, and Wendy Barrales, a doctoral student in Urban Education who works as a Manifold Graduate Fellow. CUNY has led Manifold's development as an OER platform.

HOW DID YOUR GC DIGITAL FELLOW EXPERIENCE HELP YOU BEYOND THE GC?

... it helped me get my own publication. I co-wrote the introduction to issue 13 [of the *Journal of Interactive Technology*]. I was an assistant professor at University of Tampa for 3 years—and I think that I got that job partially for my philosophy but also because I did have 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 specifically mentioned that they found that interesting.

Laura Wildemann Kane is an assistant professor in Philosophy at Worcester State University, as well as a faculty fellow for the Clemente Course in the humanities (Worcester branch). She received a PhD in philosophy and certificate in Interactive Technology and Pedagogy from CUNY Graduate Center in 2017. She was a GC Digital Fellow from 2012-2015 and part of the first cohort of GC Digital Fellows.

LEARN MORE ABOUT GC DIGITAL INITIATIVES
ON OUR WEBSITE: CUNY.IS/GCDI.

THE
GRADUATE
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GC DIGITAL
INITIATIVES

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