The mission of the Digital Arts, Sciences, & Humanities (DASH) program is to support faculty and students who employ digital technologies in their research, teaching, and engagement work. With guidance from the DASH Faculty Advisory Committee, DASH has refashioned itself to become a curator of the university’s digital resources that matches scholars with technology experts across its campus-spanning network of partners. In addition to the hundreds of connections DASH made this year, other landmarks for the program included:

- Launching Software Carpentry, a two-day workshop series teaching introductory research computing skills to researchers on campus
- Presenting the Human in the Data speaker series featuring Amelia McNamara (St. Thomas), Ece Kumar (Microsoft), and Tawanna Dillahunt (Michigan)
- Continuing the donor-funded cross-disciplinary research assistants program that partners faculty with students in computer science and design

As a new academic year dawns, DASH is already working on expanded partnerships and refined processes so that faculty and students at our institution find the right technologies to utilize and the best people to collaborate with in the pursuit of their scholarship.

Benjamin Wiggins, Ph.D.
DASH Program Director and Affiliate Assistant Professor of History

Our Partners
DASH is an alliance of five University of Minnesota units. Partners contribute expertise in alignment with their own missions, such as project consultations and prototyping, fielding consultation requests, supporting lectures, and providing education about research tools and methodologies.

Center for Education Innovation, College of Liberal Arts | LATIS, University Libraries, Research Computing, Institute for Advanced Study

Praise for DASH

“[Data visualization support I received through DASH] has really shifted the types of conversations we’ve been having at my school and things are coming together for long-term sustainable change.”

- Ryan Oto, social studies teacher and graduate student, College of Education and Human Development

Connections Made Through DASH

- Faculty: 250
- Graduate Student: 200
- Staff: 50
- Other: 0

DASH experts held 455 consultations connected with 85 departments served 368 slices of pizza during Programming & Pizza
DASH Research Assistants, 2018-19

Ben Bramanti
Computer science student; works with WordPress, data visualizations, data analyzing in Python

Nancy Ching
Graphic design student; works with web design and development, graphic design

Andrea Simenstad
Developer and research fellow; assists with website and programming, works on Zooniverse projects

Claire Yang
Computer science student; works with project planning and implementation, data visualizations, website building

The Human in the Data Speaker Series

Amelia McNamara
Department of Computer & Information Sciences, University of St. Thomas
“How Spatial Polygons Shape Our World: Geometry, Data, and Perceptions of Truth”

Ece Kamar
Senior Researcher at the Adaptive Systems and Interaction Group, Microsoft Research
“The Real Promise of AI: How to Get AI-Human Collaboration to Work?”

Tawanna Dillahunt
School of Information, University of Michigan
“Designing for Employability: Envisioning Tools and Opportunities for Low-Resource Job Seekers”

Software Carpentry

New workshop series
2018-19 was the pilot year for Software Carpentry at the U of M, with funding from University Libraries, the Graduate School, and the Office of the Vice President for Research.

Four workshops were held from December 2018 to May 2019.

Why Software Carpentry?
• Enables computational research that couldn’t be done otherwise.
• Improves reproducibility and rigor by automating repetitive tasks and allowing sharing and auditing of data scripts.
• Helps improve the quality of shared research data and code.

What is taught at a workshop?
• Automating tasks using the Unix shell
• Structured programming in Python, R, or MATLAB
• Version control using Git or Mercurial

Notable Projects

Agitate! - a collaborative online publishing space for community members and scholars to present creative work about the transformation of ethics, aesthetics, and justice
agitatejournal.org

SCOTUS Notes - a crowdsourcing project that transcribes Supreme Court justices' handwritten notes
z.umn.edu/scotus_notes

Latinos en Acción - digital design for an organization of Latino families providing leadership training and capacity building
designjusticehub.com/latinos-en-accion

Check out dash.umn.edu/projects for more projects that would not have been possible without the efforts of our RAs