

The BC Research Libraries Group and the University of Victoria Present

Building better 'Galleries, Libraries, Archives and Museum Labs'

by Mahendra Mahey,

British Library Labs Manager, British Library, London

1:30pm-3pm, Wednesday, February 27, 2019

University of Victoria McPherson Library/Mearns Center for Learning

Digital Scholarship Commons (3rd Floor)

Register at https://bcrlg-mahendra_mahey.eventbrite.ca

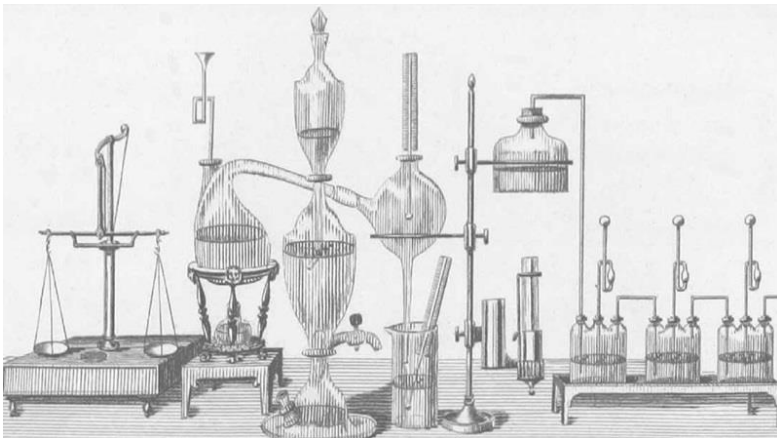


Image taken from page 203 of '[Griffith's new historical description of Cheltenham and its vicinity ... with ... engravings. L.P.]'



Experiences and lessons learned from the British Library and around the world engaging with researchers, artists, educators and entrepreneurs who have used digitised cultural heritage collections and data

The British Library is one of the largest national libraries in the world and is creating and storing millions of digital items every year such as digitised books, newspapers, maps, sheet music, manuscripts, audio / TV recordings as well as born digital archived websites, personal digital archives, electronic books, radio performances, and artworks. This incredible range of digital material is having a profound effect on the way our libraries are supporting those who want to use digital content and methods in their work. What new facts will scholars discover when they analyse thousands of digitised books computationally using data-mining techniques? What are the challenges and solutions for libraries to build systems and services that provide seamless access to its digital material from a radio recording to newspaper story? What are the practical experiences of working on digital crowdsourcing projects, and how is machine learning helping libraries to unlock new information hidden in its digital archives? Can we use digital technologies to visualise and shine light on a library's holdings, and unearth unusual and surprising findings artistically?

Mahendra will give a brief overview of digital collections and data being made available through British Library Labs (BL Labs) and examine how some of them have been re-used by making connections and collaborating with digital researchers, artists, entrepreneurs, educators, curators and librarians around the world through a range of innovative projects, research questions and engagement activities. He will highlight the myths and assumptions many make about libraries and address the significant issues and challenges they face when working with digital collections and data (e.g. legal, technical, human etc.). He will reflect on lessons he has learned over nearly two decades of working in Further and Higher Education, suggesting the types of digital

research that could bring significant benefit and impact to the way libraries in particular may work into the future.

To conclude, Mahendra will report back on an exciting international support network that he is starting to build with colleagues around the world. This community is bringing national, state, university and public Galleries, Libraries, Archives and Museums together that either had, are planning or already have experimental digital 'GLAM Labs' which encourage their users to re-use their digital collections and data. The group are already providing support to each other, sharing expertise, knowledge and experience and are pooling resources together in order to build better innovative digital 'GLAM Labs' that bring value to their organisations and users well into the future. They also intend to publish a practical open access book in 2019 about 'Building better GLAM Labs' which will include a description of the landscape of digital 'GLAM Labs' worldwide and provide advice and guidance for libraries who are in process of setting up or currently running digital 'GLAM Labs'.

Biography

Mahendra Mahey has been the manager of [British Library Labs \(BL Labs\)](#) for over five years, an [Andrew W. Mellon](#) foundation and [British Library \(BL\)](#) funded initiative supporting and inspiring the use of the BL's data in innovative ways. BL Labs encourages and helps scholars, artists, entrepreneurs, educators and innovators to work with the BL's digital collections through competitions, awards and other engagement activities. Mahendra is currently working on developing an [international support network](#) with colleagues to bring national, state, university and public Galleries, Libraries, Archives and Museums together that either had, are planning and already have digital experimental 'GLAM Labs' to share expertise, knowledge and experience in order to build better 'Library Labs' for their organisations and users.

He has a strong background of working with digital technology as a manager, educator, researcher, adviser and community builder in Further and Higher Education for researchers, educators, librarians and businesses both in the UK and internationally. He worked for 8 years at the [University of Bath](#) on a number of collaborative projects within [UKOLN](#) (a former centre of expertise for information management) including; the pioneering Jisc-funded UK academic software Developer Community Supporting Innovation ([DevCSI](#)) network initiative built from the innovative and very well received annual 'Developer Happiness' events he helped organise (similar to [dev.ac.uk](#)); [CERIFY](#), implementing a European data model for managing research information; the [Digital Repositories Research Team \(RRT\)](#) which supported projects around digital repositories for scholarly outputs such as academic papers, data, educational materials, multimedia and finally incubating new research around the [analysis of digital repository use cases, scenarios and workflows, toolkits to develop Dublin Core application profiles and digital repository ecologies.](#)

Mahendra was an e-resources and technology adviser for over 4 years building supportive communities for teachers, librarians and managers working in Further and Higher Education colleges through the [Jisc Regional Support Centres](#) (in England at the [University of Wolverhampton](#) and Scotland at [Edinburgh Telford College](#) now [Edinburgh College](#)).

Finally, he has over 10 years experience in Further/Higher education in the UK and Poland, working as a lecturer and manager in Psychology (specialising in Child Development), Computing, Multimedia, and English for Speakers of Other Languages, developing open flexible learning materials in print and online and managing flexible learning centres.

He tweets at [@BL_Labs](#) and [@mahendra_mahey](#)

His email address is mahendra.mahey@bl.uk