

Final Report 2023

DEFCon Capacity Building Grant 2023 & DIGITAL ETHNIC FUTURES LAB @ DARTMOUTH

(Submitted 9/30/23)



California State University Digital Humanities Consortium Built through Ethnic Studies

The combined DEFCon Capacity Building Grant and funding provided by the Digital Ethnic Futures Lab @ Dartmouth enabled a core group of CSU Digital Humanists and Ethnic Studies faculty and staff to begin the work of creating a CSU system-wide Digital Humanities Consortium working through the Ethnic Studies departments on each campus. Thirty-eight members from seventeen (of twenty-three) CSU campuses participated in the 2023 meetings and capacity building activities.

Original Deliverables (from Proposal)

Our original deliverables were lofty considering the amount of outreach across 27,000 faculty, staff, and librarians across 23 campuses spanning the entirety of the State of California.

- Draft a Mission Statement that specifically embraces Ethnic Studies;
- Define a capacious representation of Digital Humanities that is specifically tied to CSU students and faculty; and
- Create a CSU operating committee (Advisory Board or Steering Committee) to unite the efforts across campuses and liaise with the CSU Chancellor's Office to create and fund a CSU-wide learning community similar to STEM-Net (<https://www.calstate.edu/impact-of-the-csu/research/stem-net>).

- Create a Humanities Commons website with the above information and that also includes profiles for CSU Digital Humanists, similar to the SDSU TeachDH website (<http://teachdh.sdsu.edu/>) and the SJSU DH Center Faculty Research webpage (<https://library.sjsu.edu/digitalhumanities/faculty-research>);
- Identify faculty in each campus's Ethnic Studies Programs and other programs who are already digitally-engaged and interested in defining the CSU-DH mission;
- Identify DH-Ethnic Studies Faculty with an existing DH Project who are willing to showcase their projects on the Humanities Commons website;
- Identify faculty/librarians with DH expertise to build a broader DH community in which digital Ethnic Studies can participate on their campuses;
- Identify DH LibGuides on each campus and create an Ethnic Studies focus within each LibGuide;
- Manage social media to connect, communicate, and attract further CSU faculty; and
- Manage the existing Google Group.

23 CSU Campuses: Complex & Varied Outreach

Each CSU campus is unique in its student population, access to resources, full-time equivalent student numbers, and disciplinary focus. As of Fall 2022, the CSU system enrolled approximately 460,000 students. Twenty-one of the 23 campuses are designated Hispanic-Serving Institutions; fourteen campuses are designated Asian-American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions. The only element that specifically unites the CSU campuses where the DEFCon Capacity Building activities for DH@CSU are concerned is the recent legislation: As of Fall 2021, California State law requires every CSU student to pass an approved Ethnic Studies course (with "ethnic studies" defined as Native American studies, African American studies, Asian American studies, and Latinx studies). The CSU Fullerton DEFCon team was instrumental in aiding our efforts regarding outreach beyond individual and personal networks by identifying those various Ethnic Studies programs and departments on each campus as well as moving beyond the California mandate for defining Ethnic Studies.

The CSU Chancellor's Office, the central governance of the CSU, does not offer a method for faculty, staff, and librarians to communicate with each other across the entire system. To complicate matters concerning outreach, none of the CSU campuses has a consistent naming protocol for those departments that focus on Ethnic Studies nor a way to easily identify those faculty and staff who are interested in Digital Humanities. The original team who began conversations about a DH Consortium for the CSU (begun in 2020) relied on outreach among their campuses, serendipitous meetings across individual campuses, as well as annual system-wide discipline-based Council meetings at first. The below deliverables became more dynamic, complex, and energized as more interested faculty, staff, and librarians were added to the steering committee¹ membership list and attendance at each monthly meeting grew.

¹ We have yet to settle on the governance infrastructure, especially after community organizers and Ethnic Studies faculty pointed out that typical governance structures for a university are not necessarily

Stronger Together

Though the CSU system is complex, unique on a national scale, and individual on each campus, the Consortium's fundamental ideas rest on this idea that we are stronger together, especially in:

- Amplifying historic legacy of CSUs in pioneering ethnic studies
- Gathering spaces
- Enhanced thinking, creativity,
- Build community, breakdown the silos, share/talk
- Creating space for shared conversations/dialog, and collaboration
- Building a larger knowledge base
- Collectivity/Solidarity

Membership

Each Consortium member was offered a \$500 stipend (provided by either the DEFCon funding or the Dartmouth Lab) with offers provided on a rolling basis February-May 2023 that depended upon when individuals joined the conversations. The stipends were a gesture towards each individuals' commitment but not indicative of the workload or time commitment that these members eventually invested in DH@CSU. Eighteen Consortium members accepted the stipend; eight declined or did not respond to the inquiry about the stipend; and eleven members did not receive a stipend because they were either provided with a stipend from the CSU Fullerton DEFCon funds or were added to the Consortium after all of its funding was expended.

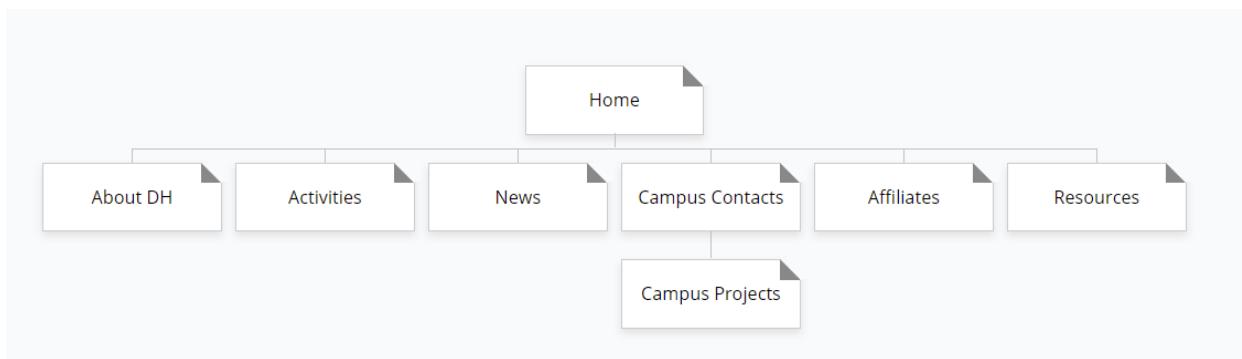
Website Development, Aggregating DH Projects & Identifying Campus Stakeholders

The Consortium paid \$500 each to two different graduate students for website development of the Humanities Commons site (that deploys a Wordpress platform), according to the website architecture (see [here](#)) discussed and agreed upon during the virtual monthly meetings.

<https://dhatcsu.hcommons.org/>²

inviting to those very community organizations and faculty that the Consortium proposes to embrace and serve.

² Currently, the website is under construction and available only to the DH@CSU designated administrators.



While all of the top-level pages have been ascribed to the website, the page level content is still being developed based on the conversations at the August 2023 Convening. The Consortium is exploring plug-ins to seamlessly integrate, for example, all DH-Ethnic Studies projects by using a [CSU DH Zotero group](#) that will then be integrated into the Resources and/or the Campus Projects page. The Zotero group can then be opened to anyone who would like to add their own projects. (Initially, the Consortium attempted to create a plug-in that would pull data from each campus or departments' listings of DH projects; however, Humanities Commons' Wordpress limitations do not allow this kind of functionality.) The Consortium would like to welcome inclusion of DH projects on the website (beyond the initial aggregation by the Consortium researcher) by encouraging potential Consortium members to add their projects via Google form similar that used by SJSU's DH Center (see [SJSU google form](#))

After conversations at the August Convening, the Consortium decided that the organization of the website was perhaps not attractive to potential Consortium members if it focused on text-based explanations of the initiative. Instead, the opening page will feature blog posts and stories by and about our Consortium members. The first two blog posts have been authored by members and are ready for integration into the website. (We still need to discuss user experience and inclusion of images instead of the text-heavy web pages that currently exist.)

The Campus Contacts page would provide links to campus listings of all campus projects, if available. The Affiliates page would provide a list of DH-affiliated faculty and staff on each campus. Anyone who wishes to advertise that they do DH at the CSU can request to have their name, departmental affiliation, interests, and/or contact info added here. The Resources page might include tool tutorials, CSU DH assignment bank, and/or external organizations that might be useful for anyone interested in DH and Ethnic Studies. As the website and DH@CSU progresses, we anticipate creating a Supporters page that will provide information about various organizations' support of the Consortium.

At this point, the Consortium has plans for expanding the website to include a design that excites members and potential users with storytelling. For now, the site is a functional space to record decisions around, for instance, defining the Mission Statement and offering a version of Ethnic Studies and Digital Humanities that speaks specifically to the CSU.

Campus Contacts, Resources & Campus Projects

In an attempt to identify all forms of “projects” (both research and pedagogically-focused), the Consortium voted to employ a researcher to explore every CSU campus website and log each project. The Consortium also voted to deploy the ontology for identifying and tagging each project based on the extended version by the [SJSU DH Center](#) (which ontology was originally borrowed from *Reviews in Digital Humanities*).

The Consortium paid \$2000 to one graduate student for extensive research into existing DH and Ethnic Studies on each of the 23 campuses. (Because titles, department names, and digital footprints are unique on each campus, this was a massive undertaking that is still in progress.) Those tasks included:

1. Work with Jamila Moore Pewu (CSU Fullerton, jmoorepewu@fullerton.edu) to discuss information already identified: we (Jamila) specifically identified all the ethnic studies and ethnic studies adjacent programs across the CSU system and identified Department Chairs/faculty and for some individual projects.
2. Work with Dr. Jamila Moore Pewu and the CSU Fullerton team to catalog general education courses across the CSUs that satisfy the state-mandated ethnic studies requirement.
3. Search CSU campuses for evidence of faculty/staff/library DH projects and/or “publications” and record in [CSU DH Projects](#) spreadsheet.
4. Add all materials to the [CSU DH Zotero group](#).

We have identified more than 300 potential DH projects across all 23 campuses (see [here](#)). However, Consortium members have noted that we should not display those projects without the consent of the project owner.

We did not progress to accumulating or creating LibGuides that focus on DH and Ethnic Studies because the aggregation of information from 23 campuses required more than 60 hours of work from our researcher.

As of September 20, 2023, this work will need to be continued when the Consortium identifies further funding for continued research and outreach.

Communications & Documentation Infrastructure

The Consortium established communications through SJSU’s enterprise Google services with a closed Google Group managed by Dr. Katherine D. Harris as well as a shared infrastructure for Consortium documents in an SJSU shared Google Drive managed by Dr. Harris with Dr. Pamela Lach and Dr. Scott Kleinman included as managers (to allow for redundancy in access). Consortium members who indicated their interest in capacity building were added as Content Managers to the shared drive (with the ability to delete documents) while others were added as

Contributors (no ability to delete, but ability to read, edit, comment on any material included in the drive). A few members were added as commenters only based on their expressed interest in being part of the Consortium (and their bandwidth for contributing). Anyone interested in capacity building was invited to join those monthly meetings in order to learn more about building the infrastructure across 23 campuses and was therefore added to the Google Group and the Shared Google Drive.

Outreach

Dr. Pewu and her team created in Airtables an interest form (see [here](#)) and distributed it via key stakeholders on as many campuses as possible to inquire about individual levels of interest in the Consortium. By defining each category, the Consortium was able to garner interest based on faculty and staff workloads. The below categories also indicate how many respondents are interested in a particular category (beyond the Consortium members already participating in the Consortium):

- *Reading and willing- 10 respondents from 7 different campuses; 4 of these joined us at the August Convening:* I would like to take on a leadership role by joining the DH@CSU steering committee and helping to envision the future of this consortium. We also currently have a limited number of honorariums to support new steering committee members in 2023.
- *Campus liaison - 11 respondents from 11 different campuses:* I'm not yet ready to join the steering committee but I would like to serve as a liaison between DH@CSU and my campus community by sharing DH@CSU news and information with students, faculty staff, and administrators on my campus.
- *Interested and Curious - 17 respondents from 8 different campuses:* I'm not interested in taking on a formal role within the Consortium but I would like to be added to the DH@CSU communication channels and stay up to date on the latest Consortium happenings, as well as DH related news and events at other campuses.

The Consortium announced the DEFCon Capacity Building Award and the collaboration with the Digital Ethnic Futures Lab at Dartmouth in an April 2023 press release that was sent to each CSU campus communications office as well as the CSU Chancellor's Office. A revised press release with additional members was released in May 2023 and again in July 2023 (see [here](#)).

Branding

SJSU Humanities & Arts Marketing (staffed by Graphic Design majors) created a series of DH@CSU logos for consideration. The Consortium chose one design that was then produced in six different color variations for use in different types of media. The marketing team then created colorways for every campus in the selected design (see [here](#)). The team took into consideration the CSU Chancellor's Office requirements for colorways and use of the CSU logo in general in their design. Because we want to celebrate the important contributions of the CSU, it is

important to credit the individual undergraduate who was responsible for this logo design (see [here](#)).

Chancellor's Office Support

The CSU Chancellor's Office has been receptive to the formulation of the Consortium, according to several meetings between Leslie Ponciano (Director of Research Opportunities) and members of the Consortium (lead by Dr. Jamila Moore Pewu). At this time, the CSU Chancellor's Office has not offered funding to support the Consortium's activities but is interested in supporting the creation of an official affinity group, which would mean a system-wide email distribution as well as minimal funding. (Establishing affinity groups can take up to 8 years.)

Dr. Pewu was invited by Dr. Ponciano to submit a single slide to potentially be included in the August or September meeting of the CSU Board of Trustees. The Consortium sees this as a positive recognition of its ongoing work, especially as a new CSU Chancellor takes the helm.

Monthly Meetings

Monthly meetings were held virtually via Zoom on the following dates:

- February 27, 2023 ([Agenda & Meeting Notes](#))
- March 27, 2023 ([Agenda & Meeting Notes](#))
- April 10, 2023 ([Agenda & Meeting Notes](#))
- May 15, 2023 ([Agenda & Meeting Notes](#))

At each meeting, we discussed how to achieve the primary deliverables and perform further outreach activities, including a widely distributed press release. The Consortium members found that the larger questions of a Mission Statement and defining DH with Ethnic Studies required a longer exploratory conversation and was reserved for substantial discussion at the August Convening.

August Convening (August 8-9, 2023)

Held at CSU Fullerton thanks entirely to the work of Dr. Pewu and her CSU Fullerton team, the DH@CSU Consortium attendees met at the Center for Oral & Public History, Pollack Library and were welcomed by the Dean of the Library, VP of IT, and the Provost. Dr. Pewu's team provided catering from minority-owned small businesses from the local area in addition to facilitating reduced nightly hotel rates at an establishment one block from the meeting location. Due to the depth of Consortium members in the Southern California area, holding the in-person Convening at CSU Fullerton allowed for a critical mass of attendees in person. The Consortium provided \$2000 to CSU Fullerton for catering and any last-minute additional \$250 stipends for attendees at the Convening.

Dr. Pewu's team also introduced [Notion](#), which is a real-time online platform that allows for multi-media synchronous note-taking by a variety of users. The multi-media aspect and aggregation of information on one single page allowed attendees to engage between working groups and access our meeting materials in one location. (We then stored all of our notes in the shared Google Drive folders for archiving and later reference.) Our list of attendees is also included on that Notion page along with email addresses to facilitate further communication among the attendees. We hosted a total of 31 attendees across 2 days, which included representatives from the following 14 CSU campuses:

Bakersfield	Channel Islands	Dominguez Hills	Fresno
Fullerton	Stanislaus	Long Beach	Sacramento
Monterey Bay	Northridge	Pomona	San Marcos
San Diego	San Jose	San Luis Obispo	

Convening materials include:

- [Agendas](#) for both days
- [Day 1 Slide Deck](#)
- [Day 2 Slide Deck](#)
- [Notion](#)

Requests to fill in desired topics for the agenda on both days of the convening were distributed at each monthly meeting with opportunities provided to add to a Google Doc through July 2023. After consultation with all of the agendas, notes, and recorded conversations, Drs. Pewu and Harris constructed the 2-day Convening agenda to create opportunities to discuss the foundational values of the Consortium as well as to address gaps in the capacity building activities.

Bringing together those interested in DH and Ethnic Studies as both an exploration and a community-building effort meant creating space for all of the divergent perspectives in a productive manner (that often can be chaotic and challenging). To this end, a values workshop seemed to be the best approach for establishing community and providing attendees with an opportunity to share their perspectives.

Day 1 - Agenda

8:30-9:30am	Breakfast
9am	Welcome & Introductions
9:30-10am	Updates
10-12:30pm	DH@CSU - Why are we here? (Values Workshop)
12:30-1:30pm	Lunch
1:30-4pm	Working Groups - See descriptions
4-5pm	Working Groups Report Out: progress, complexities, next steps

The primary topic for Day 1 of the Convening was discovering those overlapping values through a HumetricsHSS-style workshop on building values-based infrastructure while Dr. Pewu successfully facilitated and moderated the conversation for online participants. In-person attendees were assigned to specific tables with 4-5 participants from diverse backgrounds and campuses in order to facilitate ice breakers in anticipation of the values workshop. Before embarking on general conversation, we offered a Code of Conduct / Community Agreement borrowed from the [NHC Summer Institute Podcasting Institute 2023](#). We are grateful to Dr. Pam Lach for bringing these important community agreements to our DH@CSU Convening.

Interrogating, Relating & Prioritizing: Building a Values Framework for DH@CSU

References:

- [HumetricsHSS values cards](#)
- HumetricsHSS [exercise instructions](#)
- [Harris blog post](#)

Instructions

Topics:

- DH ([working definition](#))
- Ethnic Studies ([working definition](#))
- CSU

For each topic, create and organize a set of values after a discussion about the following:

1. Do certain values conflict with one another or exist in tension with others? How might you mediate that tension?
2. Are there values that are missing? Values that don't fit?
3. How is this best organized to indicate what matters most to you as a group?
4. Can you implement productive disagreement to create this values-based infrastructure?

After one hour of conversation and working with the values sorter cards, teams were requested to affix their cards (and added post-it notes) to the white board and begin connecting those values in a non-hierarchical fashion. (See [Mini Values Workshop Discussion/Results](#).) The open

discussion yielded cross-over without necessarily seeing consensus in the values that would provide the foundation for the Consortium:

Flexibility, Community, different definitions of “Public Good,” intentionality, Intersectionality, inclusivity, Trust - Respect, generosity, and advancing knowledge. Empowerment - understanding that people want to better themselves, their communities, and their life chances.

We found in our discussion that the tensions identified were as important as the shared themes. For instance:

- Making room in the academic space for failure - which can at times give way to creativity.
- Public Good as a value important to DH, Ethnic Studies and CSU - but also in conflict
- For Ethnic Studies, brings with it an established disciplinary history that can not just be “stirred in” at the end of a DH project or community-engaged DH.
- There’s a disconnect in how the University fosters or makes space/time for true community engagement. Need time to build relationships
- Found some tension with some of the values and the dollars that CSU commits to
- Problematize the question of the public good. How does good serve which public?
- Wanted to look at the synergy between digital humanities and ethnic studies, within the context that the CSU isn’t inherently structured to support this synergy.
- How to create a CS4-You through a people - community bubble (reciprocity, generosity, candor, appreciation).
- Regarding community-led work, academics should ask for a final report from communities after a project has finished to assess the successes and areas of improvement for the scholarly/academic team.

After lunch, attendees divided into working groups with a limit of 5 people per working group in order to distribute the discussion. The primary areas of interest and concern discovered in those monthly meetings were converted into working groups for the Convening (see [Notion](#) for raw notes from each working group):

- [Consortium infrastructure](#)
- [Website Platform and Content Development](#)
- [Defining DH & Ethnic Studies at CSU](#)
- [Mission Statement Development](#)
- [Outreach & Internal Communications](#)

To prepare for the working groups, we requested that everyone read the following 3 articles: from [People, Practice, Power: Lach/Pressman](#) (SDSU); [Pewu/Shroud](#) (CSUF); [Risam](#) (DEFCon; Salem State). Two articles are authored by CSU faculty and librarians with the third article focusing on building DH-Ethnic Studies communities at a regional public university. The Pewu/Shroud article offers some keen insight into the first general students served by the CSU

system while Lach/Pressman's article provides details about building a DH Center in a more distributed fashion on a CSU campus. After two and a half hours of team discussion, working groups returned for an open discussion.

One of the most revealing discussions dealt with creating an infrastructure and governance that mimicked academic governance structures and how to avoid replicating hierarchies inherent to the higher education power dynamics. We are still in conversation about how to create governance structures that don't end up with the same small group shouldering the workload. We also discussed why Ethnic Studies faculty might in fact be reticent to join an initiative that makes yet another request on their overburdened time, especially at a moment when CSU campuses are pressing their Ethnic Studies faculty for creating curriculum, educating every student who walks through the campus gates, and helping each campus with its DEI work. The discussion also highlighted the potential distrust from the community organizations with which the Consortium proposes to collaborate. These discussions are ongoing as we work on foregrounding a values-based infrastructure.

Day 2: Current Tasks, Next Steps, and 5 Years into the Future

8:30-9:30	Breakfast (Main Conference Room)
9-9:15am	Welcome from CSU Fullerton Dean of the Library
9:15-10am	Collaboratively Generating Tasks (Main Conference Room)
10-11am	Open Discussion
11-12pm	Working Groups: What do we want this to look like in five years
12-1pm	Next Steps
1pm	Lunch and Departure (Boxed lunches available)

Upon the advice of both Dr. Roopika Risam and Dr. Leonardo Flores (DEFCon Mentor) with guidance from Dr. Lach, we moved to a task-based approach for our immediate workflow and generated a Google spreadsheet with small, discrete tasks articulated by each working group along with deadlines and dependencies on other working groups. The hope was that we would move away from the committee/sub-committee structure and allow Consortium members to choose tasks that align with their workloads – or to express interest and invite others into the task for conversation: DH@CSU Tasks. There is a consideration that the working group Outreach and Internal Communications should be divided into two different working groups due to the size of the tasks.

At the time of authoring this final report, we are in the process of assessing that task list and distributing it among the Consortium members to request their self-assignment of tasks. We will discuss the task list further at an upcoming October meeting.

The Future

For the remainder of Day 2, working groups collaboratively re-structured and organized our [Potential Items for a 5-year Plan](#), that also includes the next steps originally included in our DEFCon DH@CSU proposal, including:

- Author a major grant proposal for the CSU-DH Consortium
- Create a curriculum/best practices/community of expert leaders in DH specifically crafted for Hispanic-Serving and Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions (e.g., SDSU's TeachDH - <http://teachdh.sdsu.edu/>);
- Create a database/archive/showcase of this work and visualizations of the network of faculty and students doing it;
- Develop a roadshow (program) that travels across the CSUs to present these products and solicit participation in use and building it out;
- Create a system-wide speaker series; and
- Create a system-wide communication strategy/listserv that originates from the Chancellor's Office.

Post-Convening Activities: What's Next (in the short term)

- Dr. Pewu and her team are in the process of soliciting feedback from the Consortium members about: 1) what needs to happen next; 2) what resources are necessary to accomplish those goals (e.g., funding for stipends, research assistants, course release, etc.); 3) who is available to serve on the "Steering Committee" as a form of governance September-December 2023; and 4) who is available from each working group to bring tasks to completion.
- Consortium members are assessing the [DH@CSU Tasks](#).
- We are scheduling an October meeting to discuss those tasks as well as future funding and necessary resources to continue this capacity building.
- The researcher is concluding his work of aggregating DH projects and Ethnic Studies faculty, staff, and librarians.
- The website structure and content continues to be developed with the intention of going live by the October meeting (if not before).
- The mission statement draft will be considered at the October 2023 meeting.
- A pilot of a different style of governance infrastructure will be implemented with a distributed leadership model that makes space for a variety of voices and shares the workload equitably.

With this information, the CSU DH-Ethnic Studies Consortium can develop:

- Site-specific and cross-CSU programs: DH Showcases, DH/Elit competitions, traveling/visiting faculty, traveling/visiting postdocs and graduate students; cross-campus research opportunities for students to work on DH projects; and

- Expansion of [Digital Humanities Research Institute](#) (SJSU & SDSU) for presentation at each campus by using local faculty and librarians to host a week-long workshop and mentoring programming.

Partnership with the Digital Ethnic Futures Lab @ Dartmouth University

Dr. Risam generously offered to support the DH@CSU Consortium under the auspices of a mutually agreed-upon memo of understanding. The following items include the status of those deliverables:

1. **BLOG POSTS:** Consortium has identified a blog post series that moves away from process and instead focuses on people as a more evocative way to introduce the Consortium and attract potential members. Juvenal Caporale has authored [the first post](#) (currently on the home page of the website, but not yet published) as a pre-convening post where he introduces himself, how he got connected with this group, and what he's hoping to learn from the convening. A co-authored [second blog post](#) by members of the Outreach and Internal Communications working group is available in draft form as a Google Doc but will be made available on the website. This post shares their personal connections/stories with Ethnic Studies and digital humanities – as a way to share personal stories of the folks involved and inform the public about the “happenings” of the DH@CSU Consortium.
2. **ROUNDTABLE:** A virtual roundtable towards the end of or upon completion of the funded project which will serve to publicize the consortial model we are developing. The Consortium will share how we created the consortial model, what that consists of, and how individual members were able to implement the infrastructure at their local institution (if at all). If possible, select Consortium members will present for 5 mins each and move into a discussion about building this type of collaborative infrastructure through Ethnic Studies on each of the engaged CSU campuses. – *The Consortium is open to this Roundtable opportunity and looks forward to working with Dr. Risam on an opportune meeting date and time to host the conversation.*
3. **Optional: ARTICLE:** Collectively and collaboratively, the Consortium and the Digital Ethnic Futures Lab @ Dartmouth will consider authoring an article about building this kind of public-private partnership to demonstrate the process and the model that is being developed. The Consortium is open to a non-traditional genre and venue as well for this writing. – *The Consortium is amenable to producing this article but is not quite ready to articulate its full vision because we are still finalizing those ideas. We are open to conversations about this as we move forward.*