

Guidelines and Criteria to Select for Digital Preservation

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These six criteria are meant to allow for informed decision-making by selectors for the preservation of prioritized digital content. Framed by existing selection and appraisal model criteria for collections, these guidelines are meant to encourage selectors to use their existing expertise regarding subject and collecting priorities to aid digital preservation practice and help inform digital preservation decisions.

The proposed criteria take the shape of categories drawn from the literature review of our paper, *Approaching Appraisal: Guidelines and Criteria to Select for Digital Preservation* presented at iPRES 2018 ([draft version available](#)), and various selection and appraisal models for both general and special collections.

Criteria	Example parameters for all collection types	General Collections examples	Special Collections examples
Value <i>(Research Emphasis)</i>	Does the material align closely with the collection policy or mission of an institution? Does digital content hold high contextual/content research value for current and potential future users?	Materials that fulfill or respond to curricular needs, add to collection strength, fulfil consortial commitments to a full body of scholarly materials	Material imperative to the volume and depth of content in areas of institutional distinction, may aid with reappraisal over time or movement of general collections to special collections
Uniqueness	Informational content and/or informational context related to unique institutional scope or mission that is not available elsewhere? Robust technical, administrative, and/or descriptive metadata to demonstrate authority of content and context for unique material?	New research developments in a field, new publication methods and formats, local institutional research and scholarship preservation commitments	Unique digital material in either/both content and context (e.g. author manuscripts on original laptop), one-of-a kind systems or processes (e.g. born digital works of art), sole repository for digital material by legal agreement

<p>Cost</p>	<p>Cost of local server storage and local maintenance as well as costs for commercial or distributed digital preservation? Costs of maintenance and expected cost of migration over time, costs for development and deployment of services for preservation, discovery & access? Costs to replace, to reprocess, or to re-digitize analog materials?</p>	<p>Costs of replacing purchased or license materials (including digitized materials) costs to researcher/user for potential delays/interlibrary loan, cost of not having immediate access to journal articles.</p>	<p>Political or administrative costs of complete loss of digital content from donors or institution, costs of subscription services to allow for technical collection of digital content, costs for born-digital ingest, storage and access to unique materials.</p>
<p>Legal/Fiduciary</p>	<p>Is the institution required by law or by consortial agreement to preserve particular digital materials over time?</p>	<p>Government documents, data related to federal grants, journals.</p>	<p>University archives and/or operational records of an organization.</p>
<p>Restrictions</p>	<p>Are there rights or access restrictions on the digital content that will require periods of time without access? Are rights unknown or unclear? If rights are known, is it understood how access and preservation actions will reflect them?</p>	<p>Availability of rights information for licensed or previously purchased materials.</p>	<p>Donor or institutional rights transfer, embargoes on access to content, state records laws.</p>
<p>Preservability of Content and Context</p>	<p>User or system documentation of creation, formats, current working environments? User or creator expectation for functionality of current rendering environment over time? Donor or licensed metadata available in machine readable format? Sensitive or private information?</p>	<p>Negotiation of legal agreements or contracts to allow for preservation of licensed digital materials, participation in efforts to preserve publisher content such as CLOCKSS.</p>	<p>Early intervention or review of computing context and creation with donors/record creators, preservation actions to ensure authenticity and provenance of born-digital materials, technical parameters for capture of content, review of networked or system environments.</p>