Memorial University Libraries
Digital Preservation Policy

Digital Preservation Policy Committee:
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Purpose

This document formalizes the digital preservation activities currently being undertaken by Memorial University Libraries. It adheres to the Memorial University Library System strategic goal “[t]o create and implement a digital preservation and disaster recovery plan for digital content and metadata.” Moving forward, every effort will be made to follow the three major university-wide frameworks of Memorial University, and to realize Memorial University’s vision to “fulfill its special obligation to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador” by preserving materials and maintaining a reliable digital archive for the people of this province and the Memorial University community.

Objectives

- Identify materials that are appropriate for digital preservation at MUN Libraries
- Preserve items and all corresponding metadata as much and as fully as possible for both born-digital and digitized materials, following appropriate standards
- Develop sustainable strategies for long-term preservation of digital assets
- Comply with community standards for digital preservation
- Wherever possible, contribute to community standards for digital preservation
- Seek organizational commitment and financial commitment
- Support professional development opportunities for digital preservation staff

Scope

The current focus of the MUN Libraries’ digital preservation program is to preserve materials under its own custody. Nevertheless, not all of MUN Libraries’ acquired content will necessarily be preserved. Born-digital and digitized materials will be given equal consideration for preservation, as the content, provenance, and stewardship of the materials are the most important factors for preservation decisions. Anything outside this scope will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

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1 American Library Association (ALA) definition of digital preservation from the [ALA Policy Manual](https://www.ala.org/ala/office/standards/lpmanual/DigitalPreservation2012.pdf): “Digital preservation combines policies, strategies and actions to ensure the accurate rendering of authenticated content over time, regardless of the challenges of media failure and technological change. Digital preservation applies to both born digital and reformatted content.”
2 [Memorial University Libraries Strategic Plan April 2015 - March 2017](https://www.mun.ca/library/aboutus/strategicplan/).
3 The [Three Frameworks](https://www.mun.ca/library/aboutus/strategicplan/threeframeworks.html) are Teaching and Learning, Research Strategy, and Public Engagement.
4 [Vision, Mission and Values of Memorial University](https://www.mun.ca/about-us/vision-mission-values).
5 For example, those recommended by the National Digital Stewardship Alliance: [NDSA Levels of Preservation](https://www.nadacan.org/frameworks/levels).
Operating Principles

- Every effort will be made to comply with the most recent version of the Open Archival Information System (OAIS) reference model\(^6\), or any subsequent standard that is widely accepted by the digital preservation community
- Becoming a Trusted Digital Repository\(^7\) is an aspirational and long-term goal of this archive, and ought to operate with that goal in mind
- Align practices with the COPPUL statement on open software, open standards, and digital preservation\(^8\)
- If no accepted standard exists, MUN Libraries will develop and operate local best practices
- Maintain currency of software and hardware
- Create appropriate backups and disaster plans
- Capture and maintain technical, administrative, descriptive, and preservation metadata
- Actively monitor threats to the integrity of the digital materials
- Adhere to intellectual property and copyright laws
- Allocate resources for sustainable digital preservation

Roles and Responsibilities

MUN Libraries’ digital preservation program is a cross-divisional endeavour and will require ongoing collaboration from virtually all units. The primary administrative responsibilities for the program are currently held by the Digital Archives Initiative. Stakeholders include collection producers, consumers, and stewards.

Review and Evaluation

Reviews will be conducted by the Digital Preservation Policy Committee, or a similar committee. The policy will be reviewed at minimum on a yearly basis, and may be dependent upon changes to technology, metadata standards, digital preservation standards, staffing, financial resources, or any other impactful circumstance.

Selection and Acquisition

Priorities and criteria for selecting and acquiring content will be based on MUN Libraries’ collection development policies. If such policies do not exist, every effort ought to be made to construct and formalize such policies.

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\(^6\) Reference Model for an Open Archival Information System (OAIS)
\(^7\) Trustworthy Repositories Audit and Certification is administered by the Center for Research Libraries.
\(^8\) COPPUL statement on open software, open standards, and digital preservation
Access/Use

- Access to the materials with the most up-to-date technology available that is supported by technical staff with relevant expertise
- Comply with any legal restrictions placed on materials
- Dependent upon access allowances and restrictions, MUN Libraries will strive to have all materials openly available with access copies
- Make every effort to make materials accessible to all users, especially our designated community of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians

Cooperation/Collaboration

MUN Libraries are open to collaboration with other internal and external archival organizations, so long as they are also committed to working together to adhere to technological standards and share expertise with the goal of acquiring Trusted Digital Repository certification.

Challenges

- Technological changes will certainly be a perennial challenge for digital preservation
- Metadata standards will continue to evolve as time goes on
- Having professional staff with up-to-date knowledge of digital preservation standards and practices
- The intricacies of intellectual property may prohibit access to certain materials
- Consistent financial support for sustaining an active digital preservation program may prove difficult

Works Consulted

ALA Policy Manual

Brigham Young University Library Digital Preservation Policies and Procedures

COPPUL Statement on Open Software, Open Standards, and Digital Preservation

Cornell University Library Digital Preservation Policy Framework

ICPSR Digital Preservation Policy Framework

IDEALS Digital Preservation Policy

McMaster University Library Digital Preservation Implementation Plan

Memorial University Libraries Strategic Plan April 2015 - March 2017
Memorial University Three Frameworks

NDSA Levels of Preservation

Odum Digital Preservation Policy Framework

The Ohio State University Digital Preservation Policy Framework

Oregon State University Libraries & Press Digital Preservation Policy

PURR Digital Preservation Policy

Reference Model for an Open Archival Information System (OAIS)

Trustworthy Repositories Audit and Certification

UMass Amherst Libraries Digital Preservation Policy

UNT Libraries’ Digital Preservation Policy Framework

University of Georgia Libraries Digital Preservation Policy

University of Maryland Libraries: Digital Preservation Policy

University of Minnesota Libraries Digital Preservation Framework

University of South Carolina Libraries’ Digital Preservation Policy Framework

University of Toronto Libraries’ Digital Preservation Policy

University of Utah Digital Preservation Policy

Woodson Research Center Digital Preservation Policy

Yale University Library’s Digital Preservation Policy Framework

York University Digital Preservation Policy

Acknowledgement

Thank you to Nancy McGovern for giving us permission to use the same document structure as she used with Cornell University Libraries for their digital preservation policy.