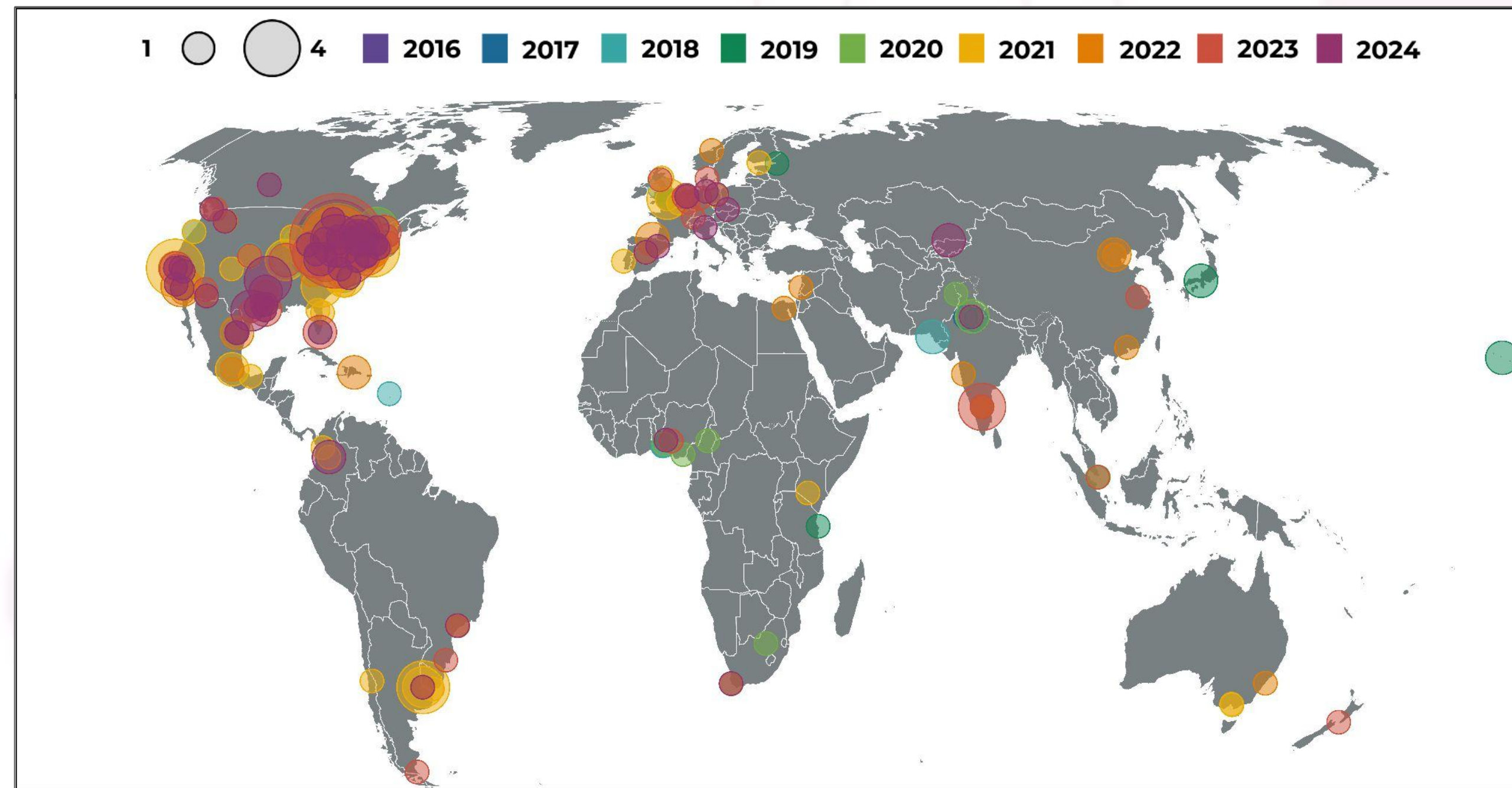# Reinvention as DH Praxis:
Reflecting on (Nearly) a Decade of the Global DH Symposium

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A map showing the location and number of presenters across all nine years of the Symposium

Values

Conferences are critical infrastructure that allow communities to create, facilitate, and curate knowledge. In organizing the Global DH Symposium, we embed social justice-oriented values, global engagement, and care work at every level while being conscious of our positionality in Western colonial institutions.

Each year, we reinvent the Symposium with those values in mind, looking for ways to better support digital humanities practitioners across the world. We navigate difficult conversations about how to enact these values while recognizing the labor involved in doing so.

Below, we reflect on three areas of values-driven reinvention that speak to the ways that we try to hold ourselves responsible to the community that we cultivated over the past nine years.

Victor Temprano speaking about the Native Land project in a 2019 keynote address

Reviews

Values
- Recognize the contexts within which submitters are operating
- Recognize the labor involved in reviewing
- Enable conversation across global scholarly contexts
- Reduce labor required to do double anonymous review

Process
- De-anonymized review process
- Adopted Oxford Abstracts
- Created transparent review criteria

Challenges
- Differing expectations across a global academic community
- Learning curve of a new system
- Aligning reviewer expertise with proposal content

Modalities

Values
- Reach a broad global audience
- Presenters can share their work regardless of ability to travel
- Environmental sustainability
- Accessibility in terms of language and of disability

Process
- Pivot to virtual modality in March 2020
- Continuation as both an in-person and virtual event
- Human-created captioning
- Simultaneous language interpretation

Challenges
- Working in multiple languages
- Value of in person connection vs opportunities virtual provides
- Scheduling across conflicting time zones

Afterlife

Values
- Allow for persistent evidence of the work
- Presentations are citable and available
- Conversation stretches beyond the event itself

Process
- Annual Proceedings in Knowledge Commons
- Special double issue with Reviews in DH
- Journal of Global Digital Humanities (Launching in 2025!)
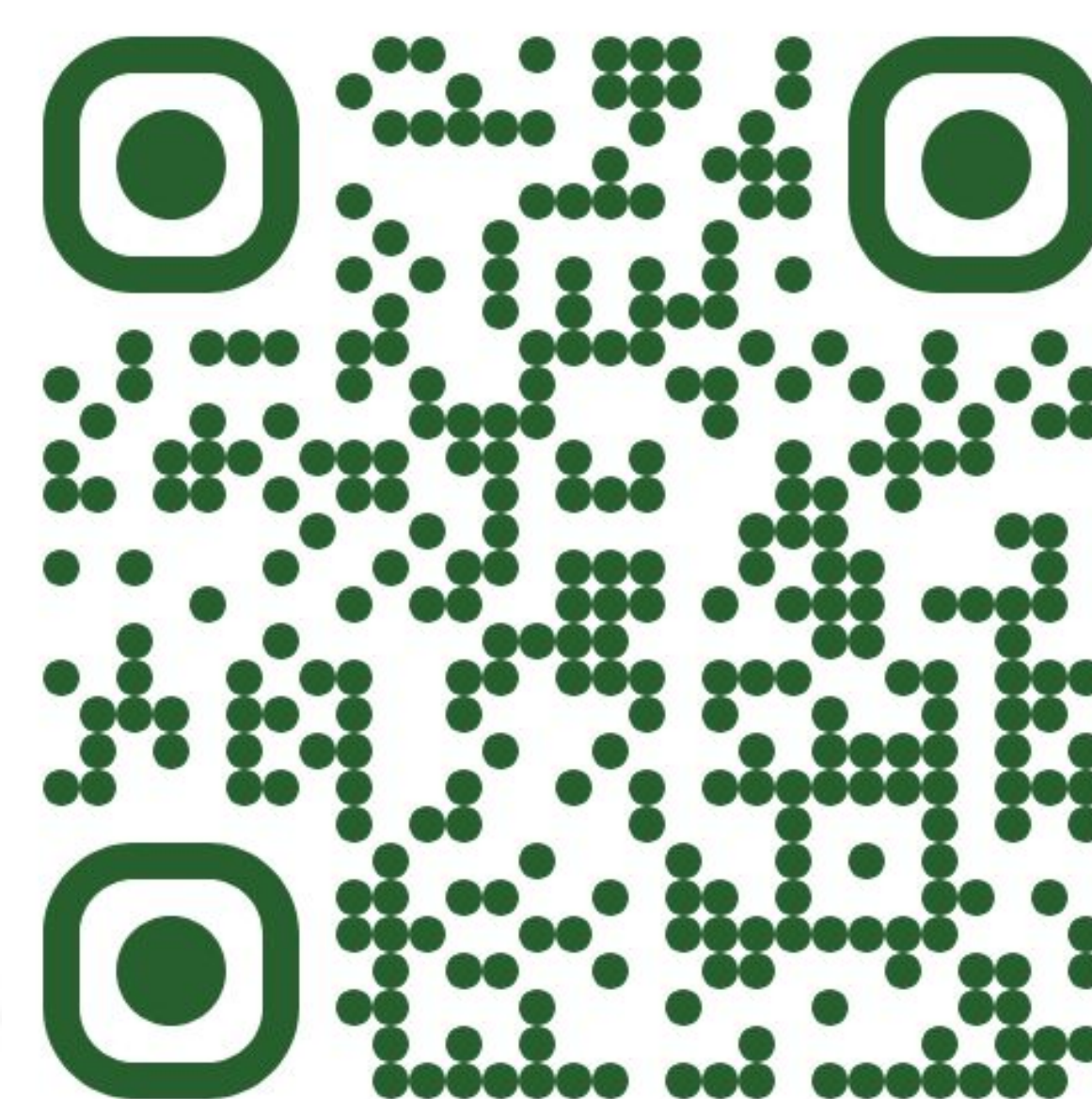
Challenges
- Increased labor
- Lightweight proceedings of digital artifacts only
- Creating a model for running a journal using Knowledge Commons
- Balancing reach against the cost of translation

Attendees at the 2019 Symposium in person at Michigan State University
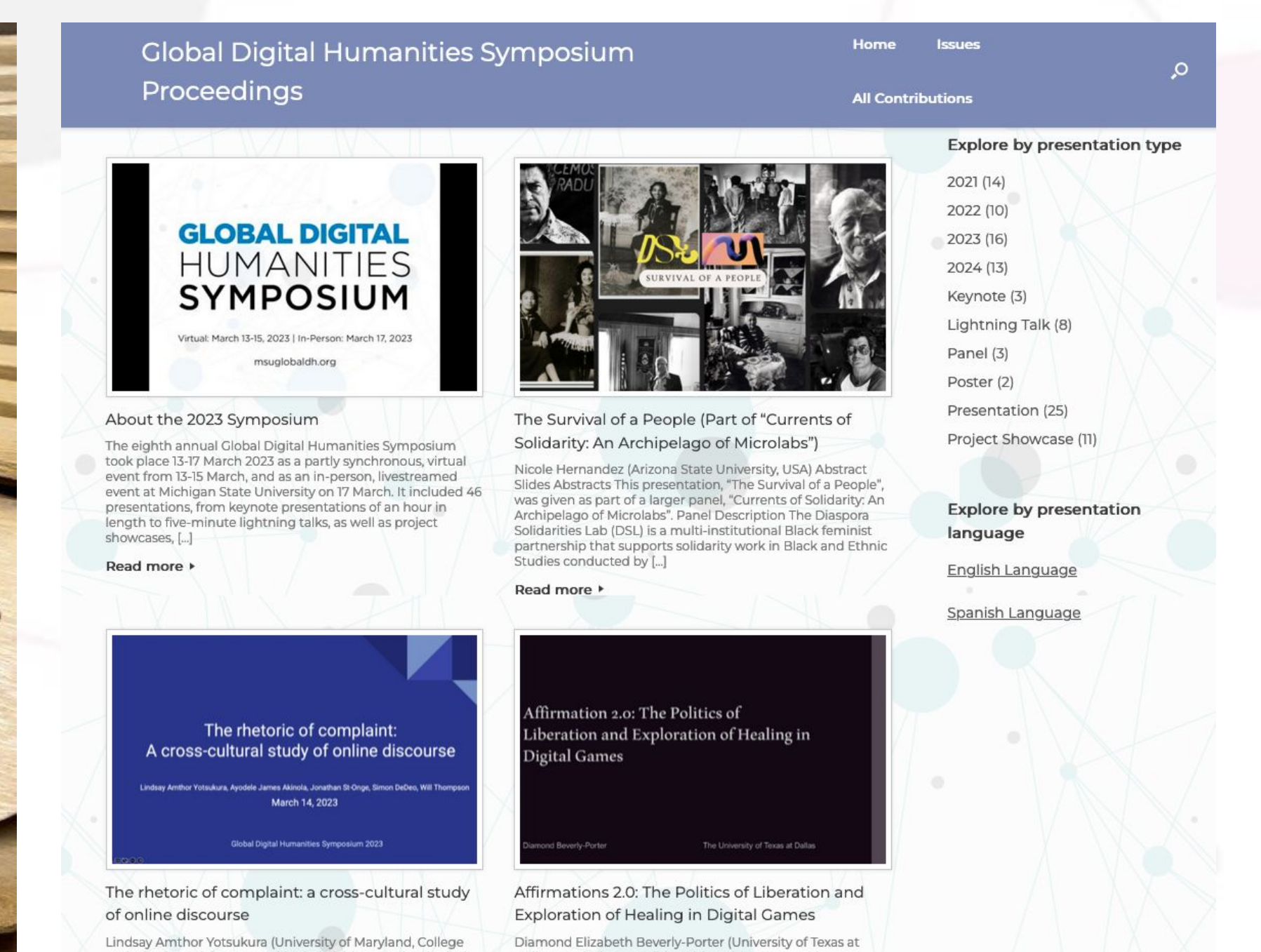

Pronoun stickers and swag at the registration desk of the 2019 Symposium

Read more about our thinking and find a copy of the poster

Spatulas purchased as swag for the 2020 Symposium, which was pivoted to a virtual format in under three weeks

Screenshot of the 2023 Proceedings on the Symposium proceedings website