

Phase 2 Institutional Survey questions

The National Archives and Records Administration Office of Innovation is conducting a benchmarking project on Public Access to Digital Content. The project looks at how cultural heritage institutions and archives with responsibilities for their country's archival record in the US and abroad currently deliver their electronic assets to researchers through their main public access interface.

This series of questions is geared to gain information and insight on your institution's choices when making collections available to the public, what file formats and record/collection types are made available, and how the public can interact with your content. Our goal is to understand more about how our fellow cultural heritage and archival institutions are interacting with their public(s) through our primary means: our digital interfaces.

We will be producing and publishing a White Paper with the results of this questionnaire. The document and supporting research will be available to the public and to your institution at the conclusion of the project. We greatly appreciate your support for the project.

Your users and the discovery and access site you provide for them

1. Who do you consider the main audience(s) for your content?
2. Is there a specific location to find digital objects, digitized content, and born-digital materials? Please provide any URLs.
3. What type of digital content (whether digitized or born-digital) is most challenging for you to present to the public?
4. Does your discovery and access platform identify the original format of the record and if the record has been reformatted from its original, whether through digitization or format transformation? If so, how?
5. Have your users/public indicated any interest in knowing whether content is born-digital or digitized? If yes, how have you responded?

Public access policies and processes

1. Who makes the decisions about what is visible to the public and what goes into which digital public interface?
 - a. What determines these decisions?
2. Does your institution have an official policy about file formats and image resolution for content made available through online public interfaces?
 - a. Is this policy available to the public? Please provide a link if available.
 - b. Would you be willing to share a copy of the policy with us, even if it is not available to the public on your website?
3. What metadata is made available to the public?
 - a. What metadata schema(s) do you use for online content?
 - b. What access points can researchers use to find your content?

File format availability and delivery

1. What electronic file formats/digital record types do you have in your collection?
2. What digital file types/formats do you currently provide for public access?
 - a. What access do you provide to born digital content, including email, databases, and other born-digital content that does not have an analog equivalent? If you do provide access, please include links to the public interface where these can be accessed.
 - b. What file formats are available to researchers (on site or remote reference) that may not be available on the public interface?
3. Does your institution provide “value added” research tools (e.g. IIRF, emulation, bulk download, “my lists”)? Please list the tools you provide.
 - a. If known, what percentage of your public uses these tools?

Your institution’s future goals

1. What technical functionality do you wish you could provide to users? What functionalities have users requested?
2. Do you think the metadata you currently provide online is sufficient for digital researchers? What types of information would you like to see made available?

Please provide a list of all metadata fields available to the public on request.