The Art Research Center (ARC)

Creating a Digital Humanities-Based Global Hub to Research, Document, and Preserve Tangible and Intangible Culture and Art Resources

The Art Research Center (ARC) was established in 1998. Since then, the mission of the ARC has been to not only conduct historical and social research and analyses of both tangible and intangible cultural properties such as visual and performing arts and craftsmanship, but also to record, organize, preserve, and disseminate the research outcomes. As a research institute at a comprehensive university in Kyoto, the ARC has, from the outset, been conducting joint and project-based research with both domestic and international research institutions by integrating humanities and cutting-edge information science and gathering the wisdom of researchers in different fields.

Since being selected by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) for the 21st Century COE (Center for Excellence) Program "Kyoto Art Entertainment Innovation Research" in the 2000s, the ARC has promoted research in Japanese culture by linking the traditional humanities and information science and has become a representative hub for digital humanities (DH) in Japan, while also nurturing young researchers.

Furthermore, the ARC has been working to enhance and effectively utilize the vast amount of digitized data on both tangible and intangible Japanese cultural resources accumulated through our research and educational activities. The Center also aims to improve its digital techniques as well as networks with relevant institutions and organizations in Japan and abroad.

In 2019, the ARC assumed its role as the International Joint Digital Archiving Center for Japanese Art and Culture (ARC-iJAC) upon being accredited by the MEXT as an International Joint Usage / Research Center, aiming to establish a world-class research hub for digital humanities-based research.

Main Academic Exchange and Research Cooperation Institutions
Japan: Katayama Noh and Kyomai Preservation Foundation; Tsubouchi Memorial Theatre Museum, Waseda University; Kunitachi College of Music Library; International Research Center for Japanese Studies (Nichibunken); National Institute of Japanese Literature (NIJL)
Overseas: The Metropolitan Museum of Art; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; The Art Institute of Chicago; Columbia University; School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London; Victoria and Albert Museum; The British Museum; Sainsbury Institute for the Study of Japanese Arts and Cultures (SIS-JAC); University of California, Berkeley; National Research and Innovation Agency (BRIN), Indonesia

Research Structure for Integrating the Humanities and Sciences

Historical Geographic Information Research
- Kyoto historical GIS, Kyoto VR/AR
- Gion Festival Digital Museum
- GIS conversion of digital-archived photos
- Georeferencing

Digital Archiving Technology Research
- Digital sound reconstruction of traditional instruments and support for digital performances
- VR technology development and application: Gion Festival, Borobudur Temple Compounds, and psychology
- Ukiyo-e image matching using deep-learning models
- Multilingual cross-search

International Research on Japanese Culture
- Digital archiving of 2D/3D cultural resources and research on their international contribution and sustainability
- Building intellectual circles for sharing cultural information
- Development of a Transcription Support and mentoring system for *kuzushiji* (cursive script)

Kyoto Culture Research
- Kyoto traditional performing arts research
- Kyoto (production-related) film culture archive
- Kyoto street culture archive
- Research related to the *Shuten-doji* picture scrolls
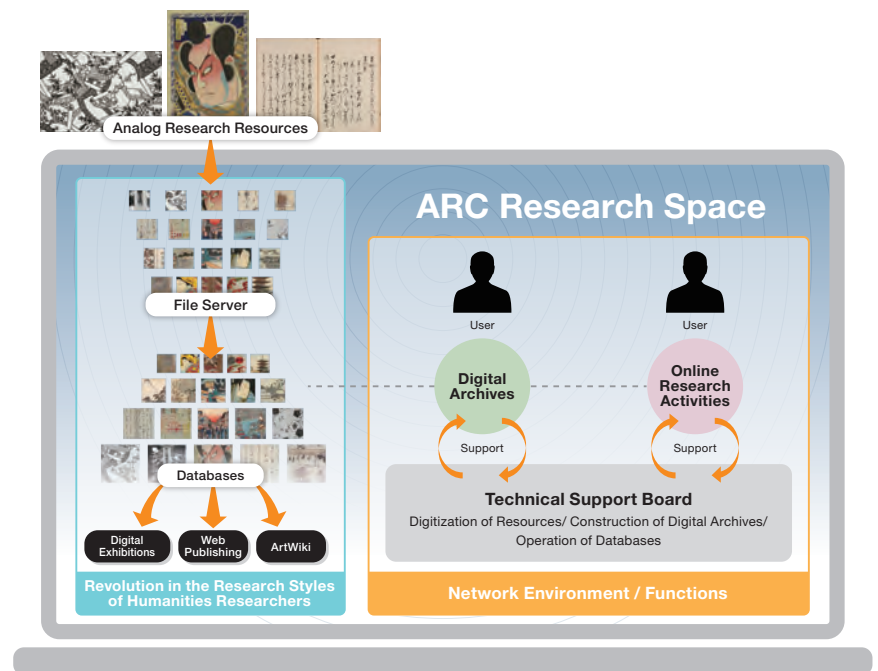
Web-based Research Technology
- Game Studies and research on play
- Media art research
- Research in utilizing the metaverse
- Development of next-generation regional archiving methods
- Research on "Gen Z" web contents

MEXT International Joint Usage / Research Center:
International Joint Digital Archiving Center for Japanese Art and Culture (ARC-iJAC)

- The ARC is one of seven International Joint Usage/ Research Centers nationwide and the only one accredited as such at a private university.

- The ARC provides an online research environment, the "ARC Research Space," to support efficient research based on digital archives.

- Besides access to the Center's facilities and equipment, the ARC-iJAC provides a Technical Support Board for researchers so that even those new to digital archiving can work in the digital research environment with ease.

1) "Cultural Resource Databases" for highly specialized research fields
2) "Reference Databases" that can be constructed for each project
3) "Virtual Institute / Digital Museum" to easily disseminate research achievements of various research groups
4) "ArtWiki" that can be constructed by each research group
5) "ARC Cloud" with functions comparable to commercial cloud computing

Analog Research Resources

File Server

Databases

Digital Exhibitions | Web Publishing | ArtWiki

Revolution in the Research Styles of Humanities Researchers

ARC Research Space

User | User

Digital Archives | Online Research Activities

Support | Support

Technical Support Board
Digitization of Resources/ Construction of Digital Archives/ Operation of Databases

Network Environment / Functions

Restoration work

Digital archiving

Digital-archived Fune-hoko float of the Gion Festival

Ukiyo-e Portal Database