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Roundtable: Digitizing Food in the Book

Food and the Book: 1300-1800

10th October 2020



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AHRC US-UK Food Digital Scholarship Network

- **Primary objectives (2019-2020)**

- 1) Increase the interest in and use of digital scholarship methods, and digital collections in the area of food studies and linked fields in the UK and the US, with a view to forming larger, longer-term collaborations and research projects.
- 2) A mapping of food digitised collections (current and possible in the future).
- 3) Harmonisation of food related digital content and metadata, with the aim to link current and future digital collections together. Produce recommendations for community discussion.



AHRC US-UK Food Digital Scholarship Network

1. Pilot Activities

2. Surveys



Common Key challenges for digital food research



Smithsonian
National Museum of American History
Kenneth E. Behring Center

USF UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTH FLORIDA



THE UNIVERSITY
of EDINBURGH



N8
AgriFood



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of York



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welcome
collection

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AHRC US-UK Food Digital Scholarship Network

- Pilot Activities

- Digitising “community collections” – (sharing practice and experience) Leeds/USM
- Searching for texts and material – Smithsonian / Boston, Edinburgh
 - Looking for Food in the New Smithsonian Institution Catalog, a White Paper
<https://doi.org/10.15131/shef.data.12993383.v1>
- The Sifter www.sifter.org
- Discussions of how to link IIF, databases, and transcription tools.
- NLP of recipes, pilot application to various collections.



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AHRC US-UK Food Digital Scholarship Network

- Surveys (2019-2020)
 - Community Survey (n=200) <https://doi.org/10.15131/shef.data.12994178.v1>
 - Archive Survey (n=45)

Wide respondents from Archives and Community members

US (40/50%) /UK (28%) /Canada (9/6%) /AU (5/8%) /NZ/EU etc.

Wide age/technical readiness/need and wants.

Digitization expands the table – but comes with unique challenges

Common Key challenges

Stakeholders and network members

UK and US cultural institutions
Currently with digitised and digital food collections and archives.

UK and US cultural institutions
wanting to develop digitised and digital food collections and archives.

US and UK researchers and practitioners
in the digital scholarship of food. New and current.

US and UK researchers and practitioners
of digital research methods and archiving. Introducing food as a new area for research.

Network-research themes

1. Manuscripts
& hand written materials

2. Printed documents
Books, periodicals, menus etc.

3. Other digital collections
Image, Sound, Mass obs etc.

- Funding – where to get money to research/ digitise (Staff/Time/Cost & Access)
- Understand what is available/useful/discoverable.
 - How do we link our collections and search?
 - Is full OCR needed?
 - Metadata standards
 - Paywalls, copyright, and open access
- Establish/normalise new methods of digitizing, accessing and research.



Comments?
Questions?

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