Designing Cultural Data Products

Hello. My name is Jamie McLaughlin. I'm a Research Software Engineer at the DHI. My research interests are User Experience Design, WebGL, and software sustainability.

I'm here to introduce the module Designing Cultural Data Products. Cultural data products are all around us. They are not just websites. They are apps, databases, information services, virtual environments, and digital art and exhibitions.

Every cultural data product has to be designed and disseminated. And how that is done will help determine its success. The aim of this module is to teach you the methods, tools and best practices to ensure that the cultural data products you are involved with in the future have the maximum possible impact.

User-led design

You will learn about user-led design, and develop a grounded understanding of why good design is important. This will be based on real-world examples, drawn from the decades of experience we have in the DHI.

The digital interface conventions which we use today have evolved over more than fifty years. In some cases they have been shaped by limitations, or even reference technological artifacts, which no longer exist. But we can use this history to refine and improve our design decisions today.

Software programming skills are not needed

You will not need software programming skills for this course. Rather, we will focus on the **processes** by which websites, systems, apps and tools are built. We will look at common, **generic** architectures for these products and how those inform their design.

Disseminating cultural data products

As well as design, this module will teach you how to effectively disseminate cultural data products. You will learn how to develop a dissemination plan according to your audience. We will also teach you how to manage licensing of third party data, intellectual property and data ethics.

Invent your own cultural data product

This is a practical, hands-on module. You will work in groups, invent your own product and develop a user interface and dissemination plan for it. You will identify the product's audience, define its functionality and justify your design using what you have learnt.

By the end of this module, you will be equipped to choose the best design and dissemination strategy for a cultural data product, and ensure it is able to reach, and engage with, as wide an audience as possible.