

Standardisation Survival for Medieval Studies: a hands-on International Image Interoperability Framework (IIIF) workshop

A workshop proposal for DH Benelux 2019

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Abstract: The Standardisation Survival Kit (SSK)¹ is an open tool that supports researchers in choosing standards and best practices for the application of digital methods in arts and humanities research. Built on the idea of providing research scenarios, it establishes a low-barrier entry point to get an overview on standards used in different research fields.

A research scenario is a (digital) workflow practiced by researchers, that can be repeatedly applied to a task that will help to gain material or insights in view of a research question. These scenarios are at the core of the SSK, as they embed resources with contextual information and relevant examples on standardised processes and methods in a research context.

The SSK is also a place to discuss and devise best practice processes in the Arts and Humanities. It is possible to create new scenarios from scratch or by combining existing steps from different scenarios, publish and share with peers, to ensure better visibility and reliability of standardised research methodologies. These scenarios can be seen as a living memory of what the best research practices should be in a given community, made accessible and reusable for other researchers.

Originally developed within the PARTHENOS project² a long-term solution was needed to sustain the SSK beyond the lifetime of the project. From the end of 2018, the SSK has been integrated into the DARIAH ecosystem.

In Summer 2018, a group of DARIAH colleagues from France, Belgium and Austria - the authors of this workshop abstract for DH Benelux - submitted a proposal to the DARIAH Theme

¹ <http://ssk.huma-num.fr>

² <http://www.parthenos-project.eu/>

Funding Call 2018/2019³, entitled “*Awareness, understanding and having fun. Fostering communities around the [Standardisation Survival Kit](#)*”. The proposal advocated that the best way to create a long-living and scalable service is to create and maintain an active and motivated users' community. To do this, we proposed to: **1) run a series of three research scenario development workshops** and **2) to create digital educational materials: a SSK presentation cartoon**. In November 2018, the results of the DARIAH Theme funding call were announced⁴. The SSK project team was awarded the requested funding. Since then, the SSK Introductory video was published on the SSK website in March 2019 and is also available for viewing on YouTube⁵.

Developing Research Scenarios: a series of three workshops

The proposed workshop at DH Benelux is the third in a series of three workshops intended to develop an active and motivated users' community around the SSK:

- **Vienna, Austria: 31st January - 1st February 2019⁶**

The first workshop focused on **Linguistics and Natural Language Processing (NLP)** and fed the SSK with scenarios dealing with **OCR and corpus annotation**.

- **Tours, France: 23rd - 24th May 2019⁷**

The second workshop is dedicated to the **archaeology community** and will develop specific SSK scenarios focussing on **digitisation, interoperability and sustainability of the data produced by archaeologists**.

- **Liège, Belgium: during the DH Benelux Conference, 11th - 13th September 2019**

The third and final workshop of the series, and the subject of this DH Benelux Workshop proposal, is to design a number of research scenarios for the **medieval studies community** around the use of the International Image Interoperability Framework (IIIF)⁹. A more detailed description of this workshop, including an outline of the programme, is provided in the following section.

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The goal of the proposed workshop is to design **medieval studies research scenarios** for the SSK around the use of the International Image Interoperability Framework (IIIF)⁸ particularly related to access to digitised sources. This workshop will be co-organised by the DARIAH-BE /

³ <https://www.dariah.eu/2018/06/29/dariah-theme-funding-call-2018-2019/>

⁴ <https://www.dariah.eu/2018/11/05/dariah-theme-funding-call-2018-2019-meet-the-winning-projects/>

⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JVJ1dUDpX5I>

⁶ <https://www.dariah.eu/2019/01/25/standardization-survival-kit-workshop-1-2019-textual-data-scenarios/>

⁷ <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1SGeqYmcC7Bj3M3nKLNmqPWWjk041v05c1pD5n03qZsl/>

⁸ <http://iiif.io/about/>

CLARIAH-VL IIF expert group together with two of the DARIAH Working Groups active in Belgium; Medievalists' Sources (MESO)⁹ and Sustainable Publishing of (Meta)data¹⁰.

One of the key challenges identified by the MESO working group is how to structure the digital landscape around data/sources used by "Medievalists", i.e. historians, art historians, philologists, codicologists, archaeologists, musicologists, etc. As the range and variety of digital sources studied by medieval scholars are numerous, varied (such as literary or archival documents, iconic documents, archaeological or architectural documents, etc.) and widely dispersed, increased use of IIF by cultural heritage institutions, who are custodians of medieval collections, could open up the wealth of medievalists sources, cross-institutionally and internationally. If (digital) medieval scholars understand the value of IIF implementation, they are in a better position to both advocate for the implementation of IIF in cultural heritage institutions and influence, contribute to and shape the development of IIF-compatible tools¹¹ to meet their scholarly needs.

The outcome of this workshop will be to publish at least 3 research scenarios in the area of digital medieval studies on the SSK. Contribution of research scenarios will be open to all researchers and cultural heritage professionals with an interest in medievalist sources both within and beyond the Benelux. Already the workshop proposers have identified a range of potential research scenarios related to digitised (medieval) manuscripts, innovative educational environments for learning paleographical and transcription skills, material objects related to medieval studies, such as 3D digitisation of medieval seals. An overview of the outline programme for the workshop is included below:

⁹ <https://www.dariah.eu/activities/working-groups/meso-mediaevalists-sources-sustainability/>

¹⁰ <https://www.dariah.eu/activities/working-groups/sustainable-publishing-of-metadata/>

¹¹ <https://iif.io/apps-demos/>

Outline Programme

DH Benelux Conference: 11th-13th September 2019, Liège, Belgium

Date: 11th September?

Place: University of Liège

Duration: Full Day Workshop

Number of participants: maximum 20 (to optimise collaborative writing of the research scenarios)

10:00 - 10:15 Introduction to the aims and objectives of workshop (DARIAH-BE colleagues)

10:15-11:00 Standards and medievalists: Best practices and challenges (DARIAH-EU Medievalist Sources Working Group)

11:00 - 11:30 Introduction to IIF and Humanists practices (DARIAH-BE / CLARIAH IIF Expert Group, external experts)

11:30 - 12:00 Presentation of the Standardisation Survival Kit (DARIAH-FR)

12:00 -13:00 Lunch

13:00 Presentation of proposed Medieval Studies research scenarios (first insight of proposed scenarios, 10 minutes per scenario)

14:00 - 16:15 Hands-on session: group work on SSK scenarios, based on the presented use cases

16:15-17:00 Wrap-up, discussion, conclusion

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