Digital Preservation Policy Worksheet[1]

To the best of your ability, answer the following questions to inform your digital preservation policy. If you don't know or don't have an answer, leave it blank until you do. This worksheet should document what you are doing NOW and what you hope to do in the future. It's aspirational and will evolve over time, alongside your collections and preservation strategies.

Section One – Goals/Mission

Why is digital preservation part of your institution?
Compose a general statement about the importance of digital preservation to the overall goals of your department or organization. This can be tied into your mission and collection development statements.

1. Why is there a need for preservation of digital files at your institution?
2. What responsibilities are you upholding by making sure files are digitally preserved?
3. How does digital preservation tie in with your department or institution mission statement?

The following statement is an example: *"The purpose of digital preservation at our institution is to provide long term storage, care and access to digital content across time and changing technologies. Our aim of responsible preservation ties into our departmental mission of preserving and sharing our community's history."*

Section Two – Materials

What digital materials will you preserve long-term?
Define the scope of your digital preservation policy. Discuss the types of materials that will be included in your digital preservation activities. Your Collection Development policy may be helpful in this section. Add any exclusions - items that will NOT be preserved - to this section.

1. What digital materials will be a part of your digital preservation plan? Include a list of file formats as well as collection decisions based on intellectual organization.
2. How do you determine what digital files are preserved for the long term?
3. What digital materials will NOT be a part of your digital preservation plan? Include a list of file formats as well as collection decisions based on intellectual organization.
4. In what ways are digital files created or accepted? *For example: through digitization of analog content, through donations of digital files, created by your department, etc.*

Section Three – Roles/Human Resources

Who will be responsible for long-term digital preservation in your institution?
Define who will be involved in digital preservation and at which stage(s) in the process. In this section, write roles and job titles, rather than naming individual people.

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[1] Adapted from the Sustainable Heritage Network's *Developing a Digital Preservation Policy*: http://sustainableheritagenetwork.org/digital-heritage/developing-digital-preservation-policy

1. Who will be in charge of digital preservation planning? *For example: archivist, media specialist, program manager, etc.*
2. Are multiple departments and people involved in digital preservation planning? Will there be an advisory committee?
3. Who will be involved in technology support for digital preservation activities?
4. Who will be involved with day-to-day operations that involve digital preservation?
5. Is anyone else involved in digital preservation? *For example: donors, community members, library patrons, project champions, etc.*

Section Four – Best Practices & Standards

What standards and specifications do you follow for creating, acquiring, and describing digital content?

Define the standards you are following for digitization, the file types and metadata schemas you are using, etc. This information is important to keep updated as changes occur in your workflows or when you start creating new types of digital content.

1. What quality standards do you follow for creating digital files (audio, video, images, text, etc.)?
2. What file types and content encodings for AV materials do you use for digital files? *For example: Images - TIFF for preservation masters and JPEG for access copies; Audio - WAV (pcm [96kHz, 24 bit]) for preservation masters and MP3 for access copies; Video - MOV (h.264)*
3. How will you instruct your donors about file types and access and preservation permissions for digital donations?
4. What metadata standard(s) do you use? *For example: Dublin Core, METS.*
5. How do you document preservation metadata and where is it stored? *For example: spreadsheets, entering in a database, embedding in files.*
6. How often will your standards and specifications be reviewed and updated?

Section Five – Storage & Backups

How do you ensure long-term storage of digital materials at your institution?

**Include information from the "Digital Storage: The 3-2-1 Rule" worksheet here.

1. What storage media do you use? Explain types of media and their locations. *For example: RAID hard drive held by a partner organization, Network Attached Storage at the library, Hosted storage through a trusted vendor, etc.*
2. Why do you use these storage media?
3. Who is responsible for setup and maintenance of the storage media?
4. What is the schedule for when new content is added to storage?
5. When do you need to replace storage media?

Section Six – File Fixity/Integrity

How do you ensure the continued integrity of digital materials at your institution?

Define the specific objectives and strategies in your institution related to the integrity of digital files. This

section should address keeping files unchanged and stable over time through management, security, and technology.

1. How do you establish and monitor the fixity of digital files? Describe the process and tools used. *For example: using the open source program Fixity to create checksums after scanning and to verify checksums once per month.*
2. What staff should have access to files and what permissions should they have to edit, move, and delete files?
3. How are security measures enforced through policies and actions? *For example: password protected storage, giving access to only certain personnel, training for all staff with access privileges, etc.*
4. What technology do you use to maintain the integrity of files? What virus scan software do you use and when do you run virus scans? Do you use write blockers when accessioning new digital collections?

Section Seven – Access
How do you ensure continued access to digital materials at your institution?
Define the specific objectives and strategies related to managing access to digital files INTERNALLY among staff in your institution. This section should address metadata, file formats, and tiered versions of files.

1. How do you describe and document information about digital collections? ***Refer to your Digital Collections Inventory here.*
2. How are folders structured for organizing digital files? What is the convention used for naming digital files?
3. How and when do you migrate or convert proprietary or non-standard file formats into known open formats?
4. Do you have different versions of your files? Specify what versions of files exist, and then which of those versions will be backed up in your preservation plan. *For example: a version for long term preservation ("master files"), and a version for uploading to the internet ("access copies").*
5. What legacy media types are there in the collection? *For example: floppy discs, Zip discs, CDs, DVDs*
6. What process will you use for moving content off of legacy media and into your storage system?

Section Eight – Disaster Recovery
How does digital preservation fit into your overall disaster plan or emergency preparedness plan?
Define the steps that should happen during and in response to natural and human-made disasters that affect digital storage. This might be a section in your digital preservation policy, or you might reference a separate disaster plan used by your institution.

1. What are all the types of natural disasters, human error, or media failure that could occur?

2. What precautions do you take to make sure digital files are protected and prepared for disasters?
3. Do you have a system of notification in place? If so, where is it located? If not, who will be included in the notification tree and who will be responsible for its maintenance?
4. How will you check if data is lost after a disaster event?
5. If data is lost, how will you recover from backups? What is the procedure for verifying fixity after recovery?

Section Nine – Education

How will you educate your organization and keep updated on best practices in the digital preservation field?
Define how you will educate yourself and staff about digital preservation processes, software, and up-to-date practices. Think about courses, conferences, and other professional development activities.

1. How will you educate others in your institution about the importance of digital preservation?
2. How will you and your staff keep up with developments in digital preservation technology and research in the field? *Don't forget to reach out to the CCDC community and the digistew email with questions or suggestions.*
3. Will you or your staff seek specific training in digital preservation?
4. Is there any funding for travel to attend conferences or workshops about digital preservation?

Section Ten – Policy Review & Update

How and when will you review and update your digital preservation policy?
Describe what you will do to keep your policy relevant to your institution's needs and changing technology. Remember to document roles and positions, not specific people, in your organization.

1. When will your policy be reviewed next?
2. Who will do the review?
3. Who is involved in the approval process for updating a policy?

Section Eleven – Resources

What other sources can you supply for your audience to learn about digital preservation?
Include further resources for understanding digital preservation and its importance. These resources can be helpful if your digital preservation policy is for an audience outside your department or even for internal staff who are unfamiliar with digital preservation. Include a brief glossary to help people understand your policy.

1. What resources (online or print) would be helpful to your audience in learning about digital preservation?
2. What terms might your audience need explained?
   ** Include or adapt CCDC's digital preservation and curation glossary here.