

Commitment to Digital Preservation

Brooklyn Historical Society (BHS) acknowledges its institutional mission to preserve and make accessible Brooklyn history through both physical materials and digitized and born-digital materials. Subject to the same criteria for selection and retention decisions as non-digital materials (e.g. photographs, manuscripts, artifacts), BHS formalizes its commitment to ensuring continued access to digital content in its care through a policy of active digital preservation that works toward becoming a Trusted Digital Repository¹.

Objective

In 2016, BHS Collection Staff acknowledges we are at a turning point: the amount of digitized material we have created and the born-digital content we are acquiring through donations is now significant for the size of the Institution of BHS's size. In addition, the institutional archive of born-digital records exists in unknown quantities, qualities, and formats and continues to grow on a daily basis. In the passive state of our current practice of managing our digital materials, they are at risk of loss, corruption, obsolescence, and unapproved modification.

In early 2016, the Digital Preservation Sub-Committee was formed including Julie I. May, Managing Director of Library & Archives, John Zarrillo, Senior Archivist, and Tess Colwell, Digital Asset Associate, to think strategically about accessioning, processing, and managing BHS's Digital Assets. The sub-committee members attended workshops and plan to continue attending them as part of the Society of American Archivists Digital Archives Specialist matriculated program. The group also reviewed several existing policies from a variety of institutions and adapted parts from each of them so that BHS may begin to work toward following best practice in the field of digital preservation.

The goal of the Digital Preservation Policy is to garner support from Staff and Trustees in this endeavor. Support consists of dynamically developing policies and committing financially to support infrastructure that will contribute to a strategic plan that establishes the robust framework and program required to actively and responsibly manage BHS's digital assets. The formal establishment of this policy will provide a system by which we review, plan, and implement digital asset management practices and will place us in a better position for fundraising opportunities.

The Digital Preservation Policy was recommended for approval by the Collections Committee at the September 2016 Board Meeting and approved by the full Board of Trustees.

Scope

The scope of this policy applies to the records that the Committee agrees are in the current capability of the institution to steward as well as future records we are working toward collecting and

¹ A trusted digital repository is one whose mission is to provide reliable, long-term access to managed digital resources to its designated community, now and in the future.

(<http://www.oclc.org/content/dam/research/activities/trustedrep/repositories.pdf>)

See Appendix A: NDSA Levels of Preservation

managing. This includes all digital surrogates created by BHS or a digitization vendor representing original collection items such as photographs, oral histories, paintings. Born-digital acquisitions are also within scope. They are any collections that are acquired and accessioned within the framework and policies of the Collections Committee of the Board of Trustees and thus become part of our Collections. This includes, but is not limited to, born-digital oral histories, films, and photographs. Finally, the non-active electronic records created by the Institution that represent the day-to-day business activities are within the scope of this policy. While the Institutional records of BHS are in the process of being surveyed and appraised, this area of responsibility will be developed in the coming years as the Digital Preservation Program develops and as the collection is processed series by series.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Digital Preservation Sub-Committee is made up of the Managing Director of Library & Archives, the Senior Archivist, and the Digital Asset Associate. Their role is to draft the policy, establish collaboration with stakeholders to incorporate their informed and necessary feedback, share the policy with the Board of Trustees for approval and support, implement the tasks and methods established within the policy, and educate the Staff about the goals of the policy and involve them with active management tasks when applicable. The Sub-Committee will also establish a schedule to review the policy on an annual basis and revise according to updates in institutional activities, technological developments, and financial opportunities.

The Tech Strat Committee is a primary stakeholder of the Digital Preservation Policy. As such, they will be responsible for reviewing the Policy extensively in the early stages of its establishment, reviewing the Policy as-needed or requested by the Sub-Committee, assisting the Sub-Committee with training and/or implementation of tasks and methods established by this Policy, and strategically planning for enhancing the technological infrastructure to support the goals defined in this Policy.

iWise or any 3rd party IT support company hired by BHS is another primary stakeholder of the Digital Preservation Policy. Their responsibility is to review the Policy and apply their expertise to support its preservation activities and contribute to informed, long-range, and efficient implementation of the overarching goals of the Policy and the Institution.

Mandate

The mandate that defines and drives this Policy is to support Scholarship, the preservation of our Institutional Records, adhere to our legal obligations, and maintain our consortial and contractual commitments.

- Born-digital and Digitized collections

This refers to materials we ingest from donors where the original format is digital with no physical output. Digitized collections are those BHS staff create as representative digital surrogates of the original physical items.

- **Consortia and Contractual Agreements**

BHS is a member of catalog and web resource consortia and is therefore responsible for maintaining those records in raw and interoperable formats (MARC.xml, Wordpress sites, other website data and assets). BHS also enters into contractual agreements with partners and donors to make collections accessible in our library or online and will manage and maintain those records as long as those contracts are active and then as part of the Institutional Archive.

- **Institutional Archives**

The Brooklyn Historical Society Institutional records have been mostly surveyed and partially processed, but remain largely unprocessed. These records include, but are not limited to, photographs and recordings of public programs and the day-to-day documents created in the course of doing business.

- **Scholarship**

This policy will support scholarship by maintaining the electronic records associated with the scholarly activities within the institution such as the curriculum guides and their associated records and research created by the Education Department. It also includes the records and research associated with the projects within the Public Programs Department regardless of whether those projects are fully realized/published.

- **Legal Obligations**

BHS also has legal obligations to manage records related to our finances, personnel, and institution's establishment either permanently or as established by State and Federal requirements. This Policy will encompass and plan for those requirements within a comprehensive framework.

Review Cycle

The cycle of review for this Policy will be on an annual schedule at the minimum and as needed to acknowledge updates in technology, institutional activities, and financial opportunities. It will be revised and go through the review procedures with each major update and/or annually. Revisions will be drafted by the Digital Preservation Sub-committee, the Tech Strat Committee, iWise/IT Consultant, and BHS President. Once a revision is finalized by the reviewers, the Policy will be submitted by the Collection Committee with a recommendation to the Board of Trustees for final review and approval.

SAA Museum Archives Section Working Group Example

Appendix A: NDSA Levels of Digital Preservation²

The National Digital Stewardship Alliance (NDSA) was established to “establish, maintain, and advance the capacity to preserve our nation’s digital resources for the benefit of present and future generations”³. As such, they developed the NDSA Levels of Digital Preservation, a set of guidelines to evaluate a repository’s state of digital preservation and preparedness and inherently offer tasks to complete in order to work toward more responsible care of digital collections.

The first meeting of the Digital Preservation Sub-committee met on April 29, 2016 and determined BHS’s Levels of Digital Preservation. Shaded fields indicate BHS’s level accomplished.

	Level 1 (Protect your data)	Level 2 (Know your data)	Level 3 (Monitor your data)	Level 4 (Repair your data)
Storage and Geographic Location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Two complete copies that are not collocated - For data on heterogeneous media (optical discs, hard drives, etc.) get the content off the medium and into your storage system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - At least three complete copies - At least one copy in a different geographic location - Document your storage system(s) and storage media and what you need to use them - At least one copy in a geographic location with a different disaster threat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Obsolescence monitoring process for your storage system(s) and media - At least three copies in geographic locations with different disaster threats 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have a comprehensive plan in place that will keep files and metadata on currently accessible media or systems
File Fixity and Data Integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Check file fixity on ingest if it has been provided with the content - Create fixity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Check fixity on all ingests - Use write-blockers when working with 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Check fixity of content at fixed intervals - Maintain logs of fixity info; supply 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Check fixity of all content in response to specific events or activities

² http://www.digitalpreservation.gov/documents/NDSA_Levels_Archiving_2013.pdf

³ <http://nds.org/>

Information Security -	<p>info if it wasn't provided with the content</p>	<p>original media</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Virus-check high risk content 	<p>audit on demand</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ability to detect corrupt data - Virus-check all content 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ability to replace/repair corrupted data - Ensure no one person has write access to all copies
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify who has read, write, move and delete authorization to individual files - Restrict who has those authorizations to individual files 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Document access restrictions for content 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maintain logs of who performed what actions on files, including deletions and preservation actions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Perform audit of logs
Metadata -	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inventory of content and its storage location - Ensure backup And non-collocation of inventory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Store administrative metadata - Store transformative metadata and log events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Store standard technical and descriptive metadata 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Store standard preservation metadata
File Formats - Monitor file format obsolescence issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - When you can give input into the creation of digital files encourage use of a limited set of known open formats and codecs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inventory of file formats in use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monitor file format obsolescence issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Perform format migrations, emulation and similar activities as needed

Appendix B: Access Restrictions

The default level of access to Archived Digital Assets (ADA) for all staff beyond READ privileges will be approved by the Managing Director of Library & Archives and implemented by iWise. The following table outlines ADA privileges⁴.

Role	Permissions	ADA Drive/Folder
Managing Director of Library & Archives	Read, Write, Edit	Archived Digital Assets, all folders
Exhibition Coordinator & Registrar	Read, Write, Edit	Archived Digital Assets, all folders
Oral History Project Archivist	Read, Write, Edit	Archived Digital Assets, all folders
Reference Librarian	Read, Write, Edit	Archived Digital Assets, all folders
Archivist	Read, Write, Edit	Archived Digital Assets, all folders
Director of Public History	Read, Write, Edit	Archived Digital Assets/!Access/podcast_flatbush-main
Digital Asset Associate	Read, Write, Edit	Archived Digital Assets, all folders
Oral Historian	Read, Write, Edit	Archived Digital Assets, all folders
BHS all Staff	Read	Archived Digital Assets/!Access

⁴ As of May 9, 2016