

# Welcome speech

by Marie-Theres Federhofer, Vice Dean for Research at the Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education, UiT The Arctic University of Norway

I would like to welcome you to this conference about Digital Humanities at the University in Tromsø – The Arctic University of Norway. I especially want to welcome our colleagues and guests coming from outside Tromsø. Some of you have travelled far in order to be with us, and I am very pleased that you accepted our invitation and decided to join us. My name is Marie-Theres Federhofer, I am currently the pro-dean of research at the Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education. My colleagues from the University Library, Per Pippin Aspaas and Philipp Konzett, and I, we took the initiative to and planned this event.

Actually, I should not stand here right now. The idea was that our rector, Anne Husebekk, should open the conference and welcome you. Unfortunately, there is a meeting in the University Board right now which she has to lead. But she will come tomorrow and will give some delayed words of welcome. So, you make do with me, and I will use the next few minutes to tell you something about the background for this conference and our motivation. There are mainly two reasons:

Firstly, we want to present ongoing projects within Digital Humanities at UiT and make them more visible for a bigger public. Secondly, we want to discuss Digital Humanities in a broader context and want to put DH on the agenda of UiT. Therefore, we have invited DH-experts from other Norwegian institutions, namely University of Oslo, University of Bergen and Norwegian University in Science and Technology in Trondheim, National Library of Norway, and from abroad, namely Sweden, Finland, Germany and Italy.

Digital Humanities seems to be very in vogue, the expression sounds fancy and fashionable. What it basically means is the use of digital technology to enhance

and to further research and education within arts and humanities. Linguistics, history, literature, philosophy and music education are some of the academic disciplines whose researchers have developed and are still developing digital tools in order to improve research, to gain new insights and to ask new questions. In my opinion, digital technology can be a very useful instrument to enhance and to stimulate, to innovate research, but digital technology and basic research have to interlock. Today and tomorrow we will hear more concretely about some particular DH-projects both at UiT – examples are digital language teaching resources for minority languages, the Historical Population Register and an ongoing digital edition – and at other universities as The Wittgenstein Archives and Ibsen's Skrifter.

For a long time UiT has been a pioneer in promoting and realizing Open Science. Last week, we arranged the 12th Munin conference about Open Access and scholarly publishing. This year, our institution has adopted its own digitalisation strategy which aims at making open non-sensitive research data. Our conference on Digital Humanities today and tomorrow fits well into this context because Digital Humanities is also a way to support and realize our institution's vision of Open Science. UiT is partner of two European networks of research infrastructure within humanities and arts, CLARIN and DARIAH, and today we will learn more about these networks which also other Norwegian Institutions participate in. Even if we may postulate with a certain pride that UiT in a way is forward-thinking in terms of Open Access and Open Science, it is always beneficial to have a look at other institutions and other countries and to learn more from their experiences and practices. We are therefore very grateful that so many colleagues from other Norwegian and foreign institutions will share their experiences with us today and tomorrow.

Last not least: I have mentioned in the beginning that this symposium is the result of a collaboration between the University Library and my faculty. This is

only half of the truth. But even if I have probably made a first advance, the complete work with the conference was not done by me. Per Pippin Aspaas and Philipp Konzett have designed the programme, sent out invitations, thought about all the practical details and have managed to work it out. So, thanks a lot to you two.