A Resource for Existing and Emerging Community Networks to Advance Digital Preservation in Shareable, Scalable, and Sustainable Ways

Statewide & Regional Stepping Stones to the National Digital Platform Project

Collaboration Toolkit

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About the Collaboration Toolkit

The Statewide and Regional Stepping Stones to the National Digital Platform Project (or "Stepping Stones" for short) is pleased to make available this Collaboration Toolkit for current and emerging digital preservation communities.

The Toolkit shares governance models and community-developed resources from several thriving digital preservation networks that have gotten off the ground in different states and regions throughout the United States.

All of the networks that are being spotlighted herein represent a small but important slice of the many that are either in full-blown operation or are in nascent stages of planning, testing, or implementation. Rather than attempting to achieve a comprehensive registry, the Collaboration Toolkit has aimed to capture a respectful, representative sample of networks that span a range of lifecycle stages of development.

In that spirit, the Toolkit integrates with a most-important new open resource known as the *Community Cultivation Field Guide (Educopia, 2018)*. The CCFG, as it has come to be known, documents the various Lifecycle Stages and Growth Areas that communities undergo in the course of their development and maturation. Each of the networks spotlighted are referenced in relationship to one of the CCFG Lifecycle Stages so as to provide some context for other networks and communities to tap into. So, as you dive into the Toolkit take some time to first get oriented to this important sister resource (see the link above).

Beyond that, users of the Toolkit should find it to be readily self-guiding and self-explanatory. It is the culminating achievement of the Stepping Stones Project—a year-long planning and research effort to launch the newest addition to our country's state/regional networks for digital preservation—namely the Michigan Digital Preservation Network (MDPN).

You will read all about the MDPN at the outset of the Toolkit. As you will see, the MDPN has attempted to proof-of-concept the already healthily demonstrated model of following the "stepping stones" of the many other great networks that have preceded it in time and follow it in these pages (e.g., ADPNet, InDiPres, Digital Virginias, and the Texas Digital Library).

Each case study in the Collaboration Toolkit spotlights the "stepping stones" that the MDPN took wisdom from and that we would encourage others to consider in the active development and maturation of their own communities and networks. There is no one-size-fits-all roadmap for collaborative and community-owned digital preservation networks to follow. And to be fair, this is only the beginning of the sharing process.

The *Stepping Stones Project* and its partners will be continuing to engage the many other networks and communities that time did not permit for this publication, and will work with them in 2020 and beyond to amplify our proven, open, scalable, and sustainable models for advancing digital preservation at state/regional levels to achieve a collective national digital solution. *Stay tuned!*

Acknowledgements

The Stepping Stones Project would first and foremost like to acknowledge the Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS) for their generous funding and support of this project. IMLS made it possible to visit with and research each of the networks documented in the Collaboration Toolkit herein.

We would like to acknowledge all of our principal project partners.

> Library of Michigan
> Midwest Collaborative for Library Services
> Michigan Council of Library Directors
> Michigan Academic Library Association
> Michigan Archival Association
> Michigan Museums Association
> Historically Black Colleges & Universities Library Alliance
> Educopia Institute

In addition, several state/regional consortia set aside time to dialogue with our project team over the course of the research. We look forward to continuing to work with them as they explore and advance their digital preservation support communities/networks.

> Council of Pacific and Prairie University Libraries
> Minitex (University of Minnesota Digital Library)
> OhioLINK
> Recollection Wisconsin (WiLS)

Many thanks also to the California Digital Library (CDL) for their attempts to engage with us during the active stages of our project research. Though schedules did not permit we look forward to future opportunities to engage with them as well.

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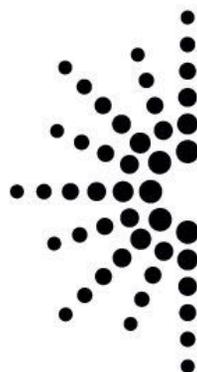
Special thanks also to the Digital Library Federation (DLF) and the National Digital Stewardship Alliance (NDSA) for their statements of support for this work and for their championing of these state/regional efforts at the national level.

Finally, the Stepping Stones Project would like to thank the many organizations and practitioners that have produced the various model governance resources, policies, toolkits, handbooks, expert publications, and other resources that are cited in the Collaboration Toolkit. Above all else the project team has aimed to amplify and echo, as opposed to overwrite and duplicate, their exceptionally good work.

Michigan Digital Preservation Network (MDPN)

The Michigan Digital Preservation Network (MDPN) is the direct success of all of the research and planning that has gone into the *Stepping Stones Project.* Throughout 2019, the lead institution (Grand Valley State University) and project partners engaged cultural and scholarly preservation institutions across the state to develop a roadmap for broad collaboration to develop shared services and solutions for digital preservation.

This research, planning, and roadmap development took the form of surveying, symposia, focus groups, and presentations to the boards of all of the state professional associations for libraries, archives, and museums. It was a cumulative process that picked up steam and investment with each new step.

In late 2019, at the urging of the Library of Michigan, several of the project partners, including the state/regional consortium—the Midwest Collaborative for Library Services—agreed to host and hire a full-time MDPN Coordinator to help shepherd the new community/network forward.

Beginning in 2020, the new Coordinator will make use of this Collaborative Toolkit, including all the Model Governance and Policy Resources, as well as the Community Cultivation Field Guide resources linked herein, to develop the instruments that will be needed to make the MDPN a successful digital preservation solution for the state/region.

REGIONS

1 UPPER PENINSULA
Cynthia Coté   906.482.2333
Emilie Schada   906.786.9234 x508
Ellen Benoit   906.635.1581 x2

2 NORTHWEST
Mary Bevans Gillett   231.883.8388

3 NORTHEAST
Justin Christensen-Cooper   989.356.4877

4 WEST MICHIGAN
Lori Gramer Lorain   616.396.3278
Smaligan   616.897.8545

5 EAST CENTRAL
Marsha Braun   989.759.1496 x223

6 EAST MICHIGAN
Suzanne Lossing   810.238.2787
Laura Tyll   989.269.6431

7 SOUTH CENTRAL
Josh Holliday   517.853.7582

8 SOUTHWEST
Beth McCann   269.342.5059

9 SOUTHEAST
Allison Buck   734.213.2733 x707

10 DETROIT METRO
Phil Gilchrist   586.469.8666
Donna Miller   313.224.1155

See page 2 for specific county breakdowns within each region and contact information for each regional regranting agency.

MDPN: Stepping Stones to Follow

The MDPN is the newest state-based distributed digital preservation network to get off the ground in the United States. Emerging from the IMLS Stepping Stones Project, it has pursued its planning and implementation in parallel with research into best practices for successful governance and sustainability. In addition to replicating the great work of several of the networks that follow they have also pioneered their own unique strategies.

- *Data Driven Readiness Assessment:* Survey your state preservation institutions across ALL sectors (libraries, archives, museums, historical societies, research centers, etc.)—addressing areas and issues such as digital preservation readiness; adoption and maturity of policies and preservation plans; hardware and software technologies in use; and willingness to collaborate with other peer institutions. The Stepping Stones Project has made available their survey instrument for other groups to reference - see here: https://bit.ly/2Hly06a.

- *Community Symposia:* Engage potential stakeholders though community fora and symposia and use these events to not only share any gathered survey and assessment data, but to hear from other well-established networks/communities and experts like those documented in the Toolkit. Structure your community-building events to be highly-generative and exploratory. Aim to summarize and synthesize the conversations, and develop a roadmap for the next stages of piloting and exploration.
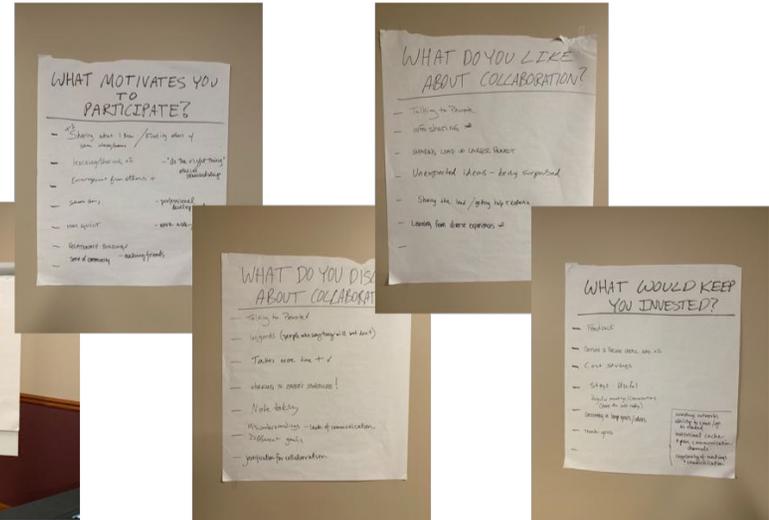
- *Enlisting State Associations:* Leverage to the fullest extent the leadership and expertise of the various professional associations within your state/region. Enlist their help in outreach and promotion for your proposed network/community. Coordinate closely with their event-planning teams to engage their membership institutions at annual meetings and conferences. Use these event opportunities to advance conversations around governance and technology needs assessment.

- *Fostering Community Leadership:* Support and promote leadership as it organically arises from within the community during early exploratory efforts such as those described above. As institutions express interest in leading various pilot sub-initiatives for the network/community, consider formalizing these efforts as foundational sub-committees and working groups. They can be critical for giving institutions some of their first experience in peer-to-peer collaboration.

- *Securing Stable Funding & Hosting:* Make every effort to secure stable seed funding for some reasonable period of development and testing, and identify a well-respected and neutral administrative partner to coordinate staffing and resources during this period. Funding can be sourced in several ways; centralized (e.g., through LSTA funds from a state agency(ies)) or decentralized (e.g., from founding membership fees). Coordination could come from expert staff allocated by one or more founding member institutions or perhaps from a consortial partner.

MDPN
Community Cultivation in Context

The Michigan Digital Preservation Network (MDPN) is currently in the Formation Lifecycle Stage of Community Cultivation (see page 16 of the Community Cultivation Field Guide).

Below are some specific Growth Areas that MDPN is achieving. If you are a network working through similar stages of development consult the Field Guide for similar related Activities and Tools.

Vision: Set initial goals (1-3 yrs) and establish how to assess progress and how to recalibrate as necessary at regular intervals; pilot services and/or products.

Infrastructure: Establish administrative structures (e.g., file sharing, calendaring, registration, project management, survey tools).

Finances and HR: Document initial (three year) fiscal milestones; establish initial pilot pricing for services/products.

Engagement: Establish and facilitate subgroups and regular meeting schedules.

Governance: Develop prioritization plan for formation activities.

MDPN
Model Governance, Policy & Related CCFG Resources

The Michigan Digital Preservation Network (MDPN) will be undergoing community and governance formation beginning in 2020. Key decisions have already been made that are setting that work up for successful outcomes. The Library of Michigan has developed an MOU with the state/regional consortia (Midwest Collaborative for Library Services - MCLS), and with several academic partners, to hire and host a full-time Network Coordinator to lead the ensuing developments. A cohort of cross-sector partners have also begun coordinating to convene the Network's first Technical Committee to pilot a shared repository solution for the state. MDPN will build on the great cumulative work and resources of all the networks documented herein.

Example Governance Resources

- Stepping Stones Project - Governance Research

- DPC Handbook: Collaboration

- UT Memorandum of Understanding Workbook, v. 1.0

Example Policies

- DPC Handbook: Institutional Policies & Strategies

- SCAPE Catalogue of Preservation Policy Elements

Related CCFG Resources

- UK Community Toolbox: Creating & Maintaining Colaitions & Partnerships

- Collective Impact Forum: Organizing for Impact Tools
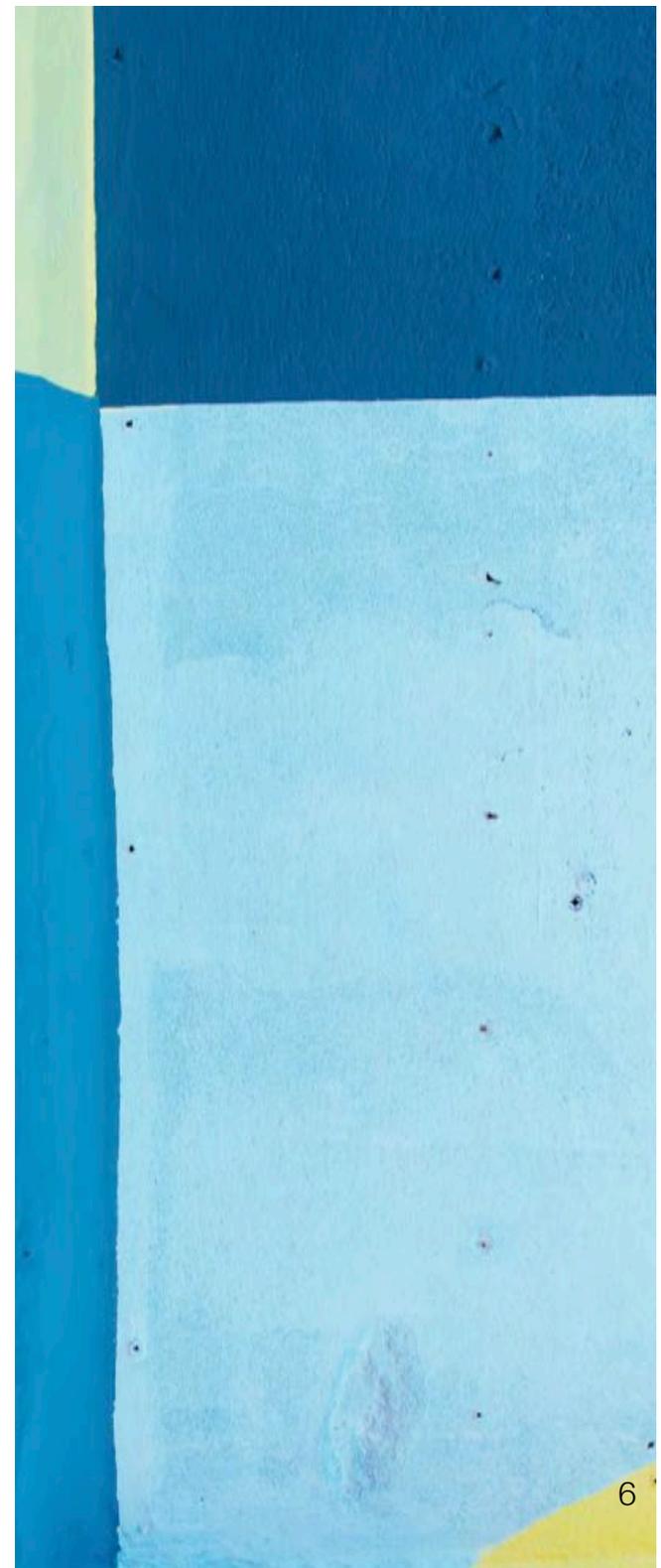
# Alabama Digital Preservation Network (ADPNet)

The Alabama Digital Preservation Network (ADPNet) is one of the earliest state-based distributed digital preservation networks in the United States. They have played an instrumental role in fostering the birth and growth of several other state/regional networks over the course of their operations, including InDiPres (see page 11).

ADPNet was a key partner in the Stepping Stones Project and helped to launch the Michigan Digital Preservation Network. ADPNet continues to play a consulting role in the ongoing piloting of the MDPN technical network.

There are several unique qualities of the ADPNet, first and foremost of which is their success in achieving a self-funded cost model for their network. ADPNet made the key strategic decision early-on to avoid long-term grant funding for their basic operations. This has provided for stability and predictability.

Similarly, ADPNet has achieved self-sufficiency in their technical operations by bringing all of their host network infrastructure under the direct management and maintenance of their member institutions.

ADPNet also keeps their community collaborations highly streamlined and focused on core operations—namely governance and technology. This respects member time and workload and has kept communication efficient.

Preserve YOUR DIGITAL CONTENT with ADPNet

If you're creating publicly available digital content in Alabama, you need a digital preservation solution. The Alabama Digital Preservation Network (ADPNet) may be the right solution for your institution.

The ALABAMA DIGITAL PRESERVATION NETWORK
PRESERVING ALABAMA'S DIGITAL RESOURCES

Visit their website here: https://adpn.org/

ADPNet: Stepping Stones to Follow

The Alabama Digital Preservation Network (ADPNet) is one of the longest running state/regional networks in the United States. They have strived to be a leader in practicing strong independent governance and maintaining institutional control over digital records through stable peer-to-peer collaboration. As they have made strides they have also been extremely generous and proactive in their advocacy and support for other networks seeking similar goals and objectives.

- *Towards a Self-Funded Network:* Deeply weigh the benefits of developing a self-sustaining cost model for your network/community; think critically about maintaining a healthy balance of diverse revenue streams and be wary of cultivating long-term dependence on soft-funding for supporting core operations and staffing.

- *Towards a Self-Hosted Network:* Related to the above, take active steps to bring increasingly more of your core operational infrastructure under the direct control and supervision of the community. ADPNet has made strides over time to position the most critical functional resources for their network under the management of the member institutions and the governance boards. They have scaled up to host their own central network configurations and ingest servers. This strengthens the network's autonomy.

Why ADPNet?

IT'S DISTRIBUTED.
ADPNet is a geographically distributed preservation network, with at least seven storage sites around the state. Even if one or two sites go down, your content can be restored from the others.

IT'S TESTED.
ADPNet was founded in 2007, and has been used to successfully restore lost or damaged content at member institutions. ADPNet uses the award-winning LOCKSS ("Lots Of Copies Keep Stuff Safe") open-source software.

IT'S COMMUNITY-BASED AND COMMUNITY-RUN.
ADPNet is based at the Network of Alabama Academic Libraries (NAAL) and is managed by the member institutions. We run the network ourselves, which means more control—and lower costs.

IT'S AFFORDABLE.
ADPNet was designed to be affordable for smaller institutions with modest resources. There are a number of membership options, starting at $300 per year.

IT'S SUSTAINABLE.
ADPNet has been entirely self-supporting since 2008. The network has a growing reserve fund that can be used for improvement and expansion. Members keep costs low by sharing technical expertise. ADPNet can also draw on a robust support network through a world-wide community of LOCKSS-based networks.

- B*uilding Future Reserves:* Plan for technology refresh cycles and set aside revenue dollars in reserve for future needs and replacements. This can take both targeted approaches for areas of known and specific need (e.g., server replacement costs) or follow a general 10% of overall expenses rule as one widely adopted best practice for contingency planning. ADPNet has established a hardware subsidy program to assist institutions with hardware replacement needs.

- *Engaging State Agencies:* Coordinate closely and constructively at all stages with your state governmental agencies/commissions for higher education and public history/culture; seek and cultivate their leadership. Current and prospective member institutions will derive a great deal of ongoing confidence and legitimacy in the overall initiative to the degree that the participation of these institutions is vibrant.

- *Streamlining Governance:* Consider the potential value of a simplified and flexible governance structure as a means to lowering the pressure on contributions of member time and staffing—ADPNet avoids the proliferation of a large number of committees and working groups but leaves the door open for their creation as needs arise from within the membership.

- *Sharing Successes:* Engage with other emergent networks/communities and share wisdom and best practices for their road ahead—this is a sign of maturity. ADPNet has provided generous collaboration and support to several up-and-coming state/regional networks, including InDiPres and the most recent Michigan Digital Preservation Network (MDPN).

ADPNet
Community Cultivation in Context

The Alabama Digital Preservation Network (ADPNet) is currently in the Acceleration Lifecycle Stage of Community Cultivation (see page 28 of the Community Cultivation Field Guide).

Below are some specific Growth Areas that ADPNet is achieving. If you are a network working through similar stages of development consult the Field Guide for similar related Activities and Tools.

Vision: Scaling up services/products

Infrastructure: Streamline member on-boarding processes

Finances and HR: Evaluate growth/scaling activities iteratively, recalibrating expectations as necessary

Engagement: Exercise the community's voice within the broader field

Governance: Spin up leadership committees as needed to attend to specific operations or projects

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ADPNet
Model Governance, Policy & Related CCFG Resources

ADPNet has chosen a very streamlined approach to their community governance. They have a Steering Committee that consists of all of the voting-eligible institutions in the network from across their Host and Participant member categories. The Steering Committee has a single Chair appointed by the Steering Committee members. The community maintains one standing Technical Policy Committee. Other special committees can then be convened by the Steering Committee Chair as needed. Keeping governance simple has helped ADPNet move forward quickly on several strategic decisions, including their moves to self-host their network infrastructure and the decision to allow membership from prospective institutions from outside the state of Alabama.

Example Governance Resources

- ADPNet Resources

- ADPNet Wiki

Example Policies

- ADPNet Governance Policy

Related CCFG Resources

- UK Community Toolbox: Sustaining & Maintaining the Initiative

- Tamarack University: Community Innovation Tools

- Collective Impact Forum: Implementing & Sustaining Impact Tools
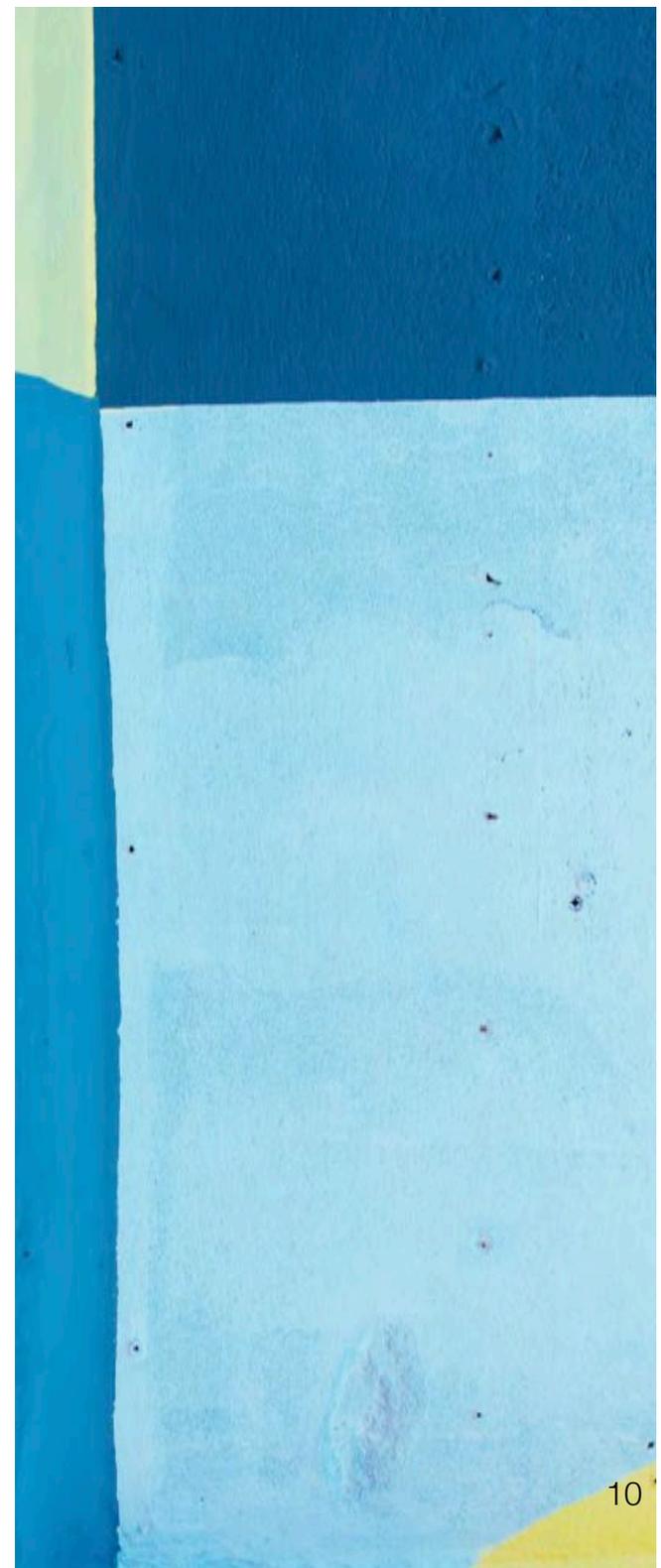
Indiana Digital Preservation Network (InDiPres)

InDiPres is one of the most recent examples of a new state/regional network that has launched through successfully collaborating with other existing networks—including the Alabama Digital Preservation Network (ADPNet), the Historically Black Colleges & Universities Library Alliance (HBCU LA), and the MetaArchive Cooperative. InDiPres both adapted and expanded upon many of the governance models and resources pioneered by these communities. The newest Michigan Digital Preservation Network (MDPN) has followed their good example and looks to InDiPres as a leader and an exemplar for its own ongoing developments.

The success of InDiPres is due in no-small part to their patience in building a meaningful set of partnerships across the state and focusing on educating their members through mutual policy development and documentation.

InDiPres is also one of the first state/regional networks to connect their digital preservation activities into a national digital platform through participation in the *MetaArchive Cooperative*. Organizationally they exist as their own separate consortial community. Technically they participate in MetaArchive as a key host storage node alongside all of the other MetaArchive Sustaining Members.

InDiPres and MetaArchive are going through deep re-evaluations of their approaches. They are engaging in the Transition Lifecycle of the Community Cultivation framework.

Visit their website here: https://indipres.org/

InDiPres: Stepping Stones to Follow

InDiPres is one of the most recent state-based digital preservation networks to arrive on the scene. They have succeeded by working closely with other existing networks. They have a strong foundation that is being deepened through change. Shortly after formation, InDiPres underwent shifts in host organizations from Indiana State University to Butler University. As an active storage node partner in the MetaArchive Cooperative, InDiPres is now also assisting with that national network's technical and organizational transformations.

- *The Slow Build:* Take the time to foster thorough consensus-building during the formative stages of your community/network development—convene multiple exploratory and feasibility-planning meetings to gauge willingness and broaden engagement with multiple sectors prior to launch.

- *Prioritizing Policy & Documentation:* Prioritize community policy development at the earliest stages of collaborations as an exercise in defining responsible management and good governance, as well as documentation of practical curatorial workflows and processes.

- *Choosing Strong Hosts:* Leverage technical expertise and hosting resources from the fewest number of the very best-equipped institutions from across the spectrum of active participants—this can reduce the complexity and redundancy of effort in these most cost- and time-intensive areas of any collaborative endeavor.

- *Cultivating Peer Partnerships:* Reach out to existing state/regional networks; seek their advice and input for strengthening and solidifying your own strategic approaches. InDiPres intentionally cultivated connections with several of the networks being promoted in this Collaboration Toolkit—including ADPNet and the Michigan Digital Preservation Network (MDPN).

- *Connecting to National Networks:* Similar to the above, consider the timing and the cost-benefit of connecting your emerging network/community with an already-established national or international distributed digital preservation network—there are several in operation that may be willing to consider a partnership, including the MetaArchive, APTrust, Chronopolis, and others. InDiPres is currently working with the MetaArchive Cooperative to dark archive member content.

In 2019, the MetaArchive Cooperative formally launched the "Changing for Continued Impact" series to work with its members, including InDiPres, to radically and intentionally reinvent its community approaches and technical infrastructure.

TRANSITION CASE STUDY: MANAGING CHANGE

Founded in 2004, the MetaArchive Cooperative is a collaborative digital preservation network. Its strong, international membership has constructed a rigorous storage and curation system through which member institutions ingest and monitor copies of each others' content on their locally hosted servers, united in a virtual network. Members have achieved broad, multi-continental content replication and distribution in a community-controlled network that protects against various types of risks and loss.

From its inception, MetaArchive has deliberately integrated a broad, cross-sector range of institutions, including research libraries, public libraries, liberal arts colleges, museums, art galleries, and community organizations. Many of these sectors still struggle to implement basic digital preservation activities, due to limited IT support, cost of current solutions, and lack of time and expertise.

At its 12-year anniversary, this award-winning service and methodology was celebrated via the George Cunha and Susan Swartzburg Preservation Award as a trustworthy, durable solution for digital preservation storage and a strong, cross-sector community of practitioner support. However, by 2016, the community was also witnessing technical changes that could unsettle the network's distributed infrastructure. A mass shift from on-site servers to cloud-based IT services began to transform the infrastructure options available to members and prospective members. Reliance on member-owned-and-controlled servers, which had been a hallmark of MetaArchive's model, suddenly became a potential future liability.

The community entered a period of "Transition" and began planning, surveying members, and engaging with other preservationists around the world to explore its options. In 2018, the network has kicked off the SuperNode Pilot Project to explore the feasibility and specific requirements for a technical infrastructure evolution. This includes use cases that blend member-owned servers with cloud-based services to minimize the pressure on current and prospective members to maintain local server infrastructures. This opens MetaArchive's services to new organizations, especially small-to-medium sized institutions seeking affordable, trustworthy community-based solutions.

The SuperNode Pilot Project will move to full production in 2019, positioning the MetaArchive community to stay true to its founding principles while adapting to the changing landscape.

Transition   38

InDiPres
Community Cultivation in Context

The Indiana Digital Preservation Network (InDiPres), as a key partner in the MetaArchive Cooperative, is currently in the midst of the Transition Lifecycle Stage of Community Cultivation (see page 34 of the Community Cultivation Field Guide).

Below are some specific Growth Areas that InDiPres is achieving. If you are a network working through similar stages of development consult the Field Guide for similar related Activities and Tools.

Vision: Consider and pursue partnerships with other communities that share similar mission/vision/values.

Infrastructure: Sunset and/or replace outmoded platforms and operations

Finances and HR: Explore potential changes and identify what resources are available and needed for each.

Engagement: Identify and pursue key relationships with other communities, funders, field leaders, etc. in support of transition(s)

Governance: Evaluate organizational hosting structure to ensure solid fit-for-purpose for continued impact.

InDiPres
Model Governance, Policy & Related CCFG Resources

InDiPres has a Steering Committee that consists of a Chair, a Co-Chair, and a Communications Officer. These are elected by the members. They are joined by ex-officio representatives from the Indiana State Library and the host lead (currently Butler University). The Steering Committee meets as-needed. There are also several standing committees, including a Technical Committee, Finance Committee, and an Outreach Committee. Ad-hoc committees can also be convened at the charge of the Steering Committee. All members meet twice a year.

Example Governance Resources

- InDiPres Membership Agreement

- MetaArchive Cooperative Governance Documentation
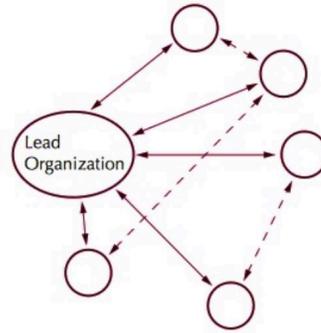
Example Policies

- InDiPres Governance Policy

- InDiPres Policy Development Workshop
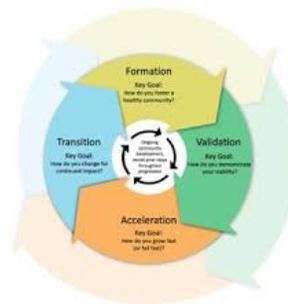
Related CCFG Resources

- UK Community Toolbox: Evaluating the Initiative

- Tamarack University: Evaluating Community Impact Tools

- Collective Impact Forum: Implementing & Sustaining Impact Tools

Digital Virginias

The Digital Virginias network is one of the most recently launched (2019) regional Service Hubs for the Digital Public Library of America (DPLA). Consisting of six sustaining members and spanning both Virginia and West Virginia, participating members are aggregating metadata and sharing digital collections from across the two-state region. In addition to digital collections access, they are focused on generating new finding aids as part of the Virginia Heritage initiative and deepening and broadening the service reach for harvesting more partner collections into DPLA.

University of Virginia Libraries (UVA) is the lead coordinating institution for both efforts.

Digital Virginias is aiming to stabilize and sustain its existing service commitments as they relate to Virginia Heritage and DPLA, but also take it a step further by exploring a new service layer for digital preservation. In this way, they are an example of a community moving from Validation to Acceleration in terms of Lifecycle Stages within the Community Cultivation model.

The University of Virginia Libraries is, and will likely continue to be, a primary backbone for current and future member institutions to bridge into a broader national digital platform for digital preservation (APTrust being one near-line possibility under exploration). A hub-and-spoke model that leverages UVA and the other founding member infrastructure is being investigated.

Visit their website here: https://digitalvirginias.org/

Jackson Davis Collection of African American Photographs

Jackson Davis, an educational reformer and amateur photographer, took nearly 6,000 photographs of African American schools, teachers and students throughout the Southeastern United States. His photographs — most intended to demonstrate the wretched conditions of African American schools in the south and to show how they could be improved — provide a unique view of southern education during the first half of the twentieth century.

Go to collection

Digital Virginias: Stepping Stones to Follow

Digital Virginias has instigated an open-ended set of explorations into the feasibility of launching a distributed digital preservation network that builds upon their already-strong existing collaborations to digitize and make digital collections shareable. They are a great example of starting with what is already working and taking it a step further. Don't over-think it. Dive in!

- **Build on Existing Collaborations:** Build upon any existing digital library or archive collaborations that may already be underway in your state/region—use these as an opportunity to begin exploring how strong partnerships that have already been formed can serve as the launchpad and foundation for digital preservation. Digital Virginias is exploring digital preservation as an outgrowth of good work that is already underway through shared engagement in the DPLA Service Hub Network and Virginia Heritage finding aid initiative.

- **The Hub-and-Spoke Approach:** Consider the hub-and-spoke model as a potentially viable means of addressing the digital preservation needs of collections from under-resourced participating institutions in your state/region—Digital Virginias is proposing to leverage the expertise and technology of more well-resourced partners to connect with these institutions and bridge their needs into services and solutions that they could not support on their own (e.g., digitization, finding aid creation, repository services, etc.).
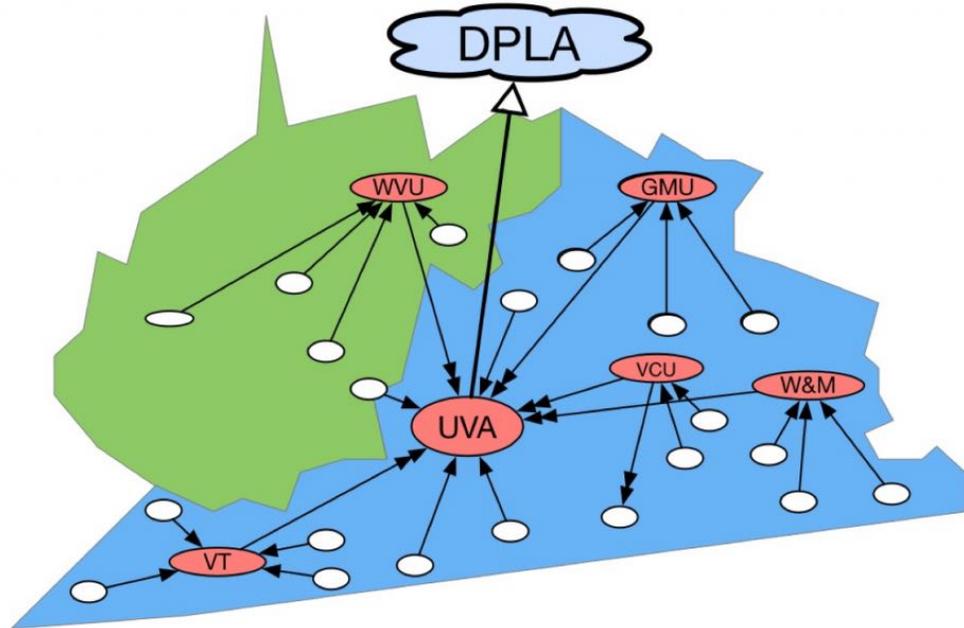
- **Governance from the Ground Up:** Don't be afraid to be flexible and creative with the formation of governance groups and the organization of work—convene sub-committees and working groups that focus on meeting practical needs for the community (e.g., website maintenance and social media) as opposed to just convening members around broad areas of soft leadership (e.g., outreach).

- **Keep it Simple:** Keep membership agreements and signatory resources as simple and streamlined as possible—strike a concise balance between communicating genuine member protections for their assets and investments, while at the same time avoiding deep legal and technical jargon that obfuscates and clouds the prospective partnership.

- **Horizontal Leadership:** Building on the previous "stepping stone", make strides over time to cultivate new leadership and distribute expertise horizontally across the community of participating member institutions—University of Virginia as one of the lead coordinating institutions for Digital Virginias engages strategically with other partners on the initiative to make sure new institutions can actively contribute to documentation and can adopt and follow workflows successfully. Planning envisions partners serving as "regional manager" to serve as hub experts for shared services—e.g., digitization, preservation, etc.

Digital Virginias
Community Cultivation in Context

The Digital Virginias network exemplifies qualities of a network that span both the Validation and Acceleration Lifecycle Stages of Community Cultivation (see pages 22-32 of the Community Cultivation Field Guide).

It is important to recognize that networks and communities evolve on different levels over time. Be sure to map your Growth Areas to appropriate stages. Below are some specific Growth Areas Digital Virginias is achieving. If you are a network working through similar stages of development consult the Field Guide for similar related Activities and Tools.

Vision: Articulate mission/vision/values to external audiences and prospective members (Validation); Scale up services/products (Acceleration)

Infrastructure: Refine communications and administrative structures, adding new tools as needed (Validation); Add digital preservation tools and strategies (Acceleration)

Finances and HR: Test and refine the financial plan (Validation); Evaluate growth/scaling activities iteratively, recalibrating expectations as necessary (Acceleration)

Engagement: Formalize committee rules and processes (Validation); Tend to existing members, maintaining open communication about the impact of change (Acceleration)

Governance: Build leadership relationships and trust (Validation); Spin up leadership committees as needed (Acceleration)

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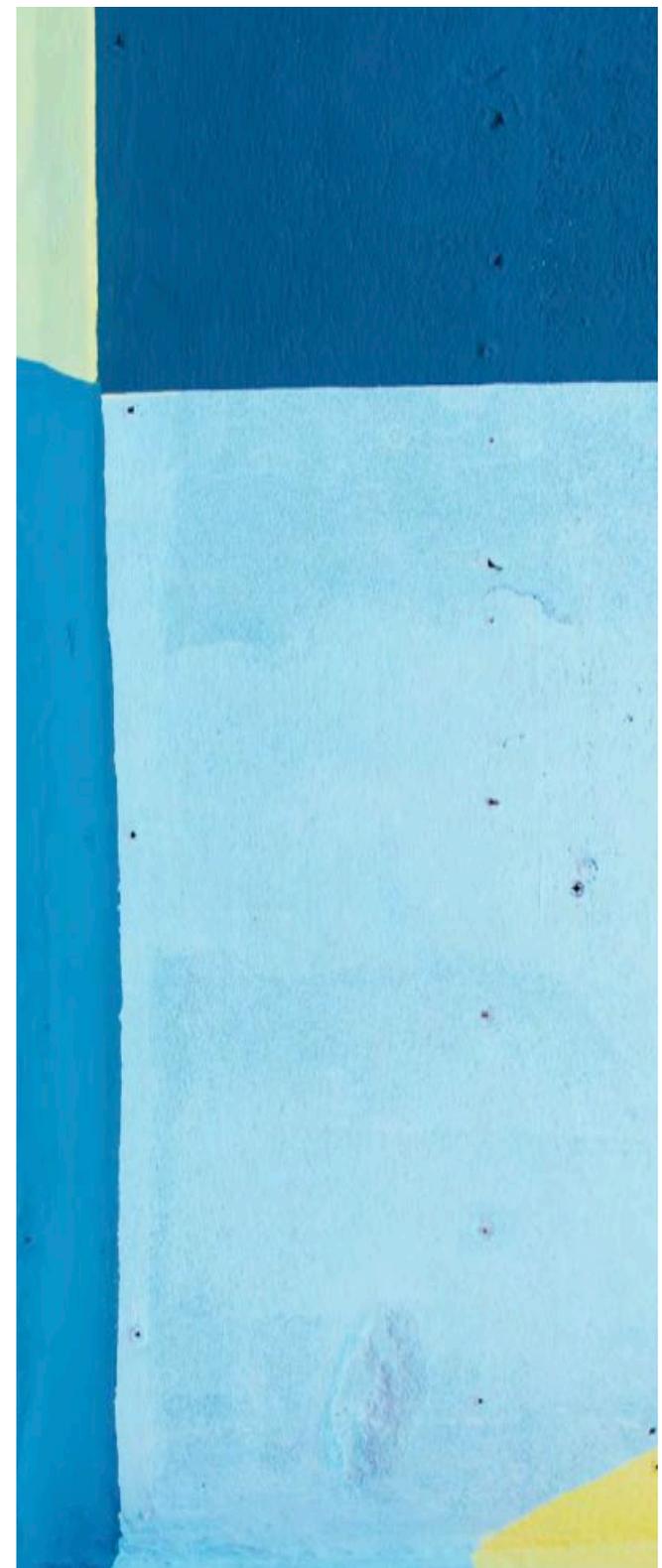
Digital Virginias
Model Governance, Policy & Related CCFG Resources

Digital Virginias has a mature set of workflows and exchanges between their existing partnerships and are moving into accelerated stages of documentation and distributed effort. Their governance model employs a top-down, bottom up approach. Governance Teams set the agenda for the year, which Working Groups operationalize and then bring topics and issues back to Governance that need sustained attention.They are prioritizing focus areas such as outreach, training, technology, social media, and data. Barriers to participation and leadership in these early groups are being lowered and volunteerism is being encouraged. Digital Virginias will revisit the need for more formal structures and policies as the community expands and evolves over time.

Example Governance Resources

- Digital Virginias - About

- DPLA Member Governance

- Virginia Heritage Organizational Structure

Example Policies

- Digital Virginias Metadata

Related CCFG Resources

- UK Community Toolbox: Increasing Participation and Membership

- Tamarack University: Community Engagement Tools

- Collective Impact Forum: Organizing for Impact Tools

Digital Preservation at UVa

Texas Digital Library

The Texas Digital Library (TDL) is an example of a collaborative network for distributed digital preservation that is in an Acceleration Lifecycle Stage for Community Cultivation.

As one of the country's longest-running and mature state/regional networks, they have an incredible number of lessons to impart to new and emerging networks.

First and foremost, they started collaborations with a very clear set of identified needs and partners—namely building shared institutional repository solutions with and for academic research libraries. This has given TDL a solid foundation on which to build for adding new solutions and services over time.

They have demonstrated the capacity to be a true Stepping Stone to a national digital platform for digital preservation though their ongoing collaborations with DPN, DuraCloud, and Chronopolis.

TDL has also developed a straight-forward membership for services model that seeks to centrally host, maintain, and manage resources on behalf of its members, who in turn devote their energies to governance and community engagement. TDL is strategically growing and expanding, seeking to diversify its membership through partnerships in new/different sectors and regions of the country.

Visit their website here: https://www.tdl.org/

TDL: Stepping Stones to Follow

The Texas Digital Library has taken several unique approaches to launching, maturing, and expanding their network and community over time. For new state/regional initiatives there are several exemplary strategies they have pioneered that are worth exploring.

- **Make the Case:** Take the time to research and document a business case for your network—the founders of TDL made a clear data-driven case for the timing and need to launch the shared solution. This communicated confidence to stakeholders and provided a clear roadmap for the initial stages of implementation. The Digital Preservation Coalition has a Digital Preservation Business Case Toolkit.

- **Align with State Priorities:** Pay attention to your state's higher education and cultural sector funding initiatives and priorities—TDL launched swiftly due to its focus on advancing shared scholarly infrastructures to meet strategic priorities set by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board for advancing the state's research profile.

- **Pursue Flexible Solutions:** To position TDL's digital preservation infrastructure and services development to be sustainable, scalable, and responsive for the community the TDL Services Manager and the Digital Preservation Working Group jointly explore and evaluate both open source institutionally-hosted solutions as well as commercially-hosted environments—adaptability and flexibility are essential to progress.

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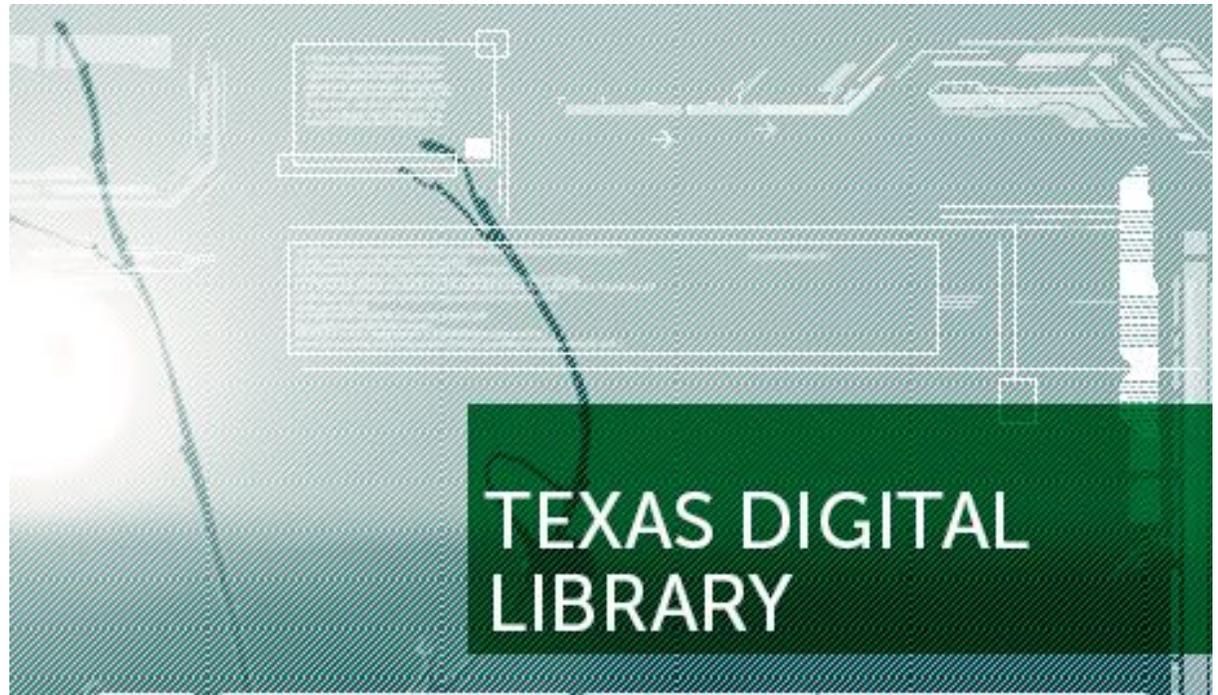
- **Member-Driven Engagement:** Solution and service oriented working/user groups combined with an annual community conference (Texas Conference on Digital Libraries) have fostered high-levels of engagement and productivity within the membership community for TDL—members are encouraged and championed to spearhead new working/user groups and take the lead with deepening collaborations at their own initiative.

- **Proactive Governance Development:** The Texas Digital Library has achieved membership diversification and addressed structural power balances through gradual but intentional evolutions to their governance board. The enduring founding institutions have developed mechanisms for newer and less invested member institutions to contribute meaningfully to strategic planning and decision-making. Most recently these changes have incorporated representation from new sectors (e.g., health sciences) and even expansion into neighboring regions.

Register for TCDL 2020 here
https://www.tdl.org/tdl-events/2020-tcdl/

Texas Digital Library
Community Cultivation in Context

The Texas Digital Library exemplifies qualities of a network firmly in the Acceleration Lifecycle Stage of Community Cultivation (see page 28 of the Community Cultivation Field Guide). They are scaling up, streamlining operations, experimenting in new areas, and at the same time looking ahead to strategically sustain their existing efforts. You can read their most recent Annual Impact Report here: https://www.tdl.org/2020/02/2019-impact-report/.

Below are specific Growth Areas TDL is achieving. If you are a network approaching similar stages of development consult the Field Guide for related Activities and Tools.

Vision: Scaling up services/products

Infrastructure: Adding digital preservation tools and strategies

Finances and HR: Evaluating growth/scaling activities iteratively, recalibrating expectations as necessary; and diversifying funding streams

Engagement: members and strategic affiliates broadcast services/products to help expand the

Governance: Cultivate the next generation of community leaders

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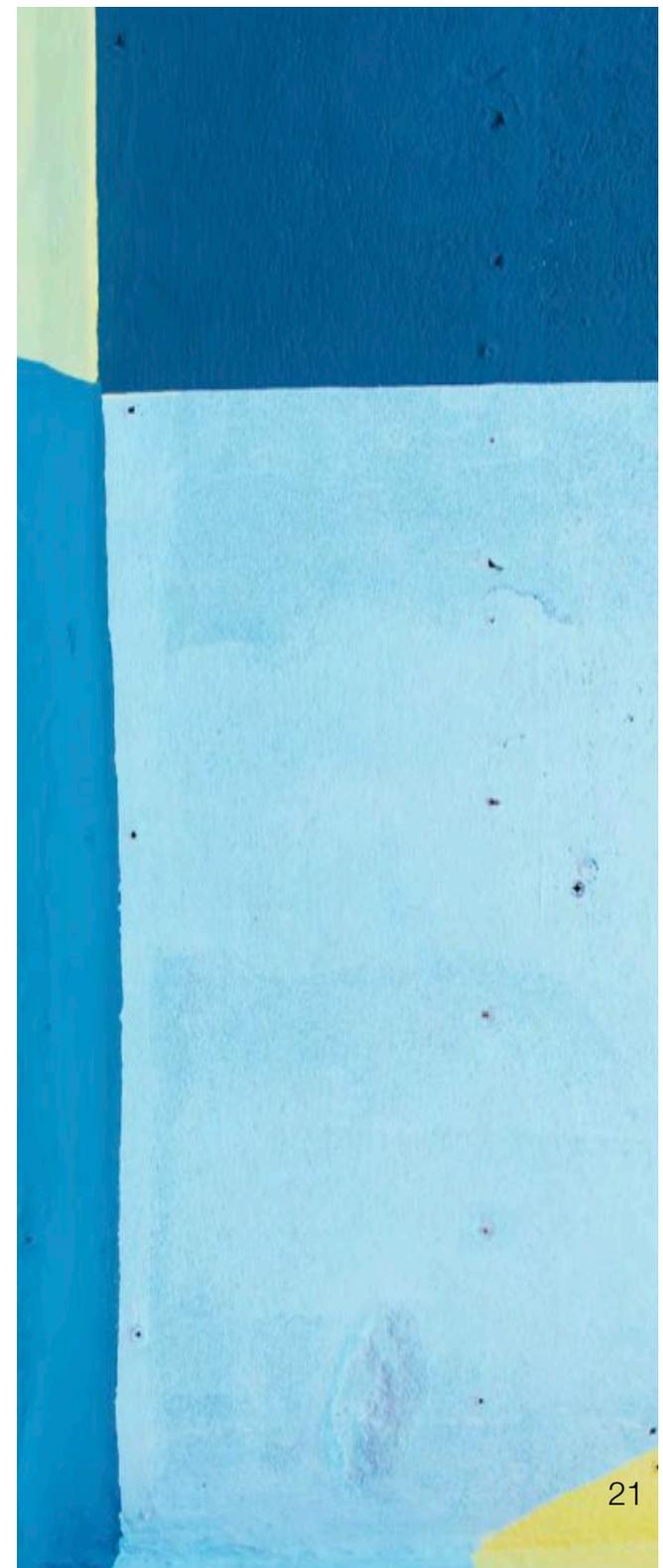
Texas Digital Library
Model Governance, Policy & Related CCFG Resources

The Texas Digital Library has a unique governance structure. It maintains three-tiers: 1) a Member Board with representation from each of the participating institutions; 2) a Governance Board partially comprised of representatives chosen from the Member Board, as well as the seven founding ARL libraries; and 3) an Executive Committee chosen from amongst the Governance Board to help manage routine business. You can learn more about TDL's governance structure here: https://www.tdl.org/governance/.

Example Governance Resources

- TDL Bylaws

- TDL Strategic Plan

Example Policies

- Digital Preservation with DuraCloud@TDL

- Texas Data Repository - Digital Preservation Policy

Related CCFG & Other Resources

- DPC Digital Preservation Business Case Toolkit

- UK Community Toolbox: Building Leadership

- Tamarack University Community Innovation Tools

- Collective Impact Forum: Implementing and Sustaining Impact Tools
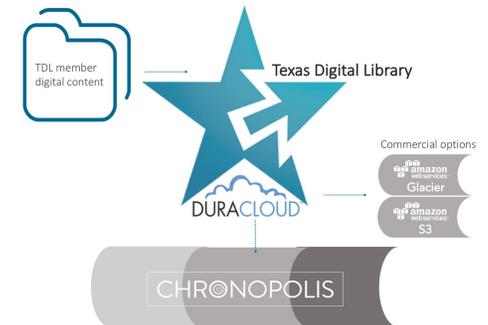
Chronopolis is our non-commercial storage option, geographically distributed, and rooted in the cultural heritage community.
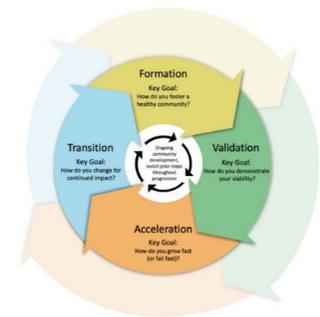
Carolina Digital Library Network

The Carolina Digital Library Network (CDLN) is a new state/regional network that is being explored to catalyze existing consortial initiatives already taking place across the Carolinas. The focus of CDLN is to test and evaluate models for shared digital scholarship services that can address the emerging needs of small- to mid-sized academic libraries.

The CDLN partners are working closely with both commercial and open-source vendors—including Gale Cengage (Digital Scholar Labs) and Discovery Garden (Islandora). Islandora is a rapidly advancing repository solution with built-in support for digital preservation.

CDLN is poised to pioneer, document, and share a critical and sustainable model for institutions seeking to build on their local digital content production and advance into new terrain for sharing and managing that content for the purposes of advancing research and scholarship.

The CDLN partners propose to systematically investigate the most optimal approach to the development of this new shared services model through community consensus building, original research, technology/product evaluations, and engagement with the field.

In 2021, the CDLN partners will host a national Digital Library Communities Symposium to engage other new and existing state/regional networks on developing digital library services, successful practices in collaborative community formation, and strategic consensus building.

Carolina Digital Library Network
Exploring a Common Framework

Improving the digital scholarship tools, infrastructure, and support available to faculty and students across the Carolinas.

UNCG University Libraries

INSTITUTE of Museum and Library SERVICES

Visit their website here: https://educopia.org/cdln/

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Carolina Digital Library Network: Stepping Stones to Follow

The Carolina Digital Library Network (CDLN) is being piloted by several academic libraries in the Carolinas to explore shared digital scholarship infrastructures and services, including for digital preservation. CDLN is unique for its service area development goals but also intentionally exploring the right balance of commercial and open-source partners. It is early days for CDLN but the network has already learned several lessons of value for other emergent networks/communities.

- *Consortial Connections:* Evaluate closely the beneficial opportunity that partnering with existing consortial groups can bring to your network/community-building endeavor. Consortia in your state/region may already have very well-developed administrative and infrastructural resources to be harnessed and utilized in order to assist with early planning, implementation, and on-going coordination of any new network/community—potentially sparing any single institution from bearing the full load of these responsibilities.

- *Commercial Partnerships:* Explore the right balance and proper participation of commercial vendor services within the overall collaborative endeavor. What do such services uniquely bring to the table? What sorts of dependencies do commercial partnerships introduce (e.g., external technologies, cost controls, etc.)? How will commercial services/solutions be managed responsibly, openly, and transparently by the community?

- *Expanding Boundaries:* Actively explore the healthy limits and boundaries for geographically defining your new network/community. Engage your membership in strategic conversations around the viability and sustainability of working across state lines and opening participation from the surrounding region. What economies of scale can be achieved? When do collaborations become too stretched and complicated? Are there political or legal barriers to certain participation? What do expanded partnerships into neighboring states/regions add to the value proposition (e.g., more geographic distribution and redundancy)? What constraints do they bring?

- *Building Consensus:* Foster broad and deep conversations with the fullest range of potential stakeholders across your state/region in order to incrementally build consensus and lay a solid foundation for future collaborative work. Take numerous outreach and assessment approaches with your emerging community. Expand the circle of participation and feedback with each new conversation making a concerted effort to address any/all exploratory questions—especially those voices expressing concerns about timing, scope, and sustainability.

- *Moving Beyond Consensus:* Related to the above, embrace the reality that not all stakeholders will always be in agreement or find themselves in a position to participate. This does not have to imply that the proposed network/community is unworthy of testing, piloting, and implementation. Development just needs to proceed according to the timelines and priorities of those that see immediate value/need in the initiative and are willing to invest time and effort.
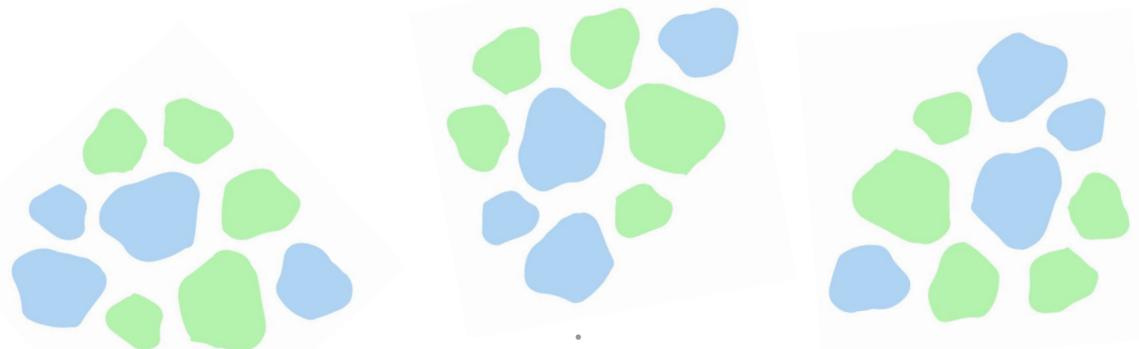
Carolina Digital Library Network
Community Cultivation in Context

The Carolina Digital Library Network (CDLN) is in the Formation Lifecycle Stage of Community Cultivation (see page 16 of the Community Cultivation Field Guide).

Below are some specific Growth Areas that the CDLN is achieving. If you are a network working through similar stages of development consult the Field Guide for similar related Activities and Tools.

Vision: Identify and document the core problem, challenge, and/or opportunity that the community is forming to address

Infrastructure: Establish communications structure (e.g., mailing lists, social media, website, videoconferencing)

Finances and HR: Establish administrative costs (overhead for running the service/product)

Engagement: Foster relationships within the community; Solicit community feedback; Plan event(s) (virtual or in-person)

Governance: Develop prioritization plan for formation activities

Carolina Digital Library Network
## Relevant Research & Related CCFG Resources

The Carolina Digital Library Network (CDLN) has a Steering Committee of deans and directors from seven founding academic institutions across the Carolinas, as well as an Advisory Group of experts in consortial management and digital scholarship. During the second year of the project, the Steering Committee will evaluate prospective governance and business models, a long-term sustainability analysis, and a sunset option process. The Steering Committee will carry out these activities using the Community Cultivation Field Guide analytic framework and will produce a White Paper on Digital Library Community Formation.

Relevant Research

- When a Repository Is Not Enough: Redesigning a Digital Ecosystem to Serve Scholarly Communication (2019)

- Library Consortia: Models for Collaboration and Sustainability (2015)

- Exploring Digital Libraries: Foundations, Practice, Prospects (2014)

Related CCFG Resources

- UK Community Toolbox: Creating & Maintaining Coalitions & Partnerships

- Tamarack University: Community Engagement Tools

- Collective Impact Forum: Pre-Launch Tools
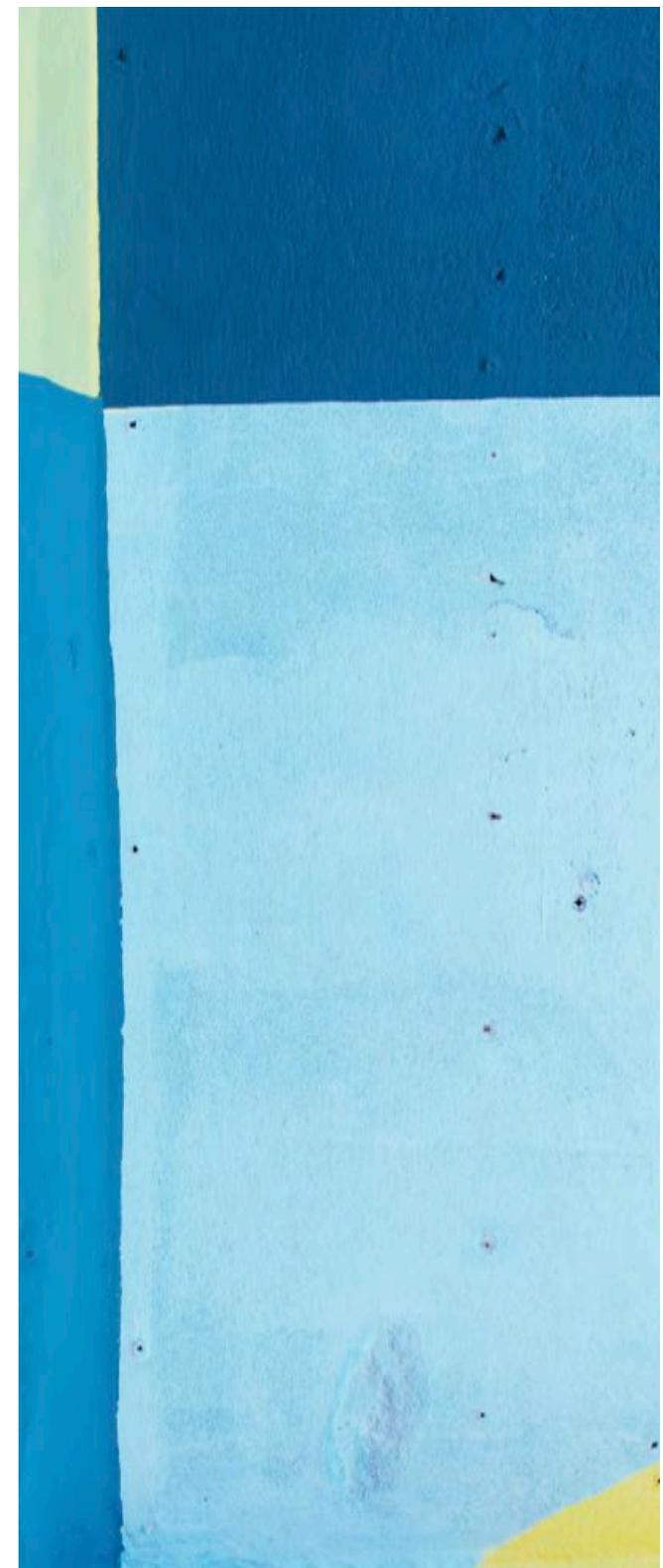
THANK YOU

The Statewide & Regional Stepping Stones to the National Digital Platform Project is grateful to have had the chance to work with and shine a spotlight on these incredible networks and communities.

This Collaboration Toolkit is arriving at a pivotal moment in the field of digital preservation. Preserving institutions are experiencing challenges to scaling up and sustaining engagement with large-scale national platforms. Institutions are recalibrating their strategies for achieving geographic distribution and offsite preservation of their valuable digital assets.

The Stepping Stones Project is here to help. As you make use of the Toolkit, the project partners want to hear from you. Be sure to visit the project website, dig a little deeper into all of the project's research and resources, and reach out with questions and feedback. Our work is just beginning!

https://www.gvsu.edu/library/stepping-stones-68.htm