Introduction: Reviews in Digital Humanities

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Reviews in Digital Humanities publishes project overviews authored by project directors alongside peer reviews written by members of digital humanities communities. The goal of *Reviews in Digital Humanities* is to foster critical discourse about digital scholarship in a format useful to other scholars. This pilot is a result of a number of converging motivations:

- We've grown frustrated with being asked to divorce technical questions from humanities inquiry and vice versa when asked to review digital projects for journals, departments, and presses.
- Our own work and the work of peers encounter challenges of timely peer review. The result is that published reviews become quickly outdated as digital projects evolve or, at the extreme, the review appears years after the project is completed. The review then serves as a post-script rather than a useful scholarly intervention.
- We've become convinced that the lack of a peer review culture that places the project's explicit intentions in dialogue with the reviewer's assessment has led to "you should have done the project I wanted" reviews rather than a review of what the project actually seeks to do.
- Our dissatisfaction with the lack of diversity among those being asked to review digital projects continues to grow. This practice has resulted in a limited vision of what is acceptable in certain areas of research. It is bolstered by the over-reliance on tenured faculty at Research 1 institutions as the "acceptable" reviewer pool. We appreciate these scholars but we also want to hear the thoughts of librarians, archivists, cultural heritage professionals, community practitioners, students, and the like.

All of these motivations converged for us in this pilot effort. Can a review culture exist in the digital humanities that can solicit projects, reviewers, and complete the entire review cycle in less than 90 days? And, as importantly, can we publish reviews on a rolling basis that highlight the continually moving targets of digital projects? Our hope over this two-year pilot is that the answer to both of these questions is yes.