

Canadian National Heritage Digitization Strategy Steering Committee

Minutes

Wednesday, February 1, 2017, 1:00–5:00 p.m. Eastern Time

Chair: Sandra Singh

Present

Larry P. Alford, University of Toronto Libraries
Clare Appavoo, Canadian Research Knowledge Network
Guy Berthiaume, Library and Archives Canada
John Degen (The Writers' Union of Canada, for Heather Menzies)
Paul Durand, Canadian Museum of History
Geoffrey Harder, University of Alberta
Andrea Mills, Internet Archive
Michael Moosberger, Dalhousie University
Kathleen O'Connell, National Research Council Canada
Pam Ryan, Toronto Public Library
Sandra Singh, Vancouver Public Library
Carole Urbain, Association pour l'avancement des sciences et des techniques de documentation (ASTED)
Martha Whitehead, Canadian Association of Research Libraries (CARL)

Present on telephone

Ern Bieman, Canadian Heritage Information Network
Loubna Ghaouti, Bibliothèque de l'Université Laval
Sophie Montreuil, Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec
Kathryn Ruddock, University of Calgary
Angela Williams, Royal British Columbia Museum

Regrets

Jonathan Bengtson, Canadiana.org
Heather Menzies, The Writers' Union of Canada

Secretariat

Caitlin Horrall, Library and Archives Canada

1.0 AGENDA AND MINUTES (S. Singh)

S. Singh thanked the University of Toronto for hosting the meeting and for providing lunch for participants.

S. Singh presented the agenda for consideration. M. Berthiaume asked that a discussion of a recent meeting of the Internet Archives at the University of Alberta be added under further business.

The agenda was approved with noted amendment.

S. Singh presented the draft minutes of the last meeting and asked for any additions or changes. As there were none, she asked for a motion to adopt the minutes.

Moved by G. Berthiaume. Seconded by C. Urbain.

That the minutes from the November 18, 2016 meeting be approved.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

2.0 VISION DISCUSSION (S. Singh)

S. Singh proposed to discuss where the Steering Committee members envisioned the Strategy in three to ten years. She asked them to consider what they were hoping to achieve and what the end-user experience would be.

One member said discovery is important, but stressed it must be defined by what users want. He also said users must be engaged in what should be digitized.

Another member noted that discovery can act as a “front door” or common entry point, to help attract funders and to help users discover collections. However he stressed the need for good standards to support this types of portal. He cited Europeana and DPLA as examples of sites supported by strong standards and practice.

Members generally agreed a portal would be useful, but that it should not try to be or positioned as the sole point of entry to all digitized collections.

S. Singh summarized the conversation and suggested that item 2.1 could include targets for user-experience and for content. Another member noted user research to inform portal development is important. S. Singh suggested it could also be added as a sub-activity under 2.1. There were no objections to this suggestion.

ACTION: Secretariat to update 2.1 to add user research as a sub activity.

3.0 ACTION PLAN INITIATIVES REVIEW (All)

The Committee agreed to review the draft action plan item by item to discuss potential sub-activities. The small working groups who worked on specific items were invited to report on their progress as the item arose.

1.1 – Define an operating model, including establishing working groups; and identifying best practices, shared processes and tools.

One member suggested discussing the activity later once projects had been identified. This suggestion was supported by the Committee.

1.2 – Create best practices and tools to share with institutions and investigate meaningful training opportunities

Members suggested doing an environmental scan to uncover best practices and identify gaps, before suggesting tools or training. One member said OurOntario had good resources that could be consulted. Another member suggested getting the community involved and wondered if there would be a way to solicit input through a wiki.

Another member suggested training would differ depending on the audience. S. Singh asked if perhaps a survey could help identify what type of training the community needs. The Committee agreed it would be useful.

P. Durand said the Canadian Museum of History has posted a [Digitization Standard](#) developed by the Bibliothèque nationale de France, Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec and the Canadian Museum of History. He noted the latest version is only available in French.

E. Bieman said the Canadian Heritage Information Network (CHIN) had performed a survey on [Digital Preservation in 2011](#) and had consequently moved from a focus on digitization training to preservation training.

S. Singh summarized the conversation and suggested two specific initiatives:

- 1) to create and/or endorse an existing best practices toolkit for digitization and preservation. This would involve conducting an environment scan of what exists already, drafting a proposal and inviting comments from the community, and finally drafting recommendations for the Steering Committee to create a new one or endorse an existing one.

- 2) to create an inventory of digitization and preservation training and conduct a survey to understand gaps..

The Committee agreed with the summary and resulting actions.

ACTIONS:

- *Secretariat to update 1.2 to include initiatives agreed to by the Committee.*
- *P. Ryan, P. Durand and E. Bieman offered to work on this item and were assigned responsibility.*

1.3 – Develop approaches to help smaller and under-represented communities and organizations participate in NHDS digitization initiatives. (C. Appavoo, A. Williams, L. Alford)

Members mentioned organizations that perform and/or facilitate digitization for smaller organizations such as OurDigitalWorld.

One member suggested creating an online space where organizations with material to digitize could be matched with organizations with digitization capacity. There was some discussion and agreement that this could be useful.

One member said the Committee would need to ensure that organizations included on the inventory are sustainable, given that sustainability of digital collections and services is a huge challenge. S. Singh suggested preservation and sustainability capacity could be included in the inventory.

M. Whitehead suggested adding "preservation" into 2.4.

S. Singh summarized the discussion and suggested adding an initiative arising from the discussion:

- 1) to create a "matchmaking" service to identify organizations that support digitization and those with content to digitize. This would give a place to organizations that have content they can't digitize themselves to see if others are interested. It was agreed this should also identify grant programs to support digitization.

ACTIONS:

- *Secretariat to update 1.3 to include initiatives agreed to by the Committee.*
- *Secretariat to add "preservation" to 2.4*
- *A. Williams volunteered to continue her work on this item. E. Bieman offered to help.*

1.4 – Develop a communications plan to engage interested stakeholders, including identifying key audiences; messages; methods of communications; feedback mechanisms; and user satisfaction metrics.

One member, whose organization has a lot of experience with communications strategies, said they follow a standard format of identifying audiences and key messages, and then identifying appropriate communications channels (website, email, etc.).

Another member said a user survey could be prepared to identify the communication needs of the NHDS.

S. Singh updated that the Secretariat developed a website with basic information about Committee. She wondered whether, in addition to a communications plan, if the Committee should also develop a community engagement plan, noting that a communications plan is how information is shared, while a community engagement plan is about creating structures that enable and welcome community participation and contributions. Members agreed engaging communities is critical.

Members agreed to work in a small team initially to develop ideas about where we can start engaging/involving the broader community and how that could be accomplished.

In the meantime, S. Singh suggested doing an inventory of activities currently underway that align with other items in the action plan (for example, the [Canadian Linked Data Initiative](#) (CLDI) which links to item 2.5) and send them to the Secretariat. There were no objections to the suggested change.

ACTIONS:

- *Committee members to send examples of communications or community engagement (such as CLDI, Portage) to the Secretariat.*
- *Williams, G. Berthiaume (with LAC staff) and J. Degen (for H. Menzies with writer's union staff) volunteered to work on this item.*

1.5 – Establish contact with international counterparts to discuss common approaches.

G. Berthiaume said Library and Archives Canada (LAC) had allocated funding to allow the Secretariat to travel to visit international counterparts. S. Singh said this seemed like an ongoing activity to keep channels of communication open. She asked if there were any objections to the Secretariat taking the lead on this activity. There were no objections. Secretariat to continue to work on this item.

2.1 – Define and develop a discovery mechanism that is sustainable, user-focused and forward-looking.

S. Singh summarized the earlier visioning discussion, saying the Committee was interested in a portal or doorway, but didn't need it to be exhaustive and that user research should be done first as to what would be most effective.

One member reminded that discovery needs good metadata and standards to ensure the content is well-structured, exposed and linked. A member said the environmental scan will help determine what has been done and identify lessons learned.

The Secretariat reported that LAC was working on an analysis of the DPLA metadata standard and technical platform to see if they would be viable options for the NHDS. She said she could report on their progress by the end of March.

One member cautioned that while the portal should be “light” (i.e. not time consuming or expensive to build), it should not be “too light,” so as to be ineffective.

S. Singh suggested a review of national platforms to see what is being done elsewhere, but thought maybe this could be explored under a phase two. There were no objections to this suggestion.

ACTIONS:

- *Secretariat to update 2.1 to indicate it will be undertaken at a later date.*
- *The Committee agreed the Secretariat should continue the work on the DPLA evaluation with LAC.*

**2.2 – Research and develop future requirements in the area of metadata standards.
(A. Mills, K. Ruddock)**

One member suggested all of section 1 of the action plan, the community engagement section, should come after the other sections.

A. Mills suggested investigating two types of standards: digitization and metadata. She presented a document, *Research and develop future requirements in the area of metadata standards*, that suggests ways to encourage participation by taking advantage of existing crosswalks to invite the ingestion of material in its original format.

She suggested drawing on institutional knowledge to make recommendations for metadata encoding. She suggested the Committee needs to consider whether to include geodata, rights metadata, standard identifiers, options for improving metadata, technical metadata and relational metadata. As a next step, she suggested a survey to look for trends and best practices. The Committee supported these recommendations.

Many members spoke of the need to find experts in the community to engage and leverage their knowledge and experience.

ACTIONS:

- *Secretariat to update 2.2 to include a survey as an initiative.*
- *K. Ruddock, A Mills agreed to continue working on this item. G. Harder agreed to help.*

2.3 – Research and develop end-user policies for the discovery mechanism (Privacy, Accessibility, Official Languages and Terms of Service etc.).

One member said the activity should be sensitive to a wide variety of languages while respecting the Official language requirements of the federal government. S. Singh

suggested putting this on hold until 2.1 is resolved. There were no objections to this suggestion.

ACTIONS:

- *Secretariat to update 2.3 to indicate it will be undertaken after 2.1.*

[At this point, the Committee agreed to prioritize discussion of items Committee members had worked on]

2.4 – Research and develop best practices for infrastructure to ensure sustainability of repositories (S. Montreuil, C. Urbain and L. Ghaouti)

C. Urbain presented the work of her team in the document, *National Heritage Digitization Strategy Action Plan: Item 2.4 – Research and develop best practices for infrastructure to ensure sustainability of repositories*. She suggested updated text for item 2.4 to ensure preservation was reflected. There was support for this suggestion.

C. Urbain suggested a project to define characteristics of Trusted Digital Repositories (TDR) that meet the needs of the NHDS and then define criteria for choosing a TDR. She suggested doing this through a literature review; conversations with experts; and discussions with the Steering Committee.

The Committee generally approved of this approach. One member suggested the framework was very useful and could serve as a template to apply to other actions.

Members offered examples of repositories that could provide information such as Canadiana, Scholars portal and/or Portage. C. Urbain said the team would reach out to these stakeholders in their consultations.

One member asked if TDRs were the only solutions to bring forward, given that TDR is a certification and that other solutions might be near TDR solutions. It was suggested the team consult widely.

C. Urbain said she would share the team's list of contacts and people could comment on whether there were others to contact.

ACTIONS:

- *C. Urbain to send a list of potential contacts to the Secretariat for distribution through Google Docs.*
- *Secretariat to update 2.4 with C. Urbain's suggested text.*
- *L. Ghaouti, S. Montreuil and C. Urbain said they would continue working on this item.*

2.6 – Research and communicate best practices for file formats for access and preservation, thinking ahead to future potential uses and access. (E. Bieman, P. Durand)

P. Durand shared a document of the small team working on this item, *Best Practices for File Formats for Access and Preservation Proposal*. The team had developed ideas already with William Vinh-Doyle from the Government of New Brunswick, as part of another working group. He suggested a three phased approach: 1) develop a draft; 2) share it with the community for comment; and 3) develop further tools (workflows, templates, reporting tools etc.). He stressed that the standards would need to belong to the community, similar to the [COPTR](#) model, an American digital preservation resource.

E. Bieman said as an initial first step CHIN could host this document, but then perhaps NHDS could take on hosting of it.

One member said sharing programming or scripts would be helpful. Another member said living resources are useful and it would be a big step forward if the community knew more about what others are doing. S. Singh agreed it would be good to merge efforts where possible so NHDS could endorse something and point to it.

ACTIONS:

- *P. Durand and E. Bieman said they would continue working on this item.*

4.1 – Define a content strategy that considers all media types and formats (e.g. books, manuscripts, audio-visual material etc.) to identify a starting point (e.g. material in public domain, orphan works, out of commerce works that are still under copyright etc.). (J. Bengtson, G. Harder, H. Menzies)

G. Harder said the working group had started working on a document, but had not finished. S. Singh suggested moving the item to a future meeting.

P. Durand noted that at his organization, when they digitize they are not making a new version of the item, but creating a record. In this way, they are creating born-digital material and he was not sure if it would be included in the NHDS. S. Singh said it is similar for her organization and their oral history projects.

G. Harder asked for more clarification from the Committee because if born-digital is included, the scope of this item is greatly expanded. One member said the Committee shouldn't try to "boil the ocean" and that it needs to stay focused to attract funders and ensure outcomes.

S. Singh pointed to the focus section from the strategy saying that while it only lists "potential" projects, it does not include the digitization of artefacts.

S. Singh asked the Committee to send any thoughts on born-digital material or media types and formats to the team working on 4.1.

ACTIONS:

- *Committee members to send thoughts about 4.1 to G. Harder for the working group's consideration.*
- *G. Harder agreed to continue work on this item with the working group.*

4.4 – Create a baseline of statistical data about digitization, digital preservation and online access to better understand the scope of Canada's digital heritage. (K. O'Connell, P. Ryan)

K. O'Connell said her team had done an initial scan of countries with national strategies to locate primary material discussing metrics. She said she would be able to present the analysis at a future meeting. She suggested "Review practices of other countries and get feedback" could be an initiative under this item. The Committee supported the suggested change.

ACTIONS:

- *Secretariat to update 4.4 to include new sub-activity*
- *K. O'Connell agreed to continue work on this item with her team. P. Ryan had noted her willingness for TPL to contribute before she had left the meeting earlier.*

3.1 – Develop a funding model that considers partner resources (in-cash and in-kind); government funding; philanthropic support; public-private collaboration; cost-recovery services; and crowdfunding. (G. Berthiaume, M. Whitehead)

G. Berthiaume spoke for his team, referring to their document *NHDS funding model*. He said conversations with the Department of Canadian Heritage will start in earnest in May or June of this year and if funds are made available it would not be before 2018 at the earliest.

He also said he'd had a meeting with the Canadian Foundation for Innovation, but their focus was more research-driven, so it may not be a good fit for the NHDS. He has also looked into Industry Canada, the HathiTrust and Internet Archives but they were not viable funding options at this time.

He asked the group whether his fundraising activities could undermine those of member institutions by soliciting the same funding organizations for what is overall a finite pool of money.

Members said if the proposal was presented as a joint proposal between LAC and a specific institution, it could negatively affect funding proposals already underway. If

however, LAC fundraised for a pool of money to fund projects that would be acceptable or if organizations were only named indirectly through their affiliations with Canadian Association of Research Libraries. One member thought LAC might bring a national focus to fundraising that funding organizations might like.

Members generally thought if they could review proposals before they are submitted, they could work with their advancement officers to ensure they pose no risk to their institutions.

4.0 FURTHER BUSINESS (All)

G. Harder provided an update on a recent visit to Alberta of Brewster Kahle, founder of the Internet Archives (IA), to talk about his vision for Internet Archives Canada. The IA is looking to expand into Canada to provide better access to research material and the community has shown initial interest. The business model has yet to be determined, but IA is considering full web archiving, a cached set of material, and/or a Canadian website collection. G. Harder said the University of Alberta is looking at how they could accommodate potential IA requests on their campus.

The Committee then talked about how this increased presence of IA in Canada could affect NHDS and the goal to have more digitized content accessible. IA could offer a common infrastructure for digitization and preservation across Canada and, while it is not a free service, one member who had used IA, said it is cost-effective and the quality is high.

There was a brief discussion of the NHDS planning website and where working papers could be published and shared. S. Singh said the NHDS website is currently hosted at wordpress.com and asked if anyone would want to host it in a more permanent location. C. Appavoo said the Canadian Research Knowledge Network (CRKN) might be in a position to host the site.

ACTION:

- *Secretariat to follow up with CRKN on website hosting.*

5.0 NEXT MEETING

S. Singh thanked the group for their work and the productive discussion. She noted that the Draft Action Plan would be updated to reflect the day's discussion and thanked the people who had volunteered to work on specific items for taking on the work or continuing their work. Another teleconference will be scheduled to complete the discussion of the items.

ACTIONS:

- *Secretariat to create a list of action items reflecting the day's discussion.*
- *Secretariat to poll participants for their availability for another meeting.*

ADJOURNMENT

S. Singh expressed her appreciation to the Steering Committee. The meeting adjourned at 4:45 p.m. Eastern Time.

Committee members left for a tour of Internet Archives Canada.