Wisconsin Historical Society
Library, Archives, and Museum Collections Division
Digital Preservation Policy

1   Purpose

The Digital Preservation Policy formalizes the Wisconsin Historical Society's (WHS) commitment to ensuring the long-term preservation of all the permanent digital collections in the custody of the Library, Archives, and Museum Collections (LAMC) Division. This policy outlines WHS's approach to preserving and accessing electronic records and other digital collections and the associated information used to effectively manage these assets.

This policy governs the establishment and operation of the Digital Preservation Program (hereafter the program). The program will ensure the accessibility, usability, and authenticity of all the permanent digital collections of the LAMC Division of WHS. The mission of the program is to ensure that the citizens of Wisconsin, and other users of WHS collections, have access to authentic and reliable electronic records and information documenting state and local governments, and the other digital collections that have been acquired and preserved by the WHS.

2   Audience

The intended audience for this policy includes staff of WHS, members of the Public Records Board (PRB), government employees from both state agencies and local governments, and donors of private papers and collections whose records WHS preserves in digital formats and collections.

3   Policy Updates

This policy may be revised and updated at any time in order to reflect technological, infrastructural, and operational developments in the program. The policy is intended to be updated at least biennially.

4   Mandate

According to Wis. Stat. § 44.02(1), WHS "shall serve as trustee of the state in the preservation and care of all records, both printed and written, and all articles and other materials of historic interest and significance placed in its custody, and interest itself constructively as the agent of the state in the preservation and care of all similar materials wherever they may be."

Other key statutes and administrative rules that govern the activities of WHS:

- Wis. Stat. § 16.61: Outlines the requirements for effective management and safeguarding of public records.
- Wis. Stat. § 19.35: Outlines the requirements for providing access to public records.
- Wis. Stat. § 19.62-19.80: Outlines requirements for managing Personally Identifiable Information (PII).

- [Wis. Stat. § 137.20](): Outlines the requirements for retaining electronic public records, including digital surrogates.
- [Administrative Rule 12](): Outlines the standards and requirements for the management of records maintained exclusively in electronic format. The rule specifically requires that state and local governments maintain their electronic records in a secure environment for the duration of the period the electronic records must be retained.

5   Objectives

The program is intended to preserve, maintain, and make accessible electronic state and local government records as well as digital collections from private donors, including those originating in digital format ("born-digital") and those transformed to a digital format ("digitized").

The primary objectives of the program are to:

- Preserve electronic state and local government records and digital collections from private donors at WHS.
- Make strategic decisions, based on long-term resources, system sustainability, and identified efficiencies, to establish processes and technologies that support both the Trusted Digital Repository standard (ISO 16363:2012) and the Open Archival Information System (OAIS) reference model (ISO 14721:2012).
- Ensure access to digital collections within state and federal laws, including copyright and other intellectual property considerations.

6   Scope

The program is responsible for identifying, securing, and providing the means to preserve and ensure ongoing access to electronic records of permanent value. The following types of records shall be included under this program:

7   Public records

The program governs the management of electronic public records that have been scheduled for transfer to the State Archives pursuant to the authorization of the PRB, [State Supreme Court Rules (SCR) Chapter 72](), and state statutes and local ordinances. This includes born-digital records and digitized records, in instances where the digitized record has replaced the physical original as the official record.

7.1   Private records

The program governs the management of private records received in electronic format that have been acquired under the *Collection Development Policy for Wisconsin Manuscripts* and for which any related intellectual property and restriction questions have been resolved.

7.2   Publications

The program governs the management of those electronic publications which are owned by WHS and which have been selected for inclusion in the program. The decision to include such electronic publications must also take into account the electronic publication collecting scope of other Wisconsin organizations, including the Wisconsin Digital Archives and the University of Wisconsin-Madison Libraries.

8   Operating Principles

The program's objectives are best achieved through the development of practices that comply with an adequate, coherent, and widely understood framework for reliable, accountable, and manageable digital collections. The program is based on the following principles:

- Ongoing, sustained support and engagement from WHS management, information technology professionals, and the content creators.
- Development of a digital repository using the best technology available.
- Implementation of a range of community-based standards, best practices, and national and/or international standards that inform preservation procedures and technology as well as archival requirements such as provenance, chain of custody, intellectual property rights, and authenticity.
- To the best of the program's capability, compliance with the Trusted Digital Repository standard (ISO 16363) and the Open Archival Information System (OAIS) reference model (ISO 14721).
- Development of consistent documented guidelines and procedures for each stage of the curation lifecycle (i.e., creation, selection, acquisition, ingest, preservation action, storage, identification/cataloging, access and use, transform, dispose)[1]
- Digital preservation staffing levels will be determined by the size, format, and preservation needs of the digital collections.
- Review of policies and procedures on a regular basis, taking into account changes in the organizational, legal, and technical environment of WHS and the government statewide.

9   Roles and Responsibilities

9.1   WHS Library, Archives, and Museum Collections (LAMC) Division

The program is under the direction of the Administrator of the LAMC Division.

The LAMC Division is responsible for:

- Developing and providing administrative and technical oversight for the program and ensuring its viability through digital preservation planning and monitoring.
- Managing access to the information contained within the digital repository, ensuring that

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[1] Lifecycle stages from Digital Curation Centre. "DCC Curation Lifecycle Model." Retrieved 8 February 2018 from http://www.dcc.ac.uk/resources/curation-lifecycle-model

statutory mandates or donor restrictions are enforced.

- Creating and staffing positions and budgeting adequately to support the program.
- Developing transfer protocols to receive electronic records from electronic records producers and contributors.
- Providing best practices and guidelines for the management of electronic records to producers and contributors.

9.2   Public Records Board (PRB)

The PRB is responsible for:

- Approving schedules for the retention and disposition of state and local government public records.
- Providing guidelines for the legal and technical responsibilities of creating entities for the management and preservation of electronic records.
- Pursuing policies to reduce the number of retention schedules calling for permanent retention at the agency level, thereby minimizing the need for agencies to create and manage their own digital repositories.

9.3   Department of Administration (DOA)

DOA is responsible for:

- Setting standards and practices for state agency information technology, enterprise content management (ERM), and enterprise content management (ECM) operations.
- Managing the selection and acquisition of ERM/ECM software and systems for enterprise-wide operations.

9.4   UW-Madison Division of Information Technology (DoIT)

UW-Madison DoIT is responsible for:

- Hosting required servers and equipment in a secure data center facility and providing management and monitoring services for all WHS equipment.
- Providing highly scalable enterprise class storage, monitoring, support, and security for digital collections.

9.5   WHS Information Technology (WHS IT)

WHS IT is responsible for:

- Facilitating digital collections storage and management services provided by UW-Madison DoIT.
- Managing rules and protocols for data transfer and WHS staff access.
- Collaborating with the LAMC Division to facilitate and manage digital preservation projects requiring technical expertise.

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- Providing procurement and desktop support services for the hardware and software needs of the program.

9.6 Electronic records producers and contributors

Electronic records producers and contributors, including staff members from state agencies and local governments and donors of private records, are responsible for:

- Complying with established submission requirements.
- Collaborating with WHS staff to ensure successful transfer of materials.

10 Financial Sustainability

The program requires the dedicated budget authority, similar to other long-term programmatic commitments. This support will ensure the program is able to meet the digital preservation mandates outlined by statute and administrative rules.

11 Access and use criteria

Only authorized staff will have direct access to the digital repository developed by the program, and this access will be controlled by the required policies. Program staff will work to ensure the authenticity, readability, and reliability of digital collections at all times. Public access to digital collections will be defined by policies and procedures based on risk, criticality, and stewardship.

12 Definitions

Born-digital: Information created in electronic format.

Digital collections: Group of digital assets assembled and maintained by a repository.

Digital preservation: The managed activities necessary for ensuring both the long-term maintenance of a byte stream and continued accessibility of its contents.[2]

Digital surrogate: A digitized record that serves as a substitute for the original analog record.

Digitization: The process of transforming analog material into digital (electronic) form. Also referred to as scanning.

Electronic records: Information created, generated, sent, communicated, or stored in electrical, digital, magnetic, optical, electromagnetic, or similar technological form (Administrative Rule 12).

Repository: An organization that intends to maintain assets for access and use.

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[2] RLG-OCLC Working Group on Digital Archive Attributes. "Trusted Digital Repositories: Attributes and Responsibilities." Mountain View, CA: RLG, 2001. Retrieved 8 February 2018 from https://www.oclc.org/content/dam/research/activities/trustedrep/repositories.pdf

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