

Digital History Autumn School (Marburg, 28 Sep–2 Oct 26)

Marburg, Herder Institute for Historical Research on East Central Europe / HERMES (Humanities Education in Research, Data, and Methods) Data Competence Center, Sep 28–Oct 2, 2026

Deadline: Aug 2, 2026

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From Data Acquisition to Data Publication: Quality Control, Tool Assessment, and Methodological Challenges in Digital History.

Digital tools and AI-assisted methods are increasingly shaping historical research. From OCR and annotation to corpus analysis and the application of generative AI systems in analysis or dissemination, these technologies open up new possibilities for generating and augmenting historical knowledge. Even after a few decades of experience, the combination of hermeneutic and computational approaches is far from straightforward, and researchers are often confronted with new methodological and practical challenges such as (but not limited to):

- Data acquisition: How can processes of datafication and data-collection lead to reliable and accurate data?
- Data modeling: Which data model is best suited to a particular research question and dataset, and how can expressiveness and interoperability be optimally balanced?
- Data analysis: Are the available tools sufficiently powerful for the chosen model, and do they perform as effectively on one's own data as reported in the literature?
- Evaluation: How can results obtained from a specific tool be critically assessed? What roles do data quality, uncertainty, and methodological transparency play in a given research context?
- Data exchange and reproducibility: How can research results be published and shared in ways that foster reuse and conserve transparency? To what extent are digitally supported methods transferable and reproducible across different datasets, and under which conditions?

The Digital History Autumn School 2026, organized in the framework of the Joint Lab Cultural Data in a Digital World (Herder Institute, Marburg -<https://www.herder-institut.de/de/start>, in close collaboration with the data competence center – Humanities Education in Research, Data, and Methods – HERMES - <https://hermes-hub.de/>), addresses these questions from both methodological and practical perspectives. Together with experts in Digital Humanities and Digital History, participants will explore criteria for the selection, application, and evaluation of digital tools and methods and will have the opportunity to discuss them in the context of their own research projects.

Topics

- Selection and critical assessment of digital tools

- Data preparation and data quality practices
- Evaluation methods in the Digital Humanities
- Transparency and reproducibility of digital methods
- Dealing with uncertainty, ambiguity, and incompleteness in historical data
- Source criticism, provenance, and the documentation of data transformation processes

In addition to thematic workshops, the Autumn School will provide opportunities for exchange both with the experts and among the participants. Planned activities include interactive formats such as peer-support sessions, including opportunities for participants to present and discuss their own research data, methods, and research questions as well as networking events.

Who Can Apply?

The Autumn School is aimed at:

- Advanced Master's students
- Doctoral researchers (PhD candidates)
- Postdoctoral and other early-career researchers

from the fields of Digital Humanities, Computer Science, Cultural Heritage, Digital History and Information Science who work with historical and cultural data and wish to integrate digital methods into their research and critically reflect on their use.

Practical Information

Dates: 28 September (from 2p.m) – 2 October 2026 (until 2p.m..)

Location: Herder Institute, Marburg, and Philipps University Marburg

Working Language: English

The organizers will provide for single room accommodation at a regular hotel. Travel expenses can be reimbursed up to a maximum of EUR 250.

Application

Applicants are invited to submit:

- A short letter of motivation (maximum one page)
- A brief curriculum vitae (CV)
- Optionally, a short description of a project or dataset they would like to discuss during the Autumn School

Application deadline: 2 August 2026

Notification of acceptance: by 21 August 2026

We welcome applications from individuals with diverse disciplinary backgrounds and particularly encourage those who have so far only made limited use of digital methods to apply.

Please submit your application as a single PDF file to: herbstakademie@herder-institut.de

For further information please contact Dr. Cristina Vertan at: herbstakademie@herder-institut.de

Reference:

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