

National Heritage Digitization Strategy Steering Committee

Minutes

Friday, March 8, 2019, 1 p.m. – 2 p.m. Eastern Time

Chair: Martha Whitehead

Present

David Alexander, Royal BC Museum
Jonathan Bengtson, Canadian Association of Research Libraries
Guy Berthiaume, Library and Archives Canada
Ern Bieman, Canadian Heritage Information Network
Sarah Dupont, University of British Columbia Library
Paul Durand, Canadian Museum of History
Loren Fantin, OurDigitalWorld Organization
Émilie Fortin, Bibliothèque de l'Université Laval
Christopher Hives, University of British Columbia Archives
Allison Lennox, Toronto Public Library
Katherine McColgan, Canadian Federation of Library Associations
Lisa Miniaci, Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec
Kathryn Rose, Memorial University of Newfoundland
Rebecca Ross, Canadian Research Knowledge Network (for Clare Appavoo)
Paul Takala, Hamilton Public Library
Carole Urbain, Association pour l'avancement des sciences et des techniques de la documentation
Martha Whitehead, Queen's University

Regrets

Clare Appavoo, Canadian Research Knowledge Network
Geoffrey Harder, University of Alberta
Gilles Lesage, Société historique de Saint-Boniface
Loryl MacDonald, University of Toronto Libraries
Heather Menzies, The Writers' Union of Canada
Andrea Mills, Internet Archive
Michael Moosberger, Dalhousie University
Kathryn Ruddock, University of Calgary

Secretariat

Caitlin Horrall, Library and Archives Canada

Kat Timms, Library and Archives Canada

1. AGENDA AND MINUTES (Chair)

The Chair welcomed new members to the group. Lisa Miniaci of Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec has joined the group, replacing Maureen Clapperton.

The agenda was approved as proposed.

Two minor changes were identified for the February 2019 minutes, one regarding a misspelling of a member's name and the other regarding whether a certain member was in attendance. These changes will be made.

The Chair then asked for a motion that the minutes from the February meeting be approved as amended. The motion was moved by P. Durand and seconded by E. Bieman. Carried unanimously.

2. CLIR UPDATE (Secretariat)

The Corporate Secretary provided an update on work related to the Council on Libraries and Information Resources' (CLIR's) Digitizing Hidden Special Collections and Archives grant program.

The Moravian Archives in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, has agreed to develop, in collaboration with NHDS and other partners, a grant proposal concerning records from Moravian Missions in Labrador. Additional partners include Memorial University of Newfoundland, the Nunatsiavut Government, and the Moravian Church in Newfoundland and Labrador. NHDS' role would be to help with grant writing, some project coordination, and publicizing the project.

Separately, the Corporate Secretary noted that she and G. Berthiaume have a call with CLIR officials on Monday, March 11, to discuss how the Digitizing Hidden Special Collections and Archives program could be more inclusive of Canadian institutions.

3. WORKING GROUP UPDATES (Chair, Secretariat, J. Bengston)

Technical Working Group

The Technical Working Group has a teleconference scheduled for Thursday, March 14. The group will provide an update at the next Steering Committee meeting.

Content Working Group

The Content Working Group had a teleconference on Wednesday, February 20. The group discussed how to further shape the NHDS content strategy. They also discussed using the 2018 NHDS funding awards to analyze the content strategy's priorities in the context of needs expressed by other institutions.

J. Bengtson mentioned that this group could do additional work to clarify the broader context, scope and priorities of NHDS. This would be distinct from any work needed for future funding calls.

ACTION:

Content Working Group to draft list of questions about how to further shape the content strategy, for consideration at a future meeting of the Steering Committee.

Communication Working Group

This group has not met. However, on February 27 there was a meeting between the Canadian Association of Research Libraries (CARL), the Canadian Research Knowledge Network (CRKN), NHDS and Library and Archives Canada (LAC) to clarify how the work of these groups interrelates or potentially overlaps.

Some ambiguity remains regarding the distinct roles of these organizations. This can make it difficult to secure funding and can also cause confusion in the community. CRKN is focused on building services within the Canadiana platform. CARL and its Portage Network are focused on research data and digital preservation.

NHDS' Content Working Group previously focused on content digitization and setting priorities for what to digitize when funding is available. By comparison, CRKN content discussions have concerned strategic directions for itself and Canadiana. While this feeds into the larger national strategy (NHDS), their approach to content is geared toward their role as service provider.

A separate area of focus for NHDS has been technical infrastructure, particularly around metadata. Funding management has also been within NHDS' scope. CRKN, by comparison, does not want to be a funds administrator, nor does it want to have the role of developing technical standards. Other areas of focus specific to NHDS are rights statements (participation on RightsStatements.org) and its focus on the GLAM (galleries, libraries, archives, museums) sector. Some work remains for NHDS to clarify viable and appropriate national discovery mechanisms for digitized collections.

As for LAC, its mandate includes national documentary heritage and facilitating cooperation in the Canadian GLAM community. It is a key player in NHDS, but this does not negate the importance of having buy-in and support from across Canada. LAC prefers to provide support through membership, the Secretariat, and expertise in NHDS areas.

The Chair relayed a set of actions that were agreed upon at the meeting:

1. Plan a metadata summit for the national GLAM community (proposed for fall 2019).
2. Work with CARL and Portage to further explore the Federated Research Data Repository tool and potentially re-purposing it as the NHDS discovery mechanism.

3. Develop clear communications about the overlapping initiatives and organizational mandates of CARL, CRKN, NHDS and LAC.

L. Fantin suggested reviewing other existing discovery tools, such as the platform used by OurOntario and the BC Digital Library.

The Corporate Secretary noted that NHDS completed an environmental scan of discovery platforms and tools a few years ago. This scan could be revisited and updated.

ACTIONS:

Corporate Secretary will ask the Technical Working Group at its next meeting if it would like to take the lead for items 1 and 2.

Anyone who is not on the Technical Working Group but would like to support item 1 can notify the Secretariat.

Corporate Secretary will re-circulate the NHDS environmental scan on discovery platforms and tools.

The Corporate Secretary mentioned that she, the Chair and a few other Steering Committee members would be attending a meeting about the World Digital Library (WDL) in The Hague on March 21–22. The WDL is an initiative of the Library of Congress and UNESCO. The meeting is to determine the future direction of the project. Information about this meeting will be shared at the April Steering Committee meeting.

4. CANADIAN HERITAGE INFORMATION NETWORK ACCESS COMMITTEE (P. Durand, E. Bieman)

P. Durand introduced a new CHIN working group, the Access Committee. Its mandate is to advise CHIN on strategies and tools for its linked data initiative. Members from GLAM institutions across Canada are participating in this group. Its first meeting was held in Ottawa on February 19–20, 2019, and current initiatives were discussed.

The Access Committee and CHIN’s Advisory Group will be focusing on the move to linked data, investigating reconciliation mechanisms for data (how to clean and normalize data) at the technical level and as a business model.

E. Bieman provided additional information on CHIN’s current linked data projects, “Makers in Canada,” and “Artists in Canada.” “Artefacts Canada” could also be overhauled. Further, CHIN and Parks Canada will discontinue supporting the descriptive and visual dictionary of objects and instead support Nomenclature 4.0 for museum cataloguing. The goal is to post Nomenclature 4.0 online by 2020.

ACTION:

P. Durand will provide further updates about the Access Committee.

5. ACTION ITEMS FROM LAST CALL (Secretariat)

The Corporate Secretary invited people to review the action items if they wished, instead of reviewing each of them in turn during the meeting.

6. FURTHER BUSINESS (Chair, Secretariat)

The Corporate Secretary noted that April will be the Chair's final meeting in that role. A new chair needs to be selected at the next meeting.

ACTION:

Secretariat will send an email asking members to nominate a new chair.

The Chair noted that the next Steering Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 18 at 1 p.m. ET.

Meeting adjourned at 1:52 p.m. ET.