

# National and International Digital Preservation Initiatives

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### Abstract

In accordance with the theme of iPres2008, this panel session will consider how 'joined up' (or otherwise) various national digital preservation initiatives are, and whether there is scope to increase levels of co-ordination and collaboration across international boundaries. The panel members will give overviews of some of the activities being undertaken in their respective countries, prefacing a more general discussion involving panel and audience to address issues arising and to identify opportunities and challenges.

### Introduction

This panel session is an opportunity to hear descriptions of digital preservation activities relevant to four different countries, and then to discuss those activities in the wider international context. The need for Digital Preservation challenges to be tackled collectively - perhaps even globally - is frequently acknowledged and the iPres conference is a great opportunity to tackle these challenges in a joined-up way. This year's conference theme obviously lends particular relevance to this approach.

Participants in a session such as this could potentially have been chosen from a wide variety of organisations operating in a number of different countries and it should be understood that the chosen panel is meant to represent one example configuration of a group capable of discussing national and international initiatives. Other voices representing other countries and activities beyond the scope of those represented by the panel will of course be critical in validating the discussion, and delegates are invited and encouraged to voice ideas and opinions during the discussion part of the session.

### Session Objectives

The scope of this session is potentially enormous and as such, it is acknowledged that it is unlikely to provide anything other than a jumping off point for further discussion. There are, however, multiple imperatives acting upon institutions, governments, funding bodies, etc. to ensure that they are as aware as possible of the range of digital preservation initiatives that are being undertaken around the world. Besides from the obvious benefit of potentially avoiding duplication in terms of effort and resources, there is also a need to ensure that the solutions

and strategies that are developed to tackle problems related to Digital Preservation are the most sustainable, the most widely validated, and of most relevance to a world whose social, cultural and scientific record is increasingly being recorded only in digital form, using methods that are ubiquitous and reliant on content that is globally distributed.

By starting with four brief presentations that describe activities at the national level in four different countries, it is anticipated that indications of strategic overlap will begin to emerge, which may then suggest areas where an increased focus on joint international working may be appropriate.

### Contributors

#### Neil Grindley – The Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) UK

The JISC is an organization that supports the innovative use of information and communications technology to support teaching and research in UK Higher and Further Education. It achieves this by: careful and selective funding of relevant programmes of work that are firstly endorsed and then overseen by representatives of the community that it serves; and by the formation of strategic partnerships and collaborations with a wide range of organisations both within and beyond the UK. The Digital Preservation and Records Management Programme is the current iteration of a long-running commitment on the part of the JISC to support institutions in keeping digital materials viable and accessible during their entire life-cycle, and incorporates a number of projects, studies and collaborative initiatives that together form the substance of the programme and deliver its benefit to the community.

A brief overview will be given of the more significant pieces of work that are ongoing and indications will be given for emerging funding priorities. This will be considered in the context of other work that is being undertaken in the UK, not only by other programmes supported by JISC, but also by a number of other major agencies and organisations who are interested and involved in Digital Preservation.

### **Martha Anderson – Library of Congress (USA) – National Digital Information Infrastructure and Preservation Programme (NDIIP)**

Martha Anderson will introduce the Library of Congress Programme that has established a network of partners dedicated to collecting and preserving important born-digital information. This national network currently has more than 100 participating entities and has worked on: developing roles and functions for the stewardship of at-risk content; building communities of practice; developing shared services; and building capacity for digital preservation work. The stakeholders in this network represent public and private sector organisations including government agencies, commercial content producers, libraries, archives and technology entities

### **Steve Knight - The National Library of New Zealand**

The National Library of New Zealand (Te Puna Mātauranga o Aotearoa) Act 2003 requires the National Library to collect, preserve, protect and make accessible digital collections, along with traditional paper collections, in ways that ensure current and future access to New Zealand's documentary heritage.

The National Digital Heritage Archive (NDHA) Programme was established in July 2004. Due to be completed in 2009, the NDHA is being developed and implemented in partnership with Ex Libris Group and Sun Microsystems as a commercially viable solution addressing the ingest, workflow, provenance, integrity/authenticity etc issues of institutional digital preservation.

This presentation will outline the National Library's work on digital preservation, how the NDHA fits into that work, what is expected to be delivered through the NDHA, how the organisation is preparing to integrate the new systems, and some comment on the issues going forwards.

### **Natascha Schumann – The German National Library**

The German National Library is one of seven project partners participating in Nestor: The German Network of Expertise in Digital Long-Term Preservation. Natascha Schumann will give an overview of the benefits and the problems of cooperation among diverse communities. She will consider which synergies can be leveraged and which differences have to be taken into account. Issues such as different legal mechanisms for undertaking preservation and different terminologies across communities will be considered. Acknowledgement will also be made of the variances in priorities across disciplines for different approaches to preservation, e.g. the need for 'raw data' curation procedures within the scientific community.

### **The Panel Discussion**

For the concluding discussion, two further panelists will be invited to join the above participants.

### **Horst Forster - Director, Directorate General for Information and Media - European Commission**

Horst Forster will be giving the keynote address at the beginning of the second day of the conference and will be able to speak about initiatives supported by the commission and its potential role in supporting future international collaborations.

### **Frances Boyle – Director of the Digital Preservation Coalition (DPC)**

The Digital Preservation Coalition (DPC) was established in 2001 to foster joint action to address the urgent challenges of securing the preservation of digital resources in the UK and to work with others internationally to secure the global digital memory and knowledge base. The member organisations that constitute the coalition are cross-sectoral in nature and include national libraries and archives, universities, societies and governmental organisations.