

Title of Project:

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| (English) | Digital Archival Futures: Techno-Humanities Approaches to Cultural Heritage and Institutional Engagement |
| (Chinese) | 數位檔案的未來圖景：科技人文視域下的文化遺產與機構參與                                                                              |

Description:

Archives are not only places where records are stored; they are living sites where people make sense of the past, negotiate memory, and articulate cultural identity. In Hong Kong and across the wider region, digital technologies are reshaping how these archival materials are created, preserved, and encountered, which means scholars in the humanities can no longer remain at a distance from the tools and infrastructures that mediate access and interpretation. This conference grows directly out of the experience of organizing Hong Kong International Archives Week 2025 at SFU, which brought together more than twenty institutions and over seven hundred participants, revealing both the appetite for collaboration and the gaps in sustained research capacity. Building on that success, we now want to move beyond one-off celebratory events to a more sustained effort: using techno-humanities approaches to rethink archival practice, strengthening Hong Kong's role as a regional hub for digitally informed archival scholarship, and consolidating archival studies as an integral part of the humanities landscape.

Over two days, the conference will convene scholars, archivists, and cultural heritage practitioners from Hong Kong, the Asia-Pacific, and selected international partners to focus on three interrelated areas. First, we will explore how AI and computational methods can support archival discovery and interpretation while keeping human judgement, local knowledge, and cultural specificity at the centre. Second, we will examine what kinds of archival methods and governance models are most appropriate for the institutional diversity and linguistic complexity of Asian contexts. Third, we will ask how digital archives can be developed and managed in ways that are ethically robust and accountable to the communities whose histories they hold. Rather than emphasizing one-way presentations, the meeting is designed around working groups and facilitated discussions, supported by partners such as the InterPARES Initiative (University of British Columbia), the UK National Archives, and the University of Tokyo. These groups will identify gaps in current research, formulate concrete questions and project ideas, and begin drafting concept notes and funding proposals. In doing so, the conference aims to seed an enduring research network that enables Hong Kong's self-financing institutions to take an active, visible role in shaping Asia-Pacific models of digital archival governance, preservation, and community engagement.