

MELA Survey on Digital Scholarship Results

prepared by
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MELA Survey on Digital Scholarship

Brief survey (10-15 minutes) addressing involvement and training in digital humanities / digital scholarship (DH / DS) for colleagues working in Middle East librarianship.

Aimed at specialists working in librarianship supporting Middle Eastern & North African Studies, broadly defined

Part of preparation for a MELA Digital Scholarship Roundtable (MELA 2018 meeting San Antonio) and for formation of a Digital Scholarship Interest Group to better support colleagues in our emerging and evolving DH / DS roles

MELA Survey on Digital Scholarship

Google Form

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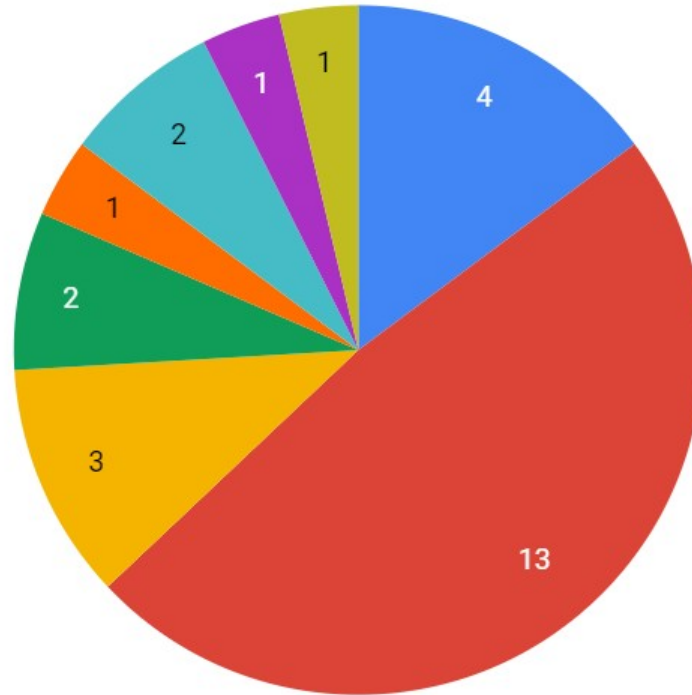
Open 17th July-10th August 2018

27 responses analyzed*

**one response fell out of scope & was therefore excluded*

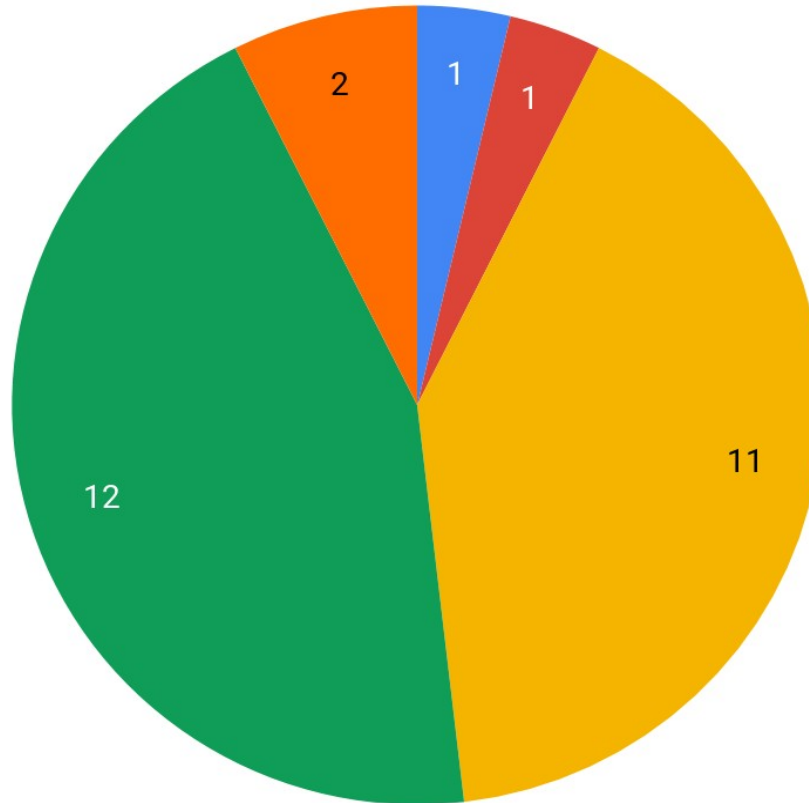
What is your job title

- Blank
- Liaison
- Head/dean
- Data Services Librarian
- Curator, Arabic collections
- Librarian, not specified
- Library Advisor
- Non-Librarian

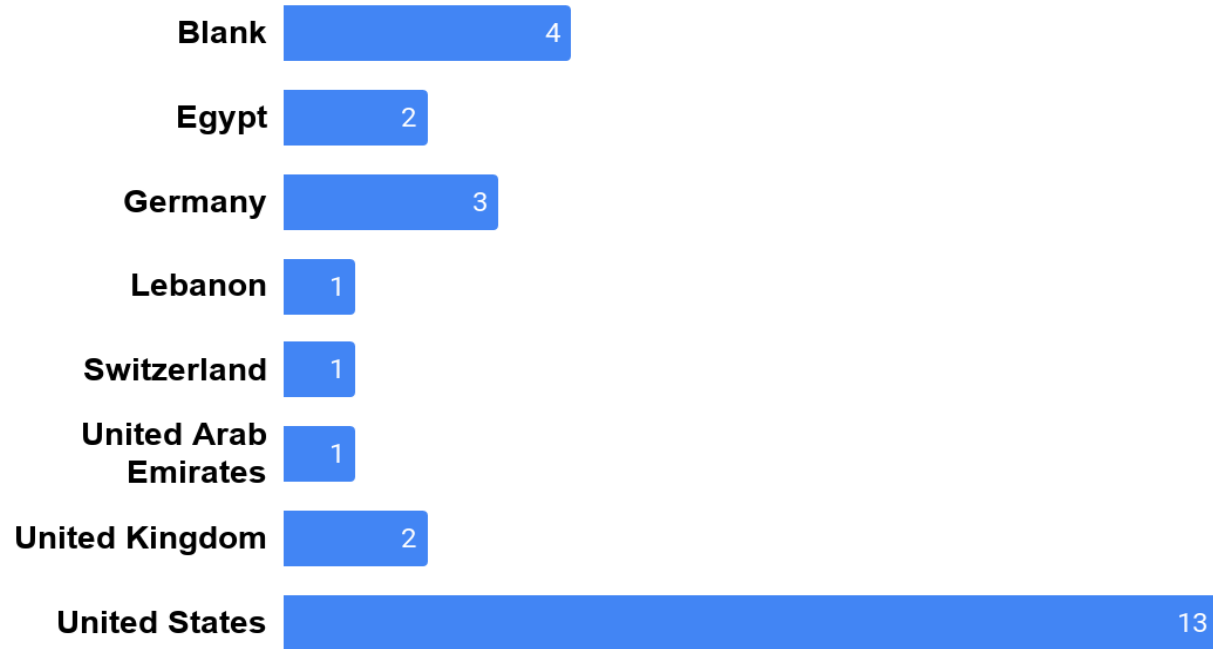


At What Sort of Institution Do You Currently Work?

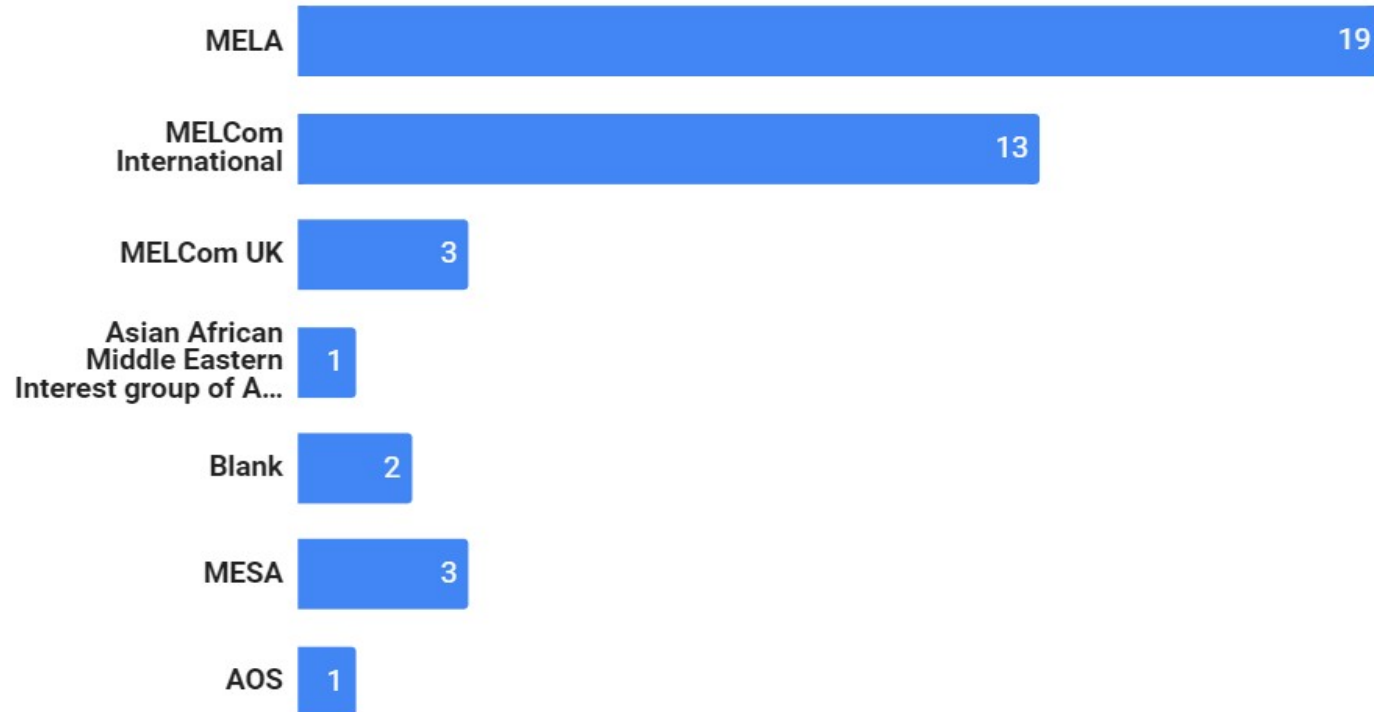
- National library
- Non-academic library
- Private academic library
- Public academic library
- Special library



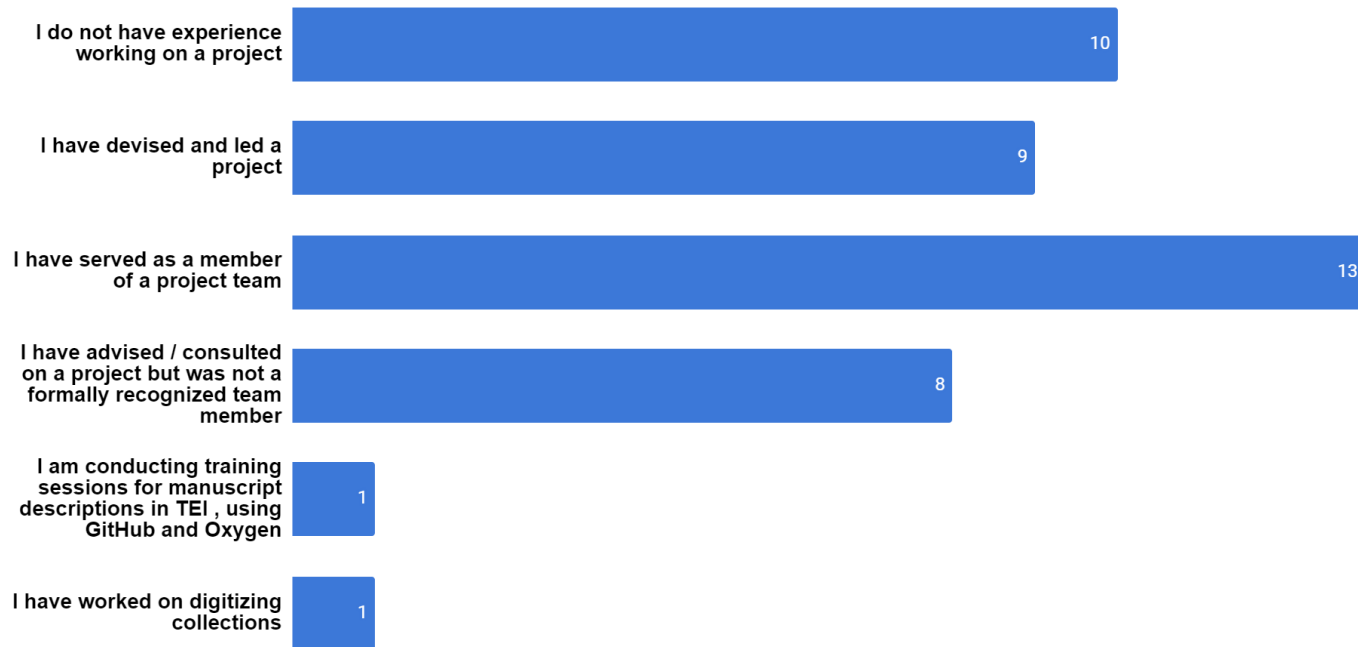
In which country is your institution located? (Optional)



Are you involved in (indicate all that apply)

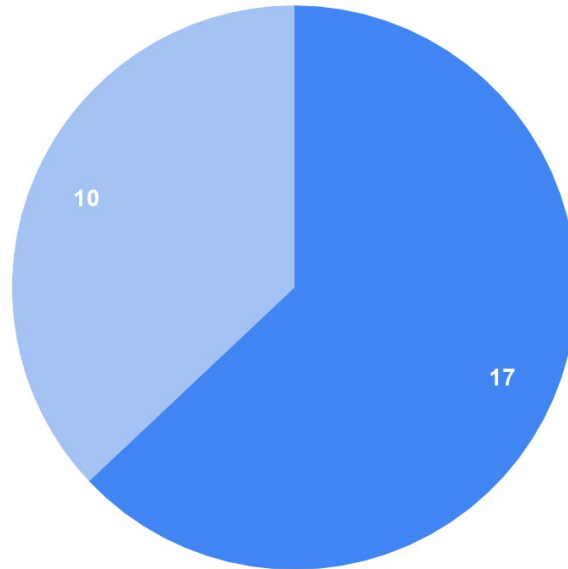


What experience do you have working on digital humanities / digital scholarship (DH / DS) projects?



Are you currently involved in any DH/DS projects?

- Yes
- No



If you are currently involved in a project, please briefly describe the project and your role

I am the data curator in one project with a faculty member from the English department and I do the data analysis and visualization in another project at the library where we are creating a digital library for a prominent political figure.

Curating collection of film posters, lead with ME artist project

Database for interdisciplinary scholarship in Gender Violence, I currently play a consultant role and support by training students to usability test

Recreating a 19th century Cairene's personal library.

Currently advising on a nascent project that supports digital engagement with Judeo-Arabic texts published across North Africa, areas of the ME and Subcontinent by spatially tracing their publication, providing transcriptions, translations etc

A digital project to study Ottoman poetry; the digitization of the Arabic collections at NYU, Columbia, Princeton, Cornell, AUB and AUC.

Similar to the Early Modern London map, but for Fatimid Cairo

Digitization of a collection of rare Islamic books (selection, cataloguing)

Corpus and digital editions of Islamic legal theory works for 1) producing dynamic editions, and 2) allowing more robust interaction with the materials for students and researchers

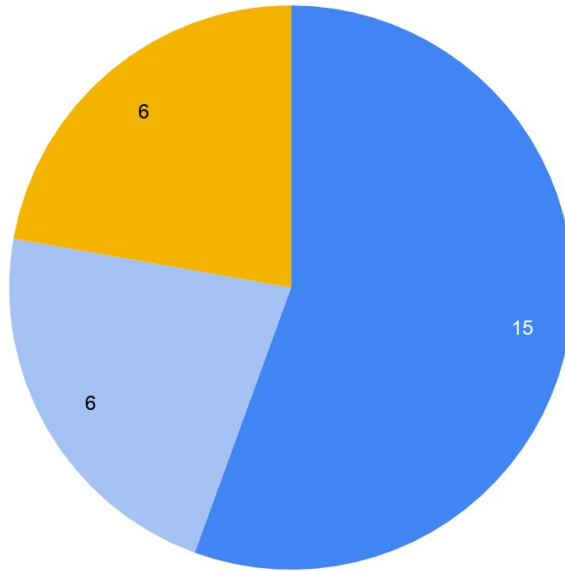
Fihrist- On-line catalogue for Islamic manuscripts - previously chair of Fihrist Board changing to editor of Fihrist.

I catalogued photographs of the 19th century taken in the Middle East being in the estate of an Orientalist scholar. They will be digitized and put on display in the net.

I support online projects like Ottoman History Podcast and Hazine that are educational and research tools.

Are MENA / Islamic Studies scholars on your campus actively involved in or considering any DH / DS projects?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know



If such scholars on your campus are actively involved in or considering any DH / DS projects, please briefly describe

I have had queries from graduate students interested in textual analysis of Arabic newspapers from late 20th century.

In Near Eastern Studies department: colleague working with ORACC (Open Richly Annotated Cuneiform Corpus), colleague working with Digital Syriac Corpus. In Judaic Studies: colleague working on nascent Judeo-Arabic texts mapping / transcription project, colleague considering platform / tool to support study of Rabbinic literature.

Two faculty members have digital archives of research material.

A project on visual anthropology of Beirut.

Develop a Digital Humanities Hub in the library

Still in the process of planning (and still too vague)

Creation of a database of premodern scientific Islamic manuscripts

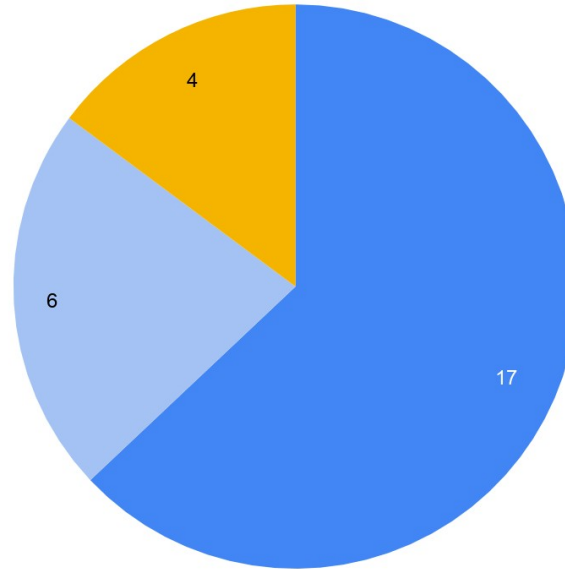
One project is complete--a digital archive & transcription of Persian-language documents held in our Manuscripts & Archives dept.

A faculty member just came to our DH Lab expressing a desire to create an all-in-one resource for digital images of Yale collection items (an ARCHNet-like resource, with the desiderata being optimal display of images, ability to manipulate them & use them in maps, timelines, etc.)

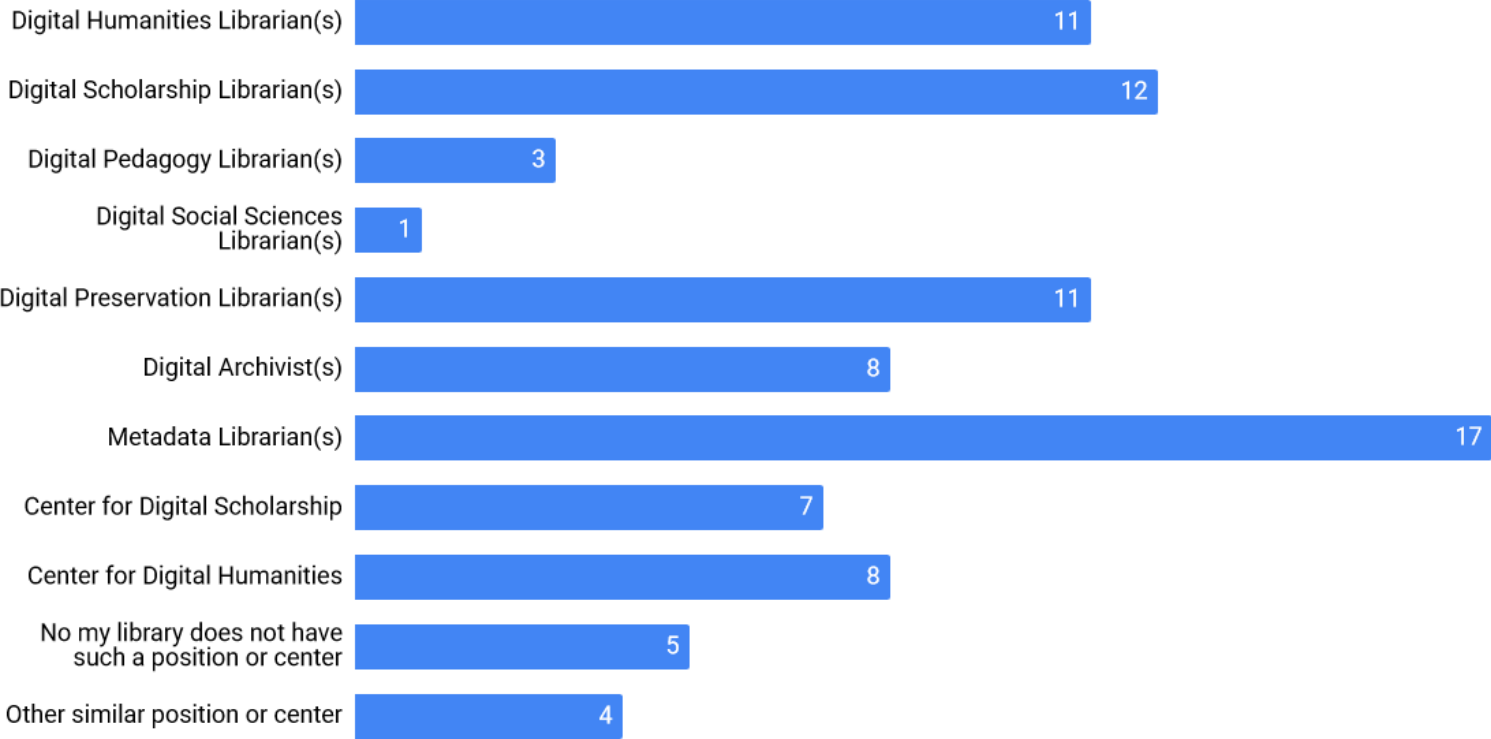
Digitization, OCR and indexing of Arabic journal

Are you expected to support DH / DS work in your current librarian role?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know



Does your library have (Check all that apply)



Does your library have (Check all that apply)

Other similar position / center

“We have a person who is effectively a digital archivist but is in a paraprofessional classification :(We are also hiring a digital scholarship librarian.”

“Data Services Librarian”

“ScholarSpace (library initiative) and Humanities Collaboratory (housed in library but staffed more broadly) ; IT Advocates (not library staff) assigned to various humanities departments”

“DS programming: Digital Scholars in Practice lecture series; Digital Preservation symposium; plans for a Scholars Lab that will essentially be a DS Center.”

If your library has any of the above positions and / or centers, please describe the extent to which you collaborate

Close / extensive collaboration

“In addition to the CDH, which is headed by an academic (professor of Musicology) supported by an assistant, the Library has a Digital Humanities group (predating CDH) which meets monthly and is made up of librarians and/or project heads working with DH tools and those who have an interest in fostering developments in DH in the Library. I am part of that group. Since it's inauguration, CDH is taking part in our meetings and for a mutual exchange of updates and the implementation of new ideas across the University academic community and the University Library.”

“I am one of the area/subject librarians who collaborates extensively with digital scholarship librarians and new digital scholarship center. Team teaching/devising assignments, creation of digital collections, including metadata work (<https://d.lib.msu.edu/dmhsp>), integration of digital scholarship center with area studies activities including outreach to K-12 and into tours for new grad students and other groups.”

“There are digital scholarship curators/librarians in a specific team, one member is seconded to our department (Asia and Africa) working with curators in different ways. They also provide digital scholarship training and organise a series of talks and workshops.”

“I have been coordinating lectures in the Digital Scholars in Practice series, participated in the Digital Preservation Symposium with a lightning talk from my library work, and I hope to be on the planning committee for the Scholars Lab (but that is still developing).”

“The Center for Digital Humanities belongs to the university, but the university library cooperates intensively with it.”

“Follow up very closely”

“Frequently”

If your library has any of the above positions and / or centers, please describe the extent to which you collaborate

Project-based / ad-hoc collaboration

“In the development stages of the two DH projects I've been involved with, I meet with the DS librarians to discuss best avenues for external funding while also discussing what my library has to offer in terms of resources, e.g. web hosting, metadata support, etc.”

“On a project basis (assigned or through referrals that we or other colleagues initiate)”

“Sporadic collaboration on projects involving collections that I curate”

“I collaborate on occasion with others involved in digital projects and often ask for things to be digitized.”

“We work together on some projects.”

“Ad-hoc collaboration on specific projects, either projects that I lead, or projects that require some MENA expertise”

“Referring faculty and graduate student with ideas for special projects”

“As Digital Archivist I work with the Digital Humanities Librarian, but the position is new so it's still being worked out.”

“Our Humanities Digital Workshop has a summer Library Fellows program, in which I have participated”

“Digital Initiatives and Preservation Services”

If your library has any of the above positions and / or centers, please describe the extent to which you collaborate

Minimal collaboration

“Not much at all, hoping to collaborate more when we have hired digital expertise”

“Very minimal”

“so far, hardly at all; from time to time they remember to include me in a conversation when a student or faculty member doing research in my area comes to them, but the last time I had to actually invite myself to the meeting b/c the DH people did NOT include me.”

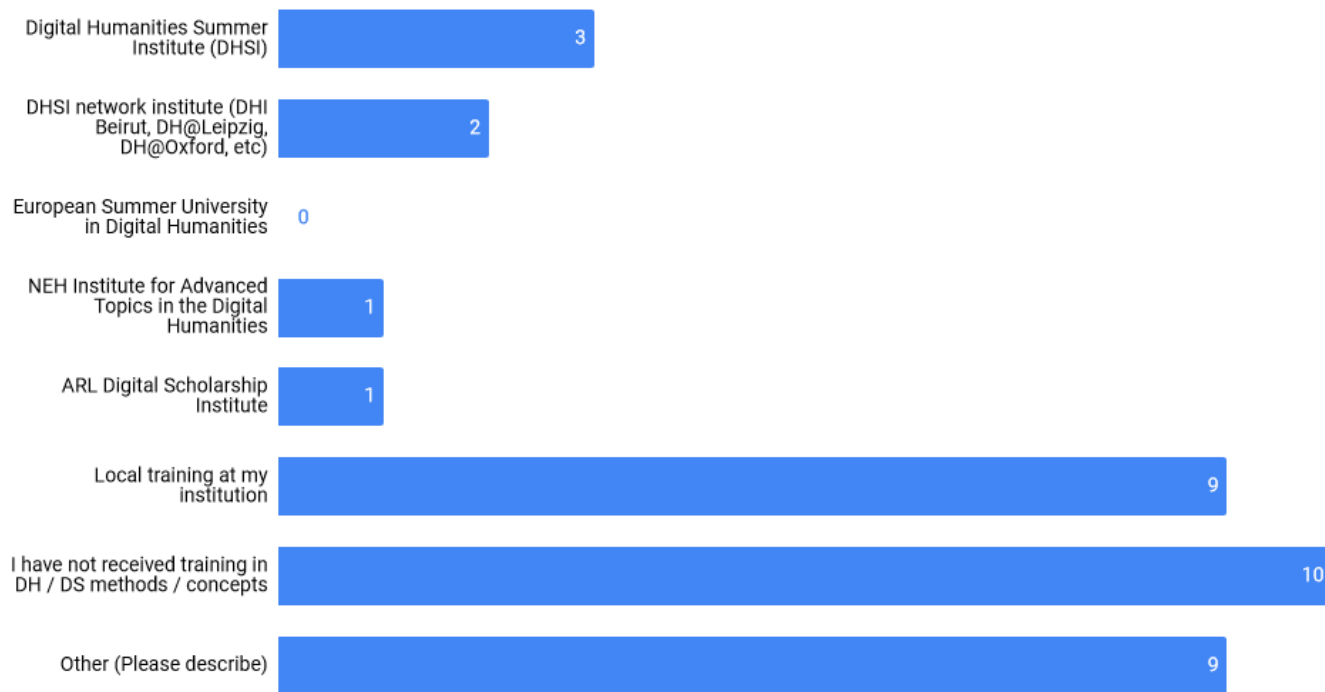
No collaboration

“No such center at my Library”

“I don't collaborate”

“None”

What training have you received in DH / DS methods & concepts? (Check all that apply)



Number of respondents

What training have you received in DH / DS methods & concepts? (Check all that apply)

Other (Please describe)

“HILT: Humanities Intensive Learning and Teaching”

“Humanities Without Walls training (iSchool at Illinois came to my institution)”

“Digital Humanities summer school (Oxford) TEI - further auto-didactic training”

“AMICAL ran a short Digital Humanities event in Beirut”

“Certificate at my local institute”

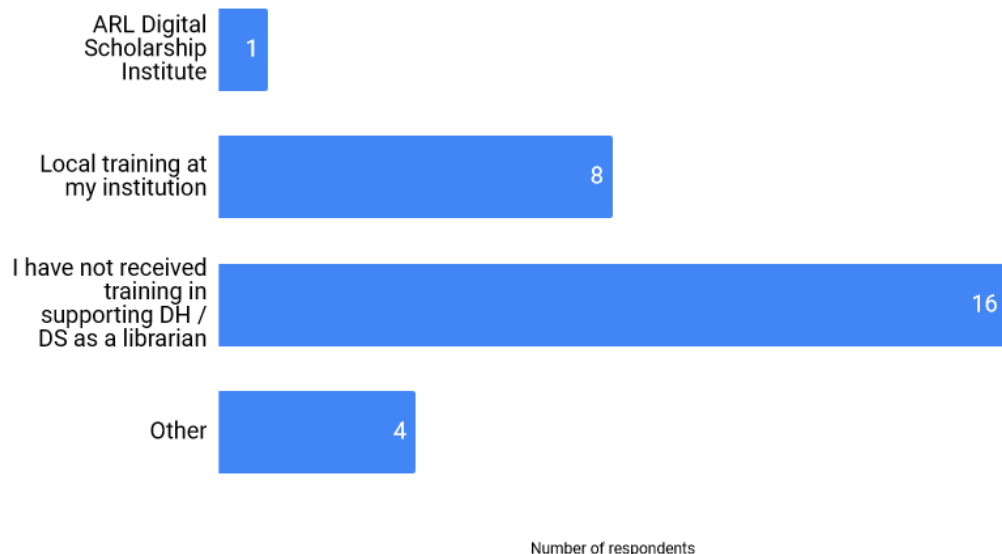
“1 workshop a few years ago”

“I received my DH training in Grad school at UIUC. I have also delivered several workshops in DHI beirut and other institutes & conferences.”

“course in Digital Humanities for my MLIS degree”

“undergraduate coursework”

What library-specific training in supporting DH / DS as a librarian have you received? (Check all that apply)



Other

“colleagues organized a reading group that met 3 times”

“Attend LibCal Workshops Offered at the Library”

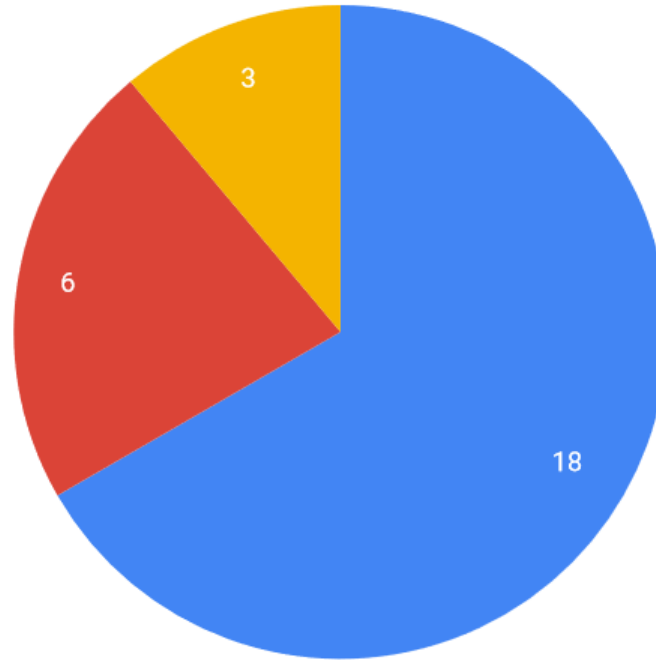
“Grad School”

“HWW [Humanities Without Walls] as above. Have attended HASTAC conference [Humanities, Arts, Science, and Technology Alliance and Collaboratory], very beneficial.”

Do you feel that you have received adequate training in supporting DH / DS as a MENA librarian?

Number of respondents

- No
- I don't know
- Yes



What DH / DS conferences and / or training have you attended that you would recommend to colleagues?

“DHSI” [Digital Humanities Summer Institute]

“Digital Humanities summer school (Oxford)”

“Personal Digital Archives [PDA], not mena specific but very interesting!”

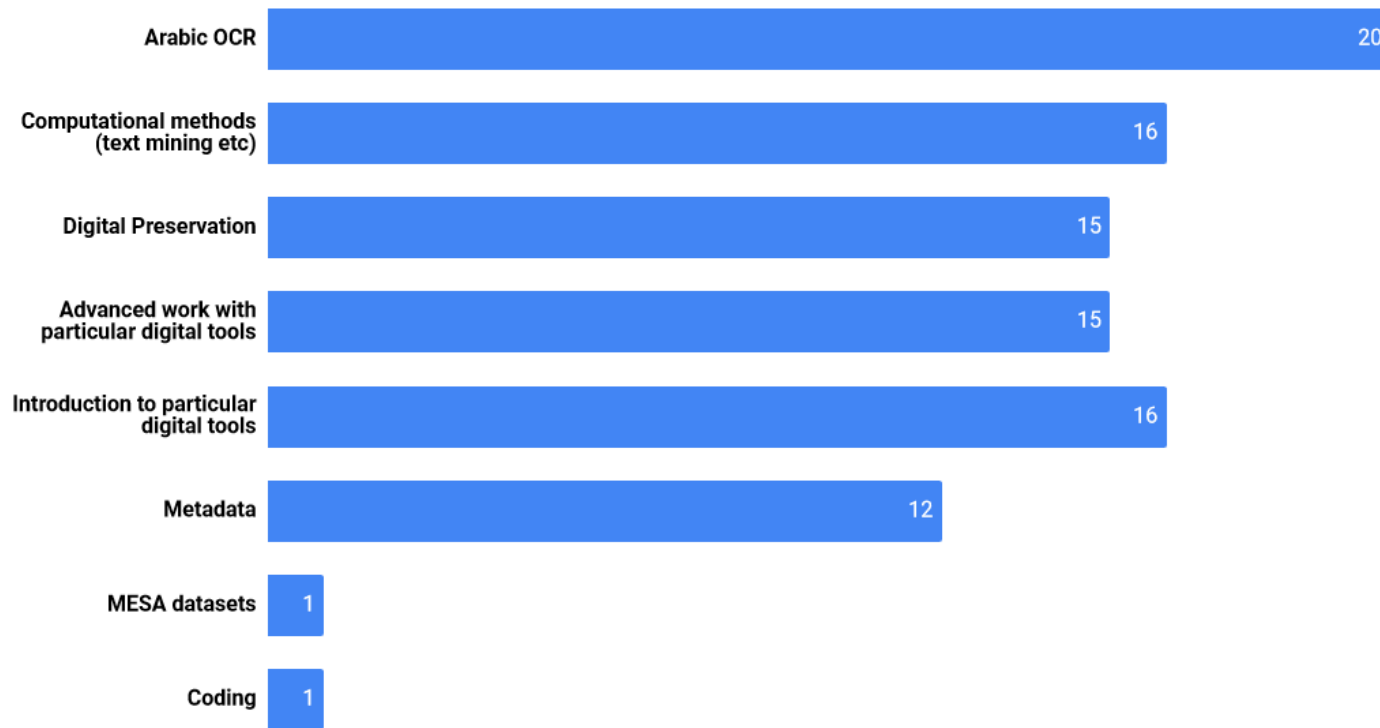
“DH Islamic Studies at Brown, workshop in Arabic/Persian DH organised by Maxim at Leipzig; ASAR 2018 jointly organised by Turing Institute and British Library”

“HILT [Humanities Intensive Learning and Teaching], NEH Institute for Advanced Topics (must have a specific topic and experience with some tools/software), Voyant Tools and Internet Archive web scraping trainings (local)”

“Brown University's workshops on Islamic DH; panels on DH at MESA”

“HASTAC” [Humanities, Arts, Science, and Technology Alliance and Collaboratory]

In what areas would you appreciate additional training? (Check all that apply)

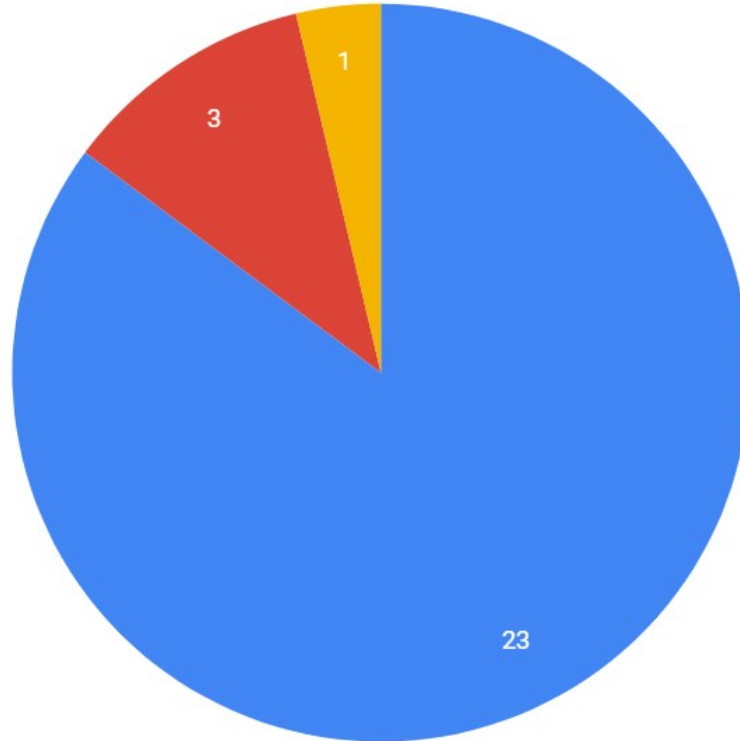


Number of respondents

Would you be interested in tailored training for MENA librarians?

Number of respondents

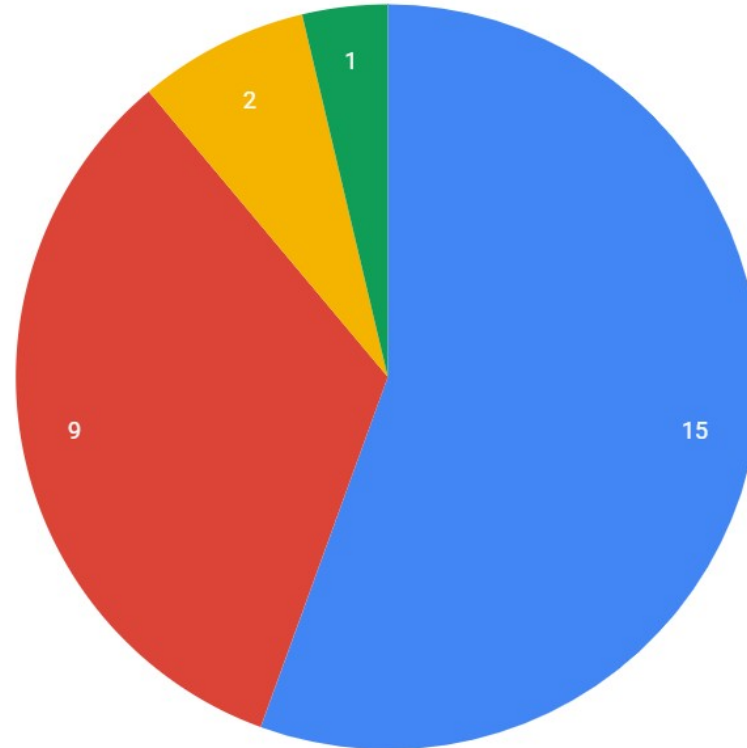
- Yes
- Maybe
- No



Do you have plans to attend the international conference “Whither Islamicate Digital Humanities?” Amsterdam, 13-15 December 2018?

Number of respondents

- No, but I wish I could
- Maybe
- Yes
- No, I am not interested



Final Thoughts

Middle East Librarians cover wide areas of expertise in their work

There is a need for further training for Middle East Librarians in dh/ds

Subject knowledge is increasingly being devalued in librarianship, yet many of the dh/ds projects described in survey results required subject knowledge

Further conversations!



Check out

<https://www.mela.us/committees/digital-scholarship-interest-group/>

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Scan me