

Digital researchers and data experts

We create digital tools
to explore academic
research in new ways.

Snapshot on King's Digital Lab Mission and Activities 2022-25

Communicating
the significance of RSE
in a research-intensive HEI context



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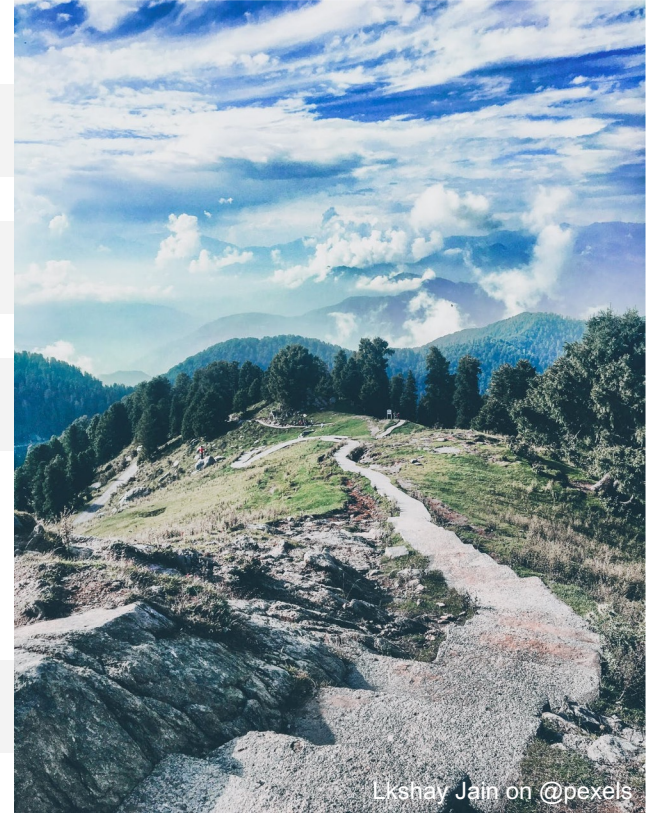


Internal review (2022)

Communication strategy

Resource allocation & capacity planning

A chore or an opportunity?



Lkshay Jain on @pexels

Core remit

1. Contribution to research projects
2. Operational overhead - including Research Themes

| | |
|---|---|
| Scope | 2 |
| King's Digital Lab Mission | 3 |
| Contributions to high quality grant-funded projects with significant technical requirements | 3 |
| Consultancy | 4 |
| Operational Overhead | 5 |
| Research Services Catalogue | 5 |
| Internal Consultancy | 6 |
| Digital Research and Data Capacity Development | 6 |
| Peer Review of Grant Applications | 7 |
| Archiving and Sustainability | 7 |
| Increasing Capabilities in A&H Staff | 7 |
| Increasing Capabilities in A&H Taught and Research Students | 7 |
| College Contributions | 7 |

Additional activities

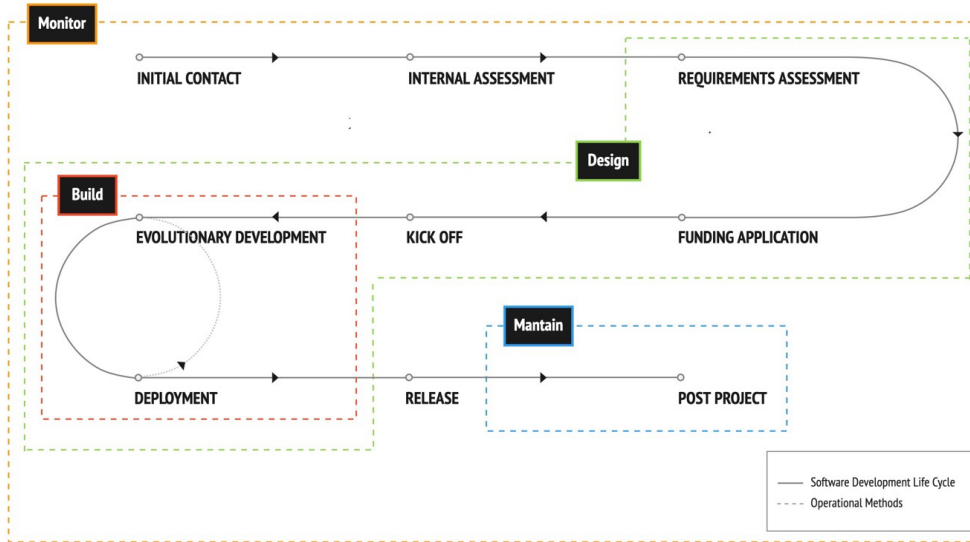
1. Research Service Catalogue – enhancing FAH research
2. College contributions
3. Consultancy

“KDL is a Research Software Engineering (RSE) laboratory in the Faculty of Arts & Humanities (A&H) charged with enabling and delivering high quality digital research.

The core market for these research services is A&H researchers. For this reason, it works in collaboration with the A&H research leadership (A&H Research), through the activities led by the PVD [Pro Vice Dean] Research Culture and the PVD Impact & Knowledge Exchange. KDL also works externally, both elsewhere in the College (in particular via King's e-Research and the Arts & Sciences Research Office) and outside the College, to enable and deliver digital research.

KDL provides a focus in the College for arts and humanities RSE. KDL research software engineers “work with researchers to gain an understanding of the problems they face and then develop, maintain and extend software to provide the answers” [from past version of [RSE UK Society site](#)], informed by a critical understanding both of the technologies and of arts and humanities scholarship. This has proven value both within A&H and beyond, particularly in terms of contributions to REF and A&H's ability to attract external research funding.”

KDL's “primary value and market position lie in its contributions to high quality grant-funded projects with significant technical requirements”



Pre-grant analysis & support
(including early concept phase)

“ Contributing to grant applications (including technical documentation required by the relevant funding scheme such as data management plans); eliciting requirements and producing terms of reference, feasibility assessment, high level solution architecture, paths to sustainability and product quotes.

King's Digital Lab Mission & Activities 2022-25

Funded projects

- Analysis, design, and development
- Contribution to research outputs
- Maintenance (covered by Service Level Agreements)
- Project management

See KDL [Agile-DSDM aligned project templates](#)

1. High quality grant funded projects with colleagues in the Faculty of Arts and Humanities

Part of yearly Business Planning Round – target volume of work is defined via yearly funding strategy proposed by KDL – first plan dates back to 2017 – and socialised with and approved by Faculty.

2. Research Services Catalogue Activities

Include technical consultancy, development, peer review, archiving and sustainability, and increasing staff capabilities.

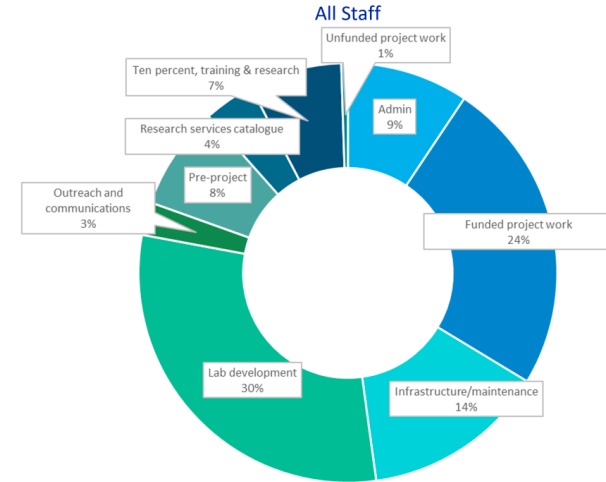
3. Funded projects with external partners

Target volume for this is also set and monitored via yearly KDL funding strategy.

Commercial consultancy

Possible to offer but “cannot lead to an overshoot in TRAC billable hours”

Logged Hours



1. Operations

Including Finance, HR and governance (including A&H committees).

2. Enabling a secure project infrastructure

For grant-funded and commercial projects built by KDL. This includes liaison with IT and eResearch.

3. Optimising business processes

KDL undertakes a series of internal process improvement activities (e.g. from design workflow integration to pipeline planning and research into sustainable methods) and external networking (e.g. with RSE national and international communities) aimed at strengthening or expanding the Lab's RSE practices to improve the quality of all KDL activities.

4. Marketing

Marketing internally and externally of KDL's expertise and services including digital and in-person activities. These marketing activities include activities such as general presentations to Faculty Research Committee or departments. This also includes marketing-focused contributions to academic, GLAM (Galleries, Libraries, Archives and Museums), heritage and creative and other industry conferences and workshops, and other networking and community building. Many other activities such as committee attendance and peer review indirectly market KDL.

5. KDL staff development and experimentation

Conducted as part of KDL team members' 10% Time dedicated to RSE research and development, including basic and practice-based research leading to digital and traditional research outputs. This also includes contributions to academic, GLAM, heritage and creative and other industry conferences and workshops and other networking and community building.

6. A&H digital research and data awareness

In order to fulfil an effective role in supporting capacity around A&H digital research and data, and in signposting resources, KDL need to maintain an awareness of this across A&H. Much of this is achieved through other activities including RSE research and development and via the Research Services Catalogue but a small additional overhead is associated with maintaining this level of awareness.

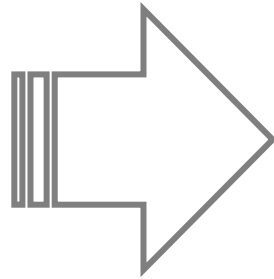


Photo by Bryan Goff on Unsplash

Community/ies

Lab Development

Personal Development



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1. Defining, contributing and promulgating appropriate quality standards

For digital research and data-centred outputs intended for REF, impact, and external relations purposes. This also includes any time associated with affiliation to a department or group.

2. Enabling development of heterogeneous technologies

Using KDL, eResearch, and external infrastructure and resources.

3. Contribute to A&H's research leadership

Informing digital research and data strategy

Digital Research and Data Capacity Development

Internal Consultancy



Photo by [Shane Rounce](#) on [Unsplash](#)

1. Advising A&H staff on (early) concept review

Advices on development, experience design, project design, technological evaluation, coding, data modelling, research methods, tool selection, including identification of third-party options. Many A&H departments include significant expertise in aspects of digital research and data in an A&H context but KDL maintains a broader overview and provides A&H RSE expertise. Their advice may in some cases be to contact other A&H experts, and potentially to become involved again later in the development of a research proposal as concrete RSE opportunities and requirements emerge.

2. Bookable drop-in slots

To meet and discuss ideas and problems with the team.

3. Co-organised workshops with departments

To elicit project ideas.

4. Data analysis and visualisations for impact data

Including standardising this approach in A&H where possible; signposting support for this where available elsewhere e.g. via the College.

5. Supporting access to King's eResearch infrastructure for other uses and liaison to other relevant services across the College

E.g. data deposit via library services or hosting simple websites. KDL are not the required route for supporting A&H research data management or simple websites but provide a service where needed to complement others, at its simplest being signposting alone.

6. Experimental work

Such as exploration of new technologies and methods conducted as part of KDL team members' 10% Time dedicated to RSE research and development aligned to colleagues' research elsewhere in A&H in order to support development of high-quality grant-funded projects with significant technical requirements.

7. Horizon scanning

In support of A&H and departmental strategies.

Increasing Capabilities in A&H Students

TRAC framework

- Limitations

Eg. guest lectures, internships, visiting students

Standard training

- MA in Digital Humanities
 - >> *Introduction to Digital Humanities*
 - >> *Product Development*
 - >> *Digital Interactions in Cultural Heritage*
 - >> *Web technologies*
 - >> *Coding and the Humanities*
- MA in Digital Asset and Media Management
 - >> *Introduction to Digital Asset and Media Management*
- MA in Global Cultures

Non-standard training

- User Experience (UX) Design (Fourth Rev)



Ongoing review of KDL contribution to educational offer

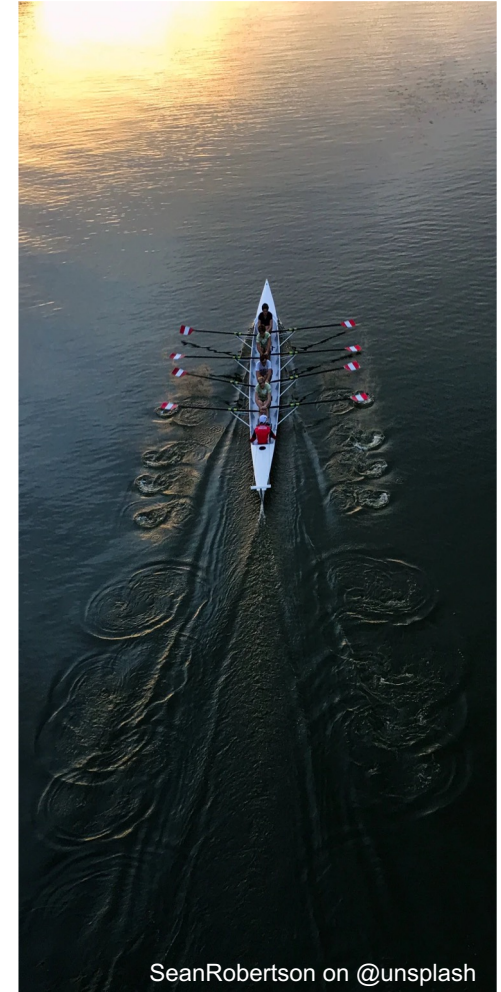
(indirectly via other activities) *Digital research and data strategy & operations*

(specific inputs) e.g.

- relevant College committees (e.g. KCL AI Institute) and working groups
- development of digital research and data capacity via training

Benefits

- Holistic account of RSE expertise
- Workload management
- Delegation
- Demand and expectations management



SeanRobertson on @unsplash

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Link to [template](#)

Thank you!

QUESTIONS?

