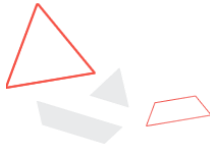




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## 2. PREPARE

Writing a digital access plan, sourcing software and equipment and other pre-digitisation considerations.

### CREATE A DIGITAL ACCESS PLAN

A digital access plan sets out details such as: what will be digitised, the resources and equipment needed, and how it will be made accessible to the public.

A digital access plan does not have to be about the whole collection. If you are going to dip your toe in the water with collections digitisation, choose a small section of the collection to highlight. Alternatively, use significance to help determine which are the most significant items in the collection; these can then become the priority for digitisation and digital access.

When you are ready to write the plan, hold a team meeting and consider the following:

- Why are you digitising your collection? Clarify why the organisation is doing this work and what you hope to gain from it.
- What will you digitise? Will you choose a section of the collection to digitise first, such as the most significant items, or a collection such as photographs or machinery? Or break the overall collection into smaller pieces and choose one section to work on, so that the task doesn't seem so overwhelming.
- Who will be involved? Consider who will be involved and write down their role. This should include a photographer, collections manager, data entry, website coordinator, etc.
- What equipment will you need to do the work? For the digital access plan consider scanners, cameras, lights for photography (or a photo tent set up), collections management software, an account with an online collection sharing platform, and other cataloguing equipment such as pencils, tape measure, and so on.
- What do you already have? Do you already have a scanner, or is there one you can borrow for this project?
- Where can you go to get the information or equipment that you need? Consider:
  - contacting your state-based support agency or GLAM organisations close to you
  - the nearest office equipment store to purchase the equipment you need – would they make a donation or discount to your organisation?
  - is there anyone at council who can help? Does council have any equipment they can lend you?
- How will it be done? What software will you use for the collections digitisation? Will you need a grant to purchase equipment or the software you wish to use?
- How will you provide digital access to your collection? Will the collection be shared online, on a collection sharing website, or on your own website?
- Are you going to use the digitised collection to make social media posts? Are you going to sell digitised versions of your 2D collection, such as photographs or artworks?



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- When are you going to do this? Write down a timeline for the project that includes a start date. If this is ongoing work, which it is for most organisations, try to set goals for how much you will have done. The amount of time it takes to digitise an item will become clearer to you, once you have done a few and become familiar with the process.
- Where will it happen? Where will the scanner and photographic space be set up? If there is data entry to be done, does this need to be done at the organisations site, or can it be done remotely by volunteers in their homes?
- Where will you store all the digital data that will be produced by the collections digitisation process? Storing image files takes up a lot of space on your computer. It is worthwhile to plan ahead for where the data will be stored. External hard drives are a good solution to providing more space for the collection and providing a back-up.

When these have been discussed, write down who will do the tasks required. That way, everyone will know who is responsible for which part of the project. Use the Digital Access Plan template at the end of this fact sheet to help you get started.

## EQUIPMENT AND SOFTWARE

There is a wide range of equipment and software available for use in collection digitisation. Do your research and find the ones that will work best for you.

### SCANNERS

A scanner is used to capture an item in digital format. It is generally used for scanning flat documents, photographs, glass plate negatives, transparencies, maps, plans, etc. It is worth considering purchasing an A3-size scanner to enable scanning a wider range of items. If there are large scale objects that require scanning see if there is another local organisation that can assist with this. There may be a large scale scanner at a local library, or architect's office, or at a local university archive.

In the Digitisation Toolkit of the State Library of Queensland, the following is recommended as the minimum capability of a scanner. Anything that exceeds these minimum standards would be suitable. Take this information to the office supply store when you are considering your scanner options.

- Size: A4
- Resolution: 700ppi for flat objects, and 2700ppi for slides
- Interface: USB2

### CAMERAS

A camera is used for photographing objects in the collection. This is everything that can be photographed from a chair, to a framed artwork to a tractor.

There are online videos and websites that provide useful information on how to photograph objects and artworks, especially those held within frames and with glass that may be proving difficult to photograph.



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In the Digitisation Toolkit of the State Library of Queensland, the following is recommended as the minimum capability of a camera. Anything that exceeds these minimum standards would be suitable.

- Type: DSLR
- Resolution: 24 mega pixels
- Sensor: DX
- Lens: 50mm.

When making a purchase, talk to the sales staff about the capabilities of the camera you are looking at, to ensure it will achieve your aims.

Other photography equipment:

- tripod – a tripod is essential for keeping the camera very still when taking photographs of objects and will provide better quality photographs.
- lighting – to provide adequate lighting for photography it is advisable to have two lights set 45 degrees either side of the object to provide an even level of light. These needn't be expensive and do not need to be professional photographic lights. Lights can be purchased from places such as hardware stores or you can use two desk lamps. It is best if they are on stands that can be moved around. Use white or daylight globes.
- backdrop – a backdrop can be a large white sheet or large white piece of cardboard. A length of white fabric attached to a cardboard roll, such as those used when purchasing fabric, is very handy as it can be rolled up and put away when not in use.

Alternatively, purchase a photographic set up that comes with lighting to photograph the small to medium sized objects in your collection. An internet search of 'shooting tables photography' or 'tent cubes photography' will lead you to suppliers of this kind of equipment. Set ups can be purchased for under \$300.

## COMPUTER HARDWARE

You will need a computer to view and store the digital assets that are created. It will also be required for cataloguing the collection.

Files of digitised material can take up a lot of space in your computer's hard drive, so consider purchasing an external hard drive. These small devices hold a lot of information that can only be viewed when connected to a computer. They are available from office supply stores.

## AUDIO VISUAL EQUIPMENT

Audio and audio/visual digitisation requires a range of specialist equipment in order to transfer old taped recordings into digital format. Because of this, it is a task best done by professionals. See the section about 'audio or audio/visual items' in Methods of digitisation for more information.

## BACK-UP SYSTEMS

External hard drives can be used as a back-up for the digital data creating through the collections digitisation process. Data may also be stored in cloud-based storage. Whichever method is chosen, be sure to back up regularly and often.



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## COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

Most organisations are using a collections management system to manage their collections. The digitised images are attached to the item record in the collections management system for easy identification.

## MORE INFORMATION

Museums and Galleries of NSW fact sheets on collection management systems and Computer cataloguing databases – [mgnsw.org.au/sector/resources/online-resources/collection-management](http://mgnsw.org.au/sector/resources/online-resources/collection-management)

Museums Australia Victoria’s video about photographing objects – [mavic.asn.au/resources/practical-training](http://mavic.asn.au/resources/practical-training)

State Library of Queensland’s Digitisation Toolkit – [slq.qld.gov.au/resources/qld-history/tools-and-resources](http://slq.qld.gov.au/resources/qld-history/tools-and-resources)

State Records NSW’s scanning and handling tips – [archivesoutside.records.nsw.gov.au/digitising-your-collection-part-4-scanning-and-handling-tips](http://archivesoutside.records.nsw.gov.au/digitising-your-collection-part-4-scanning-and-handling-tips)

UK Collection Trust publication *Digitisation: A simple guide for museums* – [collectiontrust.org.uk/resource/digitisation-a-simple-guide](http://collectiontrust.org.uk/resource/digitisation-a-simple-guide)

## COPYRIGHT

Copyright is a legal right that gives copyright owners the right to control certain activities with their works. These activities include copying and re-use, such as publication, adaptation and communicating the work to the public (for example, by making it available online). If a work is in copyright you may need to seek the permission of the copyright owner.

The duration of copyright in published materials is generally 70 years from the death of the creator, or (for sound recordings and films) from the date of publication. For unpublished materials the duration may be even longer.

Before making a digital copy of a work or item publicly available you should:

- determine whether a copyright permission is necessary
- get permission, if it is required
- adhere to moral rights, such as crediting the works’ creator.

Australian copyright law is set out in the *Copyright Act 1968 (Commonwealth)*.

## PUBLIC DOMAIN WORKS

Public domain works are commonly defined as works that are ‘out of copyright’ because the duration of copyright has expired.

Making digital copies of public domain works that are freely available for personal, research or study purposes provides greater opportunities for innovation, engagement, creativity and deeper understanding of collections. Usage should respect any creator and/or community moral rights and acknowledge the collection from which the work has been sourced.

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## TOOLKIT

[www.digitalcollections.org.au](http://www.digitalcollections.org.au)



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## CREATIVE COMMONS

Some copyright owners choose to make their work available under a Creative Commons license which – depending on the type of license chosen – allow their works to be shared, adapted and reused. It is suggested that GLAM organisations set a policy that anything created from their collection be made available under a Creative Commons license. Where other copyright restrictions do not impede it, this should be the copyright form of choice for cultural institutions.

## MORE INFORMATION

Creative Commons Australia: Creative Commons + GLAM resource kit – [creativecommons.org.au/learn/glam](https://creativecommons.org.au/learn/glam)

Australian Libraries Copyright Committee fact sheets – [libcopyright.org.au/content/resources](https://libcopyright.org.au/content/resources)

Australian Copyright Council: Find an answer – [copyright.org.au/](https://copyright.org.au/)

## WORKING WITH INDIGENOUS COLLECTION ITEMS

Some collecting organisations have material culture connected to Indigenous communities in their collections. Those considering displaying these items, digitising, or sharing these collection items on the internet, should consult with the Elders within their local Indigenous community first.

There are significant protocols around Indigenous materials that have important meanings to their communities. These protocols vary from place to place and community to community. The protocols not only ensure appropriate interaction with the materials but also protect Indigenous intellectual and cultural property rights. There may be considerations around which gender may observe or handle an object, whether it can be photographed or not, and whether a scanned photograph should be shared on the internet.

To determine the best course of action, consult with the Elders in your local Indigenous community. Chat with your contacts in the community to see if someone you know could assist you in making contact. Consider whether there is someone at the local council, a local Land Council, the library or other local GLAM organisation such as a gallery, who can help connect you with the appropriate people. You could also consult with staff of Indigenous units of your state cultural institutions.

For general advice about managing Indigenous materials in collections, including their preservation and description contact the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies reference desk or email [collectionenquiry@aiatsis.gov.au](mailto:collectionenquiry@aiatsis.gov.au).

## MORE INFORMATION

ATSILIRN: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Protocols for Libraries, Archives and Information Services – [atsilirn.aiatsis.gov.au/protocols.php](https://atsilirn.aiatsis.gov.au/protocols.php)

NSLA: Guidelines for collaborative practice between libraries and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities – [nsla.org.au/publication/working-with-community-guidelines](https://nsla.org.au/publication/working-with-community-guidelines)

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## TOOLKIT

[www.digitalcollections.org.au](https://www.digitalcollections.org.au)



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## DIGITAL ACCESS PLAN TEMPLATE

<p>WHY ARE YOU DIGITISING THE COLLECTION?</p>	
<p>WHAT WILL YOU DIGITISE?</p> <p>Which parts of the collection will you prioritise?</p>	
<p>WHO WILL BE INVOLVED?</p> <p>The names of those involved and what their role will be.</p>	
<p>WHAT WILL YOU NEED TO DO THIS?</p> <p>The equipment, software and other things you will need.</p>	
<p>WHAT DO YOU ALREADY HAVE?</p> <p>What equipment do you already have?</p>	
<p>WHERE CAN YOU GO TO GET THE INFORMATION OR EQUIPMENT THAT YOU NEED?</p>	
<p>HOW WILL IT BE DONE?</p>	
<p>HOW WILL YOU PROVIDE DIGITAL ACCESS TO THE COLLECTION?</p> <p>Will the collection be shared online? On a collection sharing website? On your own website? Will you use social media? Will you sell copies online?</p>	
<p>WHEN ARE YOU GOING TO DO THIS?</p> <p>Include a starting date. If it is ongoing work, set target dates.</p>	
<p>WHERE WILL IT HAPPEN?</p> <p>The location of the digitisation workspace.</p>	