Title

Transforming our practices and collections: experiences from the University of Southampton Library

Abstract

Libraries have a long tradition of supporting students, researchers and the wider community in discovering and accessing resources and heritage. In the last year, the focus of research libraries and other GLAMs has been on how technology can still offer access to physical heritage content that would not have been accessible otherwise. This opened discussion amongst networks such as the Research Libraries UK on how this push for digitised content could also offer opportunities to develop further participatory approaches involving different communities. In this environment, the University of Southampton library has implemented a series of activities (from UX to the implementation of a viewer that allows to annotate digitised content and share it with different groups) to make our services more inclusive and user-centred. This paper will present some of the lessons learned from various approaches used to engage different communities while supporting the development of sustainable inclusive narratives, and reflect on the challenges and opportunities encountered while developing the pilots.

Bio

I am based at the University of Southampton, where I lead the Digital Scholarship Team in the library. I co-chair of the Research Libraries UK Digital Scholarship Network (2021) and I have recently completed a RLUK/TNA professional fellowship on the use of AI and data mining to surface heritage citations. My background is in Preservation and Management of Cultural Heritage (BA Bologna, MSc Southampton), Digital Humanities (PhD, KCL) and Marketing (Chartered Institute of Marketing). Since joining the library, I have focused on the development of a sustainable user-centred Southampton digital infrastructure in line with the open digital scholarship agenda.