



Coalition for Canadian Digital Heritage Principles

One of the strategic pillars of the Coalition for Canadian Digital Heritage (CCDH) is to ensure content of importance to Canadians is digitally accessible. CCDH has developed the following principles in order to enable the stewardship and cross-sectoral coordination of content priorities for digitization and digital preservation.

We invite organizations within and around the GLAM (Galleries, Libraries, Archives, Museums) sector to endorse this set of principles. By lending your support to these principles, you signal your commitment to upholding the importance of collaboration, inclusivity, access, impact, and stewardship within our sector. Your endorsement not only strengthens our collective voice but also reaffirms our shared dedication to driving positive change and making a meaningful impact in our communities. Join us in championing these principles and together we can pave the way to a more sustainable and accessible future.

Collaboration

The selection of materials for digitization and preservation should be undertaken in open and transparent processes that engage memory institutions and communities across the country. We seek to find ways to strengthen and build on the digitization work that is already underway across the GLAM sector and within communities. Particular care should be taken to establish meaningful relationships of trust and co-creation with Indigenous bodies and equity-seeking groups, guided by OCAP® principles (ownership, control, access, possession) and other similar principles.

Inclusivity

Canada is composed of many different communities, each with its own distinct history. Materials documenting these histories reflect a diversity of interests, values, knowledge systems, and approaches to research and learning. We seek to ensure that content selected for digitization and preservation reflects this diversity. We recognize the imperative to implement the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the rights related to cultural heritage enshrined in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Access

We support equitable, barrier-free access to digitized resources for all, while respecting copyright and other access protocols, including individual and community rights to privacy. Culturally sensitive materials present significant opportunities in this regard and, in some cases, may appropriately lead to access and use restrictions. We recognize data heterogeneity given the contingencies, ambiguities, and idiosyncrasies of human cultures. If Western approaches to information management do not meet community needs, then they cannot always take precedence. Ongoing technological advances continue to transform the potential impact of digitized cultural heritage materials. We encourage a balanced approach to access



which considers safeguards and protocols to promote the ethical and culturally appropriate use of materials.

Impact

Digital cultural heritage in Canada is part of the global digital cultural heritage network. Each digital object has an intrinsic value, as do collective collections of digital objects. Digital objects can be used and reused in an infinite and multimodal variety of ways. We believe that the potential for disseminating and advancing knowledge in Canada and around the world is, consequently, enormous. In this context, there are questions of use, which are best addressed through engagement and relationship building between contributing communities, GLAM institutions, rights-holders, etc. Respectful consultation is essential for establishing trust, reciprocity, and mutually beneficial approaches and practices.

Stewardship

Careful stewardship of digitized resources is critical to their sustainability and long-term preservation and access. The migration of data and files over time, keeping up with technological advances, and finding stable funding sources to do so are all important. Existing digital infrastructure should be made accessible to communities that do not have such resources. Stewardship also means recognizing that there may be a variety of different approaches based on context. In particular, attention must be paid, including but not limited to the unique perspectives, worldviews, and practices of Indigenous peoples.