
Project Planning

IMPACT Best Practice Guide

IMPACT project

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary	1
Business Case for digitisation	1
Description of material	2
Definition of outputs	2
Project management	3
Useful General Guides to Digitisation	4
Sample digitisation approval form	4

Best Practice Guide to Project Planning

Executive Summary

Digitisation projects take in expertise from a wide variety of institutional sources, from subject curators and preservation staff, hardware and software specialists, to experts in intellectual property law. Depending on the physical capacity of the institution and the size and type of the collections to be digitised, the process may involve external contractors at any stage.

For these reasons, institutions intending digitisation should establish a specific planning and approval process that sets out the operational context in which any digitisation is to be done, the baseline technical standards to be applied, the preferred business model(s) to be used in the eventual delivery of the digitised material, and the final storage of the digital objects produced. A consistent planning and approval model will make the scope of individual projects easier to define, and thereby aid any negotiations with internal stakeholders and external parties.

A sample digitisation project proposal is included at the end of this chapter, but here are the recommended features of any planning and approval process for digitisation:

Business Case for digitisation

- **Provides a good fit with institution’s strategy** - describe how this project will contribute to objectives in the institution’s business plan overall, or within the corporate digitisation strategy;
- **Provides a good fit with existing digitisation projects** - how does this proposal fit with what has already been digitised? Can it be related to other digitisation outputs (both within the organisation and outside of it)? Does it contribute to a more comprehensive virtual collection? Does it add to a “critical mass” of material that can make an institution’s users into mass digital consumers?

- **Summarise key benefits of work** - summarise the benefits to the institution following completion of the project;
- **Define the audience** - who is the intended audience? Provide evidence of demand. The nature of the audience will help define the access approach;
- **Define critical success factors** - while all digitisation projects are shaped by their context, defining and agreeing success factors from the outset determines how the project will be both managed and measured. These agreed measurable criteria may be defined as critical success factors. An example in a digitisation context would be the percentage take-up of a new service over a given time, with milestones for each annual improvement in take-up;
- **Detail known risks** - list any known risks that may have a bearing upon the final outcome of the project. These may include areas of potential slippage, overspends, and any further impediment that may hamper the project or even cause it to fail;
- **Provide an option appraisal** - provide details of any other options considered in the planning stage of the project, such as alternative uses for funding or alternative means of digitisation (e.g. digitise from original or from surrogate? Digitise internally or outsource work?)

Description of material

- **Description of content** - provide a detailed description of the items to be digitised, including the collection(s) they come from and what format they are in;
- **Define the size of the collection to be digitised** - identify the size of the project as appropriate to the type of collection item (e.g. books and newspapers should be measured in pages, where digitised sound would be measured in hours). If known, provide information on the number of digital items that will be created during the project;
- **Digitise from originals or surrogates** - if the original material is to be digitised where surrogates already exist, explain the rationale for the decision. Digitisation from microfilm is discussed in more detail in the IMPACT Case Study: Digitising surrogates - Scanning from Microfilm;
- **Preservation requirements of hardcopy material** - All items for digitisation should be subject to a preservation assessment. For mass digitisation projects it may not be possible or desirable to conduct a detailed assessment of individual items but a methodology should be agreed with the institution's preservation experts that adds value where feasible;
- **Preservation requirements of digitised content** - in consultation with preservation team, identify requirements for preservation and storage of digitised masters. An in-depth discussion of digital storage is provided in a later chapters of this resource, along with the IMPACT Storage Estimator [https://www.surfgroepen.nl/sites/impactproject/oc/GA%20Annex%201%20Description%20of%20Work/OC2/OC2.1/IMPACT_Storage-Estimator_BSB_version3-2.xls]

Definition of outputs

- **Define access approach** - detail how access to the digitised content is to be provided. If the access is via internet/extranet, the institution's web development specialists should be consulted about access requirements. Detail any limit to proposed access, i.e. on institution property only, or restricted to subscribers, etc.
- **Define digital capture standards** - How are the digital images to be made? What kind of processing might the images need to maximise their usefulness on delivery?

- **Define metadata standard to be followed** - including data to be harvested for institution catalogue. Metadata standards for mass digitisation are discussed in detail in IMPACT Best Practice Guide: Metadata
- **Funding approach and partners** - who will provide the funding for the project? Provide details of known partners. State any explicit conditions of funding which may affect business model;
- **Sustainability** - once the digitisation project has completed and the resource has been made available, how will it be sustained? This is a fundamental question that needs to be addressed at the planning stage of the project;
- **License Agreement/Contract** - For a full discussion of working with third-party suppliers, see the Best Practice Guide: Outsourcing

Project management

- **Timescales** - detail the planned start and end dates for the project, and/or the timetable and deadlines for funding applications;
- **Funding approach and partners** - who will provide the funding for the project? Provide details of known partners. State any explicit conditions of funding which may affect business model;
- **Approved by** - detail an individual or body within the institution who has the appropriate authority to approve the project to proceed;
- **Establish a Quality Plan** - agree methods by which the outputs of the project can be assessed. This can include research into finding the right means of digitisation (e.g. from original versus from microfilm), parameters for acceptable image quality, and tools for validating metadata;
- **Financial Implications** - detail how this project will be funded and any ongoing financial implications for the institution. Cost elements to consider are: project management, project administration, recruitment, data storage, digital preservation assessment, preservation assessment, metadata creation, digital capture, digital post-processing, quality assurance, retrieval, re-shelving, transport and insurance, microfilming, material preparation.

Key Terms

Mass digitisation: The conversion of extremely large amounts of printed material into digital format. Volumes in a mass digitisation workflow are selected on the basis of shared characteristics (bibliographic, rights-related, physical, etc.) to optimise the speed with which they can be scanned, described and published. Mass digitisation is characterised by a high degree of automation, highly structured workflows and low manual input. OCR tends to be used as an index to the basic metadata. The most prominent example of a mass digitisation project is Google Books

Large-scale digitisation: The conversion of large amounts of content into digital format. Like mass digitisation, large-scale digitisation is characterised by structured and largely automated workflows. Because of the smaller amount of material being processed, large-scale digitisation may include more flexible criteria for selection, more manual input, and some value-added features such as the structured tagging of OCR output

Boutique digitisation: The planned and ad hoc conversion of small amounts of analogue material, often unique and of high value, into high-quality digital format. Selection of volumes is usually precise, manual input is high, and the workflow is flexible so it can be adapted to new conditions. Work in this area is most often project based

Industrial digitisation: A digitisation workflow of any size that operationalises and integrates digitisation processes. It is characterised by the automated scanning, description, processing and publication of digital resources. Operationalisation of these steps allows the institution to derive increased strategic benefits which may be more difficult to achieve in a project based environment

Useful General Guides to Digitisation

Federal Agencies Digitization Guidelines Initiative. Retrieved, 10.03.2011 from: <http://www.digitizationguidelines.gov/>

Oxford Digital Library, *Metadata in the Oxford Digital Library*. Retrieved 10.03.2011 from: <http://www.odl.ox.ac.uk/metadata.htm>

Minerva, *Digitisation Guidelines: a selected list*. Retrieved 10.03.2011 from: <http://www.minervaeurope.org/guidelines.htm>

Puglia, S., Reed, J., and Rhodes, E. (2004). *Technical guidelines for digitizing archival materials for electronic access: Creation of production master files - raster images*. College Park, MD: National Archives and Records Administration. Retrieved 10.03.2011 from: <http://www.archives.gov/preservation/technical/guidelines.html>

National Library of Australia, Digitisation guidelines. Retrieved 10.03.2011 from: <http://www.nla.gov.au/digital/standards.html>

National Library of New Zealand, Digitisation guidelines. Retrieved 10.03.2011 from: <http://www.natlib.govt.nz/catalogues/library-documents/digitisation-guidelines/>

Yale University Library Digital Production & Integration Program, *Best Practices*. Retrieved 10.03.2011 from: <http://www.library.yale.edu/dpip/bestpractices/>

Sample digitisation approval form

This template is adapted from the British Library's digitisation approval form:

All sections within this form should be completed, if information is not available please note reasons in the space provided.

When complete submit to: [institution's senior responsible owner of digitisation projects]

Please note here any documents that accompany this form, such as finance breakdowns, Requests For Information (RFI) forms, etc.

Project information	
1	<p>Project Name or Working Title</p> <p>If there is no formal project title, please supply a working name. Ensure the name is clear and unambiguous to avoid confusion with other projects</p>
2	<p>Contact for Proposal</p> <p>The primary contact name and contact details</p> <p>Identify the manager who has authorised the proposal, and when.</p>
3	<p>Line Manager Approval</p> <p>Name: _____</p> <p>Date: _____</p>
4	<p>Proposal Document Version and Process Stage</p> <p>This should include information about which version number the proposal is currently on; a summary of revisions from any previous stages; and which formal stage the proposal is at.</p>
5	<p>Timescales that need to be adhered to and why</p>
6	<p>Approved By (inc. date)</p>
Content Details: Description of material and outputs	
7	<p>What:</p> <p>Collection</p> <p>Media</p> <p>Does it include any treasures or high profile items?</p> <p>How many:</p>
8	<p>Items</p> <p>Pages / Hours / Images</p>
9	<p>Originals or surrogates</p>
10	<p>Preservation requirements of hardcopy material</p>

Output	
11	Intended audience

12	Access approach: website/database/hard copy, internal or external
13	Digital capture standards to be used.
14	Metadata standard to be followed, including data to be gathered for institution catalogue
15	Process for preservation of digitised content

Business Model	
16	Funding route/partner
17	Business model to be used, refer to arrangements in the toolkit
18	Sustainability
19	License Agreement/Contract
20	Procurement need

Business Case	
21	Fit with institution strategy
22	Fit with other digitisation projects
23	Key benefits for institution
24	Define critical success factors
25	Risks
	Other options considered to
26	a. digitise content or
	b. use funding

Management of the project																															
27	Individual/department who will be managing project once approved																														
28	Reporting/audit expectations of funding/partner																														
29	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Financial Implications</td> <td>Income</td> <td>Year 1</td> <td>Year 2</td> <td>Year 3</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>External Funds</td> <td>[currency value]</td> <td>[currency value]</td> <td>[currency value]</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Ongoing Revenue</td> <td>[currency value]</td> <td>[currency value]</td> <td>[currency value]</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Total Income</td> <td>[currency value]</td> <td>[currency value]</td> <td>[currency value]</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Costs</td> <td>[currency value]</td> <td>[currency value]</td> <td>[currency value]</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>One-off Project</td> <td>[currency value]</td> <td>[currency value]</td> <td>[currency value]</td> </tr> </table>	Financial Implications	Income	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3		External Funds	[currency value]	[currency value]	[currency value]		Ongoing Revenue	[currency value]	[currency value]	[currency value]		Total Income	[currency value]	[currency value]	[currency value]		Costs	[currency value]	[currency value]	[currency value]		One-off Project	[currency value]	[currency value]	[currency value]
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	One-off Project	[currency value]	[currency value]	[currency value]																											

costs, e.g. digitisation etc. Ongoing [currency] [currency] [currency] costs value] value] value] – e.g. hosting Total [currency] [currency] [currency] Costs value] value] value] Net [currency] [currency] [currency] Funding value] value] value]			
Please annotate funding position with a “X”			
Self Funding	Within current budget	Bid - In year	Bid – Business Plan