LG-252340-OLS-22, Educopia Institute, Inc.

Educopia Institute, Inc., Sustaining Collaboration Among Community-Supported Digital Preservation Services and Planning for Continued Impact

Sustaining Collaboration Among Community-Supported Digital Preservation Services and Planning for Continued Impact

Educopia Institute, partnering with six members of the Digital Preservation Services Collaborative (APTrust, Chronopolis, CLOCKSS, LYRASIS, MetaArchive, and Texas Digital Library), requests $149,784.99 for an 18-month National Leadership Grant for Libraries to articulate the need for values-driven, community-supported distributed digital preservation service options and to propose a service model for collaboration that ensures the authority, sustainability, and viability of these options. This service model will delineate where partners could combine service efforts and/or remain independent for the sake of a variety of organizational and content needs, distributed digital preservation good practice,[1] efficiency, and sustainability at the field level. This project is submitted in the Planning Grant category, and aligns with NLG-L goals, including: to improve the ability of libraries and archives to provide broad access to and use of information and collections with emphasis on collaboration to avoid duplication and maximize reach (NLG-L Goal 3) and to strengthen their ability to work collaboratively for the benefit of the communities they serve (NLG-L Goal 5).

Project Justification

The nature of digital preservation, which consists of underlying policies, infrastructure, workflows, and sustained content stewardship over time, means that its benefits to the broader public are often not immediately apparent and tangible. However, **digital preservation is directly related to the ability of cultural heritage organizations to provide broad access to their collections**—in fact, preservation itself is a dependency for access. Jeff Rothenberg's oft-cited 1995 article, "Ensuring the Longevity of Digital Documents," makes a compelling argument in favor of digital preservation: in the year 2045, how will generations in the (now-imminent) future access the information created digitally by their grandparents and stored on a CD? Will they have disk drives? Will the CD itself be damaged? And even if they can mount the storage media, will they have the software to access the information?[2] The rapid rate of technological innovation and change makes it highly unlikely that digital information will be available for future access without a concerted effort to preserve it over time. This thought experiment applies not just to family heirlooms and personal digital archives—it is the crisis faced by all digital information that will comprise the future historical record, which is only heightened by the added threats of bad actors and natural disasters. The work of digital preservation is to preserve digital objects so that they undergird the advancement of civilization, humanity, and a better world. The impact of data loss is felt immediately and more frequently as the volume of digital information grows without adequate appraisal, advocacy, and funding for digital preservation.

<u>Why Values and Community Matter</u>
Values drive the work of cultural heritage organizations and practitioners—at the most basic level, we are working to make information as accessible and equitable as possible. The Digital Preservation Services Collaborative (DPSC), an unfunded volunteer alliance of mission-aligned service providers, put forth a [Digital Preservation Declaration of Shared Values](#) in 2017 (publishing Version 2 after a period of

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[1] MetaArchive Cooperative, Katherine Skinner, and Matt Schultz, "A Guide to Distributed Digital Preservation," Book, UNT Digital Library (Educopia Institute, 2010), https://digital.library.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metadc12850/.

[2] Jeff Rothenberg, "Ensuring the Longevity of Digital Documents," *Scientific American* 272, no. 1 (January 1995): 42–47, https://doi.org/10.1038/scientificamerican0195-42.

community feedback in 2018).[3] This document is part of a broader "values and principles" philosophy that has emerged in scholarly publishing and data stewardship and which underlies the FAIR Guiding Principles for scientific data management and stewardship, the HumetricsHSS Values Framework, and the CARE Principles for Indigenous Data Governance.[4] Like these peers, the DPSC has crafted its own values statement in order to differentiate between mission-driven and profit-driven activities, and to establish specific standards that can guide the efforts of its member organizations. This grant proposal uses the term "values-driven" to denote frameworks and service providers that commit to the Declaration of Shared Values, including through providing sufficient transparency to enable ongoing assessment of their technical and operational practices. Digital preservationists are futurists by trade[5]—to engage in digital preservation is to accept that organizational and individual decisions and actions have long-term consequences and to mitigate these through such assessment.

Community-supported digital preservation initiatives foster community empowerment in measurable and visible ways, especially through governance, community contributions, transparency, and accountability. In a "community" of cultural heritage organizations that acquire, select, describe, and provide access to digital content, relationships both with the content *and* its users are deeply rooted. These organizations are bound to their designated communities, stakeholders, donors, and patrons by a pledge to responsibly steward this content, and this gives them a unique vested interest in its preservation. These organizations need to be the decision-makers for preservation policies and actions. When preservation actions are outsourced to any external service, including a community-supported service, it is even more important to provide mechanisms for community control over policies. Preservation decisions can have significant and irreversible effects on the types of access that can be provided in the future and these decisions should be made intentionally, not because they are the default setting in a software program provided by a vendor. Community-supported digital preservation initiatives empower the organizations that are stewarding the content to make informed decisions by providing them with much more than "black box" solutions. They provide open solutions, along with training opportunities, community governance, and legible policies, and this combination improves the likelihood that preservation aspirations will be fulfilled.

A Networked Approach for Digital Preservation
Despite their benefits for cultural heritage workers and the general public, community-supported, values-driven digital preservation services operate in a landscape that is increasingly challenging. Funding for libraries has decreased steadily over many years, and digital preservation especially is often an unfunded mandate within cultural heritage organizations. In a 2017 survey conducted by the National Digital Stewardship Alliance (NDSA), organizations reported on average that staffing for digital

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[3] Digital Preservation Services Collaborative, "Digital Preservation Declaration of Shared Values," 2018, https://dpscollaborative.org/shared-values_en.html. For references to the impact of the Digital Preservation Declaration of Shared Values, see: NDSA Agenda Working Group, "2020 NDSA Agenda," April 29, 2020, https://doi.org/10.17605/OSF.IO/BCETD and Katherine Skinner and Sarah Wipperman, "Living Our Values and Principles: Exploring Assessment Strategies for the Scholarly Communication Field" (Atlanta, Georgia: Educopia Institute, 2020), https://educopia.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/20201105_NGLP_PrinciplesValues_Final Publication.pdf.

[4] Katherine Skinner and Sarah Wipperman, "Living Our Values and Principles: Exploring Assessment Strategies for the Scholarly Communication Field" (Atlanta, Georgia: Educopia Institute, 2020), https://educopia.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/20201105_NGLP_PrinciplesValues_FinalPublication.pdf.

[5] Trevor Owens, *The Theory and Craft of Digital Preservation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2018).

preservation activities was roughly half of what it ought to be.[6] Furthermore, digital stewardship practitioners are expressing increasing dissatisfaction with their jobs, citing both a lack of decision-making power at the organizational level and a culture that upholds discriminatory systems of privilege at the field level.[7] Digital preservation is also an activity, like any other activity that relies on information and communication technology, that contributes to climate change. As digital collections grow exponentially, the carbon footprint and environmental cost of digital preservation will also balloon without active mitigation.[8] These economic, labor, and environmental challenges are too big for any one organization to tackle alone. Digital preservation services and cultural heritage organizations need to undertake a networked approach to ensure the continued availability of digital content.

Networked approaches build relationships among multiple partners around a shared vision to accomplish goals as a way of going "further faster." Together, the partners in this proposal serve over 800 member organizations of varying types and sizes, from university archives to publishers to public libraries to historical societies to library consortia (see Supporting Document 1: Organizations Served by Project Partners). In the networked approach described in this proposal, it will be vital for partners to avoid a top-down framework and to meaningfully engage those in the community *most* affected by the issues the partners are trying to solve, rather than those whose needs are already being met. Digital preservation services often implement top-down solutions to large systemic problems, missing the critical community cultivation aspect of this work. Digital preservation solutions tend to be tailored to better-resourced institutions, rather than those that are truly feeling the squeeze of austerity measures on their digital preservation efforts. This initiative seeks to address these potential pitfalls by using this 18-month planning project to identify and recruit groups of stakeholders from institutions that are most impacted by the costs of digital preservation, and to build their perspectives into the planning and implementation process.

The digital preservation community has long supported and recommended more collaborative approaches. The NDSA's 2015 National Agenda for Digital Preservation noted the need for a coordinated ecosystem of distributed services: "stewardship organizations and funders need to better identify and implement processes to maintain key software platforms, tools, and services. We need better models to support long-term sustainability for common goods."[9] In 2018, the Digital Preservation Network (DPN), a well-funded effort to create a durable, diverse digital preservation infrastructure that would span multiple networks, sunsetted its operations just five years after it began. The shut-down announcement from DPN was a disturbing development not only for the organizations that had invested in its infrastructure, but also for other community-based organizations who correctly worried that DPN's demise would be interpreted inaccurately. Although DPN's failure was tied to the specific governance and funding model it followed (which arguably lacked appropriate levels of transparency and community oversight), many misread that

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[6] Winston Atkins et al., "Staffing for Effective Digital Preservation 2017: An NDSA Report," September 13, 2017, https://doi.org/10.17605/OSF.IO/3RCQK.

[7] Karl-Rainer Blumenthal et al., "What's Wrong with Digital Stewardship: Evaluating the Organization of Digital Preservation Programs from Practitioners' Perspectives," *Journal of Contemporary Archival Studies* 7, no. 1 (August 17, 2020), https://elischolar.library.yale.edu/jcas/vol7/iss1/13.

[8] Benjamin Matthew Goldman, "It's Not Easy Being Green(e): Digital Preservation in the Age of Climate Change," 2018, https://scholarsphere.psu.edu/resources/381e68bf-c199-4786-ae61-671aede4e041.

[9] NDSA Agenda Working Group, "2015 National Agenda," September 2014, https://osf.io/23vph/.

failure as though DPN was emblematic of all community-supported, values-driven digital preservation models. Indeed, in the fallout from the DPN sunset, Roger Schonfeld of Ithaka S+R questioned the appropriateness of membership models for these types of organizations and companies.[10] More recent critiques of membership organizations and community-based approaches have questioned whether such models can innovate quickly enough to keep up with marketplace demands due to governance structures that are overly burdensome.[11] This, too, conflates all membership models as though they share the same governance structures and organizational approaches.

This project will explore the feasibility of a shared service model that addresses these concerns around agility and costs, while also demonstrating that in the case of digital preservation, speed and innovation should not trump stability and maintenance. Additionally, the consensus-building, community-governed, and values-driven model that membership organizations operate on should not be so easily discarded, lest the actual needs of cultural heritage organizations and practitioners are left behind. This project will also aim to demonstrate that, with deliberate collaboration and careful analysis of needs, it is possible to be both values-driven and efficient.

This project will create and begin to test a service model for meaningful collaboration between community-supported, values-driven digital preservation services, identifying the strengths and weaknesses of particular models and where more consolidation may be warranted to bolster overall product offerings. The project's recruitment and requirements gathering are structured to be inclusive of a range of organizations, including those who are most impacted by the costs of digital preservation. The service model planning will be iterative and incremental, incorporating feedback from stakeholders.

Target Audience and Ultimate Beneficiaries
The target group for this project includes three major subgroups of practitioners and decision-makers at cultural heritage organizations:
- Stakeholders at organizations that already use the services offered by project partners;
- Stakeholders at organizations that are currently in relationships with for-profit vendors; and
- Stakeholders at organizations for whom digital preservation may currently be out of reach.

By focusing our requirements gathering and service planning efforts on these three subgroups, we plan to include the perspectives of the community that has already supported these services (and may have the best sense of the current strengths and weaknesses of different platforms), organizations that are seeking solutions and collaborations outside for-profit digital preservation service vendors (and will offer a valuable perspective on different organizational procurement processes), and organizations that are the most impacted by the costs of digital preservation and are thus far unable to use any of these services. Stakeholders representing a cross-section of all groups will be recruited during **Workstream I** of the project, using the recruitment criteria included in Supporting Document 2: Criteria List for Stakeholders.

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[10] Roger C. Schonfeld, "Why Is the Digital Preservation Network Disbanding?," The Scholarly Kitchen, December 13, 2018, https://scholarlykitchen.sspnet.org/2018/12/13/digital-preservation-network-disband/.
[11] Oya Rieger, Roger Schonfeld, and Liam Sweeney, "The Effectiveness and Durability of Digital Curation Systems" (unpublished draft, October 28, 2021).

The ultimate beneficiaries of this work fall into several categories. Other community-supported, values-driven digital preservation service providers (such as digital preservation communities that use LOCKSS) will benefit from increased attention on advocacy and fundraising for this type of collaborative digital preservation, which is increasingly hard when these services do not have the same resources for marketing and promotion as for-profit vendors who may be funded by venture capital. Other collaborative networks of communities and service providers (such as the Strategic Affiliates program of the Library Publishing Coalition)[12] should be able to benefit from seeing a transparent model for collaboration and consensus-building around shared values and advocacy efforts, which will be disseminated through a white paper (licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution [CC-BY] license for the widest possible dissemination and attribution) and at conferences and webinars. And ultimately, the researchers and general public who rely on digital cultural heritage to endure into the future will benefit from these efforts, which will focus on creating a sustainable pathway for preserving these materials.

Project Work Plan
Led by Hannah Wang (Project Director and Co-Principal Investigator) and Jessica Meyerson (Principal Investigator), in partnership with six values-aligned digital preservation service providers (APTrust, Chronopolis, CLOCKSS, LYRASIS, MetaArchive, and Texas Digital Library), this planning project will focus on exploratory activities that will study the needs for and feasibility of a collaborative community-supported digital preservation service.

Project Goals
We envision this project as the first part of a multi-phase collaborative development effort between digital preservation service providers, advisors, users, and funders. As such, this exploratory phase will focus on creating concrete plans for future development and implementation, as well as building and strengthening relationships between partners and stakeholders. These outcomes will establish a solid foundation for future phases of this collaboration.

Goal 1: Design a collaborative and multi-tiered service model for distributed digital preservation
This design will lay out the strategy and detailed work plan for future development of a collaborative service model that recognizes the variety of digital preservation needs for varied organizational types, content types, and collections. The service model will be informed by requirements gathered and priorities set during **Workstreams II** and **III** of this project. The service model design will be disseminated as a white paper, at conferences, and during webinars.

Goal 2: Recruit a diverse set of stakeholders, including advisors, service users, and funders, to provide input and feedback during planning and implementation
While all project partners have preexisting relationships with current users, funders of previous initiatives, and experts in the field, one of the primary goals of this project is to reach stakeholders whose needs, values, and priorities may have been historically excluded from digital preservation development efforts. These should include small- to mid-sized cultural heritage organizations, such as historical societies, and community archives. In order to build meaningful relationships with and assess the needs of these audiences, a large part of this project's work plan will be devoted to a concerted recruitment, advocacy, and engagement effort (**Workstreams I** and **II**). The target audiences for recruitment include:

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[12] "About Us | Library Publishing Coalition," accessed March 21, 2022, https://librarypublishing.org/about/.

- **Advisory Board:** Experts on fundraising, business development, and information technology; library administration and digital curation professionals (including representatives from community-based archives); representatives from community-supported, values-driven service providers not involved as project partners, and innovative digital preservation projects. The composition of the Advisory Board will be driven not only by these core competencies, but also by an effort to achieve representation across race, gender, and sexuality. (See Supporting Document 2: Criteria List for Stakeholders)
- **Service User Group:** Stakeholders at organizations that already use the services offered by project partners, organizations that are currently in relationships with for-profit vendors, and organizations for whom digital preservation may currently be out of reach. This group will include a mix of practitioners and decision-makers at organizations. The composition of the Service User Group will be driven not only by organizational affiliation, but also by an effort to achieve representation across race, gender, and sexuality. (See Supporting Document 2: Criteria List for Stakeholders)
- **Funders:** Agencies and foundations that prioritize the preservation of cultural heritage and sustainable infrastructure, such as the Institute of Museum and Library Services, the National Science Foundation, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, and the Siegel Family Endowment.

These stakeholders will be asked to provide input on needs and iterative feedback on project findings and deliverables; these individuals will also be invited to serve as stakeholders during the future implementation phase, after the conclusion of the planning project.

<u>Activities</u>
This project will consist of three overlapping workstreams, as specified in the Schedule of Completion. Throughout all workstreams, partners (Hannah Wang, Bradley Daigle, Courtney Mumma, Sibyl Schaefer, Lydia Tang, and Alicia Wise) will meet monthly over Zoom to discuss progress, review and contribute to deliverables, and plan next steps. The Project Director (Hannah Wang) will convene all monthly project meetings, which may also include members of the Advisory Board and the Consultant, when appropriate. The Principal Investigator (Jessica Meyerson) will oversee grant administration, advise on project deliverables, and engage in outreach activities.

Outreach to funders will be an ongoing effort from January 2023 to January 2024. The Project Director and Principal Investigator will meet with agencies and foundations of varying sizes that fund projects on the preservation of cultural heritage, sustainable infrastructure, and community archives to present on project findings and gather feedback. The timing and frequency of these meetings will be contingent on the availability and interest of these funders, but the Project Director and Principal Investigator will aim to meet with at least three funders at two junctures in the project: once findings from **Workstream II** have been synthesized, and once a preliminary service model has been proposed toward the end of **Workstream III**. The goals of this outreach activity are two-fold: (1) to learn more about the digital preservation needs of current grantees, particularly smaller cultural heritage organizations with fewer resources, and (2) to gauge and cultivate interest in this planning project, with the aim of funding future development and implementation.

Workstream I: Recruitment (August 2022 - December 2022)
In this workstream, the Project Director and partners will recruit an independent Consultant, an Advisory Board, and a Service User Group. The Consultant will be selected based on their experience conducting qualitative research and facilitating groups through complex decision-making processes. The Consultant's role will involve developing research instruments during **Workstream II**, facilitating planning conversations with partners and stakeholders during **Workstream III**, and assisting the project team with evaluation activities (see Supporting Document 3: Request for Proposal - Distributed Digital Preservation Project Consultant). The Request for Proposal will be posted on Educopia's website and distributed via social media, listservs, and to individual partner contacts who may be interested. Partners already have a preliminary list of potential Consultant candidates, but recruitment for this role will not begin in earnest until August 2022, and the Consultant will begin working in September 2022.

Two stakeholder groups will also be recruited in this workstream: the Advisory Board and the Service User Group. From August to October 2022, the Project Director, in consultation with partners, will develop a project pitch deck to be used for stakeholder outreach and recruitment as well as plan an in-person kick-off meeting, to be held in conjunction with the DLF Forum in Baltimore. During this kick-off meeting, partners will review and refine the pitch deck and the recruitment criteria for the Advisory Board and the Service User Group. Partners will also develop an intake survey for Service User Group members to assess their familiarity with digital preservation concepts and practice.

The ten-person Advisory Board is intended to outlive the duration of the planning project and advise on future development and implementation. The Project Director and partners will identify and recruit Advisory Board members from October to December 2022. The partners have begun brainstorming a list of potential Advisory Board members and have reached out to some candidates. However, in order to give full time and consideration to potential candidates, and in order to meet the diversity goals described in the Diversity Plan, recruitment will not begin in earnest until October 2022. The Advisory Board will convene at quarterly virtual meetings throughout the duration of the planning project, starting in December 2022. At these meetings, which will be convened by the Project Director, the project team will provide progress updates, facilitate discussions around project findings, and solicit feedback from advisors on project recommendations and deliverables. The Advisory Board must be able to serve as a critical feedback mechanism for the project, checking partner assumptions and data underlying decision-making and prioritization. When an outside facilitator is necessary in order to solicit objective advisory feedback (for example, when partner services are being evaluated), the Consultant will facilitate those Advisory Board meetings.

The Service User Group, which is also meant to outlive the duration of the planning project, will consist of practitioners and decision-makers from organizations that currently use partner services (APTrust, Chronopolis, CLOCKSS, LYRASIS, MetaArchive, and Texas Digital Library), organizations that are currently using for-profit vendor services, and organizations for whom digital preservation may currently be out of reach, including small- to mid-sized cultural heritage organizations and community-based archives. The project will aim to recruit up to 20 stakeholders to the Service User Group. Recruitment for the Service User Group will be conducted by the Consultant, in consultation with the partners and Advisory Board, from October to December 2022. The Service User Group will meet virtually three times. In the first meeting in January 2023, the Project Director and partners will introduce the Service

User Group to the goals of the project and provide any contextual information needed prior to the survey distribution and interviews described in **Workstream II**. In the second meeting in August 2023, the Service User Group will meet again to review and provide feedback on project findings and the early stages of service model planning. In the third meeting in November 2023 (the virtual closing forum), the Service User Group will review and provide feedback on the current iteration of the service model. As with the Advisory Board meetings, when an outside facilitator is necessary in order to solicit objective feedback from stakeholders, the Consultant will facilitate those meetings.

Workstream II: Requirements Gathering (September 2022 - August 2023)
In this workstream, the project team will conduct research to gather requirements for the planned service model through surveys and analyses of stakeholders and partner service offerings. From September to December 2022, the Project Director and Consultant will develop research instruments, including a stakeholder survey, interview protocols, and a framework for comparing partner service offerings. During this workstream, the project will seek to gather information from stakeholders about digital preservation workflows, staffing levels, research and development priorities, infrastructure requirements, advocacy strategies, and potential cost models. The project will also leverage existing research in this area from Ithaka S+R, the NDSA, the DPC, and other organizations that have gathered and published data about digital preservation service requirements.[13]

From January to March 2023, the Consultant will distribute the survey and administer the interviews to the Service User Group and gather data for the comparative analysis of partner service offerings. From April to May 2023, the Project Director, under guidance from the partners, will use a mixed methods approach to analyze and synthesize this data in order to define libraries' and archives' requirements for values-driven, community-supported distributed digital preservation service options, and the capabilities and drawbacks of current service offerings, building on previous research and environmental scans. Findings from this workstream will be presented to the Advisory Board and Service User Group at their June and August 2023 meetings. At this point, the project team will be seeking feedback from stakeholders on underlying assumptions and conclusions drawn from the data, which will inform the planning activities in **Workstream III**.

Workstream III: Design (June 2023 - January 2024)
In this workstream, the project team will develop a design for a future collaborative digital preservation service model. Starting in June 2023, the Consultant, with assistance from the Project Director, will guide the partners through facilitated exercises to design a service model that is feasible for the partners to accomplish and meets the requirements defined during **Workstream II**. The first high-level draft of this service model design will be completed by August 2023, in order to share with the Service User Group and Advisory Board for feedback at their August and September 2023 meetings. This feedback will be gathered by the Project Director and Consultant, and incorporated during the second iteration of the service model design. The virtual closing forum in November 2023 will bring together all partners, the

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[13] Carol Kussmann et al., "2019 Storage Infrastructure Survey," February 24, 2020, https://doi.org/10.17605/OSF.IO/UWSG7; "LG-246365-OLS-20," accessed March 21, 2022, http://www.imls.gov/grants/awarded/lg-246365-ols-20; "Procurement Toolkit - Digital Preservation Coalition," accessed March 22, 2022, https://www.dpconline.org/digipres/implement-digipres/procurement-toolkit; Winston Atkins et al., "Staffing for Effective Digital Preservation 2017: An NDSA Report," September 13, 2017, https://doi.org/10.17605/OSF.IO/3RCQK.

Consultant, the Advisory Board, and the Service User Group. This full-day virtual event, planned and facilitated by the partners and the Consultant, will include a review and discussion of the service model and the inputs in its design and a discussion of what may be missing from the current iteration. The Advisory Board and the Service User Group will be released for the second half of the day, when the partners will hold a collaborative working session to plan and begin work on writing the white paper. Partners have had great success using Liberating Structures[14] to plan and facilitate interactive virtual events and will likely use at least one LS activity in this event. The white paper, which will share requirements gathered and lessons learned during the project as well as the design for future development, will be written by the partners during the last three months of the grant.

If possible and appropriate, the white paper writing phase of the project will include a brief high-level test of the service model, which will be reported on in the white paper. The form of the proposed service model is highly dependent on the findings from **Workstream II**. If, for example, partners find that stakeholders require crosswalks out of their current proprietary platforms into a collaborative service, the partners may be able to create a proof of concept for one such crosswalk. If, on the other hand, partners find that the best way to combine their efforts is to provide more clarity around their respective services through a brokering service, the test might consist of a few tabletop exercises using different procurement scenarios. Since there is no way to know currently what the proposed service model will look like, these are hypothetical examples of possible models and the ways that partners might test them.

Between October 2023 and January 2024, partners will present on project progress, including iterative planning and results, during at least one conference, such as the Digital Library Forum, the National Digital Stewardship Alliance's Digital Preservation conference, Open Repositories, or the International Conference on Digital Preservation. The white paper will be professionally designed and made accessible for people who use screen readers and other assistive technology, and it will be made publicly available through the Educopia website. The project will also run a strategic communications campaign to promote the project in January 2024. This campaign will include a major deliverable release through newsletters, social media, and listservs (for groups such as the Association of Moving Image Archivists, Code4Lib, Digital Curation Google Group, the Digital Library Federation, the National Digital Stewardship Alliance, the Preservation and Archiving Special Interest Group, and the Society of American Archivists), and a closing webinar featuring all partners. The closing webinar will be recorded and made publicly available through the Educopia website after the event. Feedback on the white paper will be solicited during this webinar and collected through an online form.

Diversity Plan
The field of digital preservation is plagued by diversity issues on multiple levels: collections under- and misrepresent historically marginalized viewpoints, digital infrastructure is too costly for under-resourced institutions, and practitioners operate within a professional culture of digital preservation that upholds discriminatory systems of privilege.[15] By centering a set of shared values that empower communities of

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[14] Keith McCandless Lipmanowicz Henri, "Liberating Structures," accessed March 23, 2022, https://www.liberatingstructures.com/. Liberating Structures are creative meeting activities that are meant to bolster engagement, trust, and inclusion among participants, leading to more innovative and productive meeting outcomes.
[15] Karl-Rainer Blumenthal et al., "What's Wrong with Digital Stewardship: Evaluating the Organization of Digital Preservation Programs from Practitioners' Perspectives," *Journal of Contemporary Archival Studies* 7, no. 1 (August 17, 2020), https://elischolar.library.yale.edu/jcas/vol7/iss1/13.

practitioners, the project aims to engage in a collaborative, bottom-up process that brings multiple stakeholders into the big tent of planning for the future of digital preservation.

The project team plans to recruit a diverse set of stakeholders to take part in the survey and interview process, drawing from not only current users of their services but also from users who may view these services as out-of-reach or impractical. Specifically, in recruiting the Advisory Board and Service User Group, the project team will aim to create groups that are at least 50% BIPOC and at least 50% women or LGBTQIA. Recruitment for the Service User Group will also aim to achieve representation across organization types, including small- and mid-sized cultural heritage organizations and community archives (see Supporting Document 2: Criteria List for Stakeholders). Additionally, the project team commits to making major deliverables, including the white paper and video recordings, accessible for people who use screen readers and other assistive technology.

Project Results
The intended results of this project are a collaborative and multi-tiered service model for distributed digital preservation and a diverse set of stakeholders, including advisors, service users, and funders, to provide input and feedback beyond the planning phase. The white paper will articulate the need for community-supported, values-driven digital preservation services, and the service model will propose a framework for addressing this need and provide a solid foundation for future development and advocacy. The stakeholders will provide input and hold the partners accountable for creating a service model that is authoritative, sustainable, viable, and affordable without compromising on values or community control.

The white paper will include not just project findings and recommendations for implementation, but also lessons learned that are applicable to other collaborative networks and digital preservation communities, such as advocacy strategies, research and development priorities, practical applications of digital preservation values, and infrastructural pain points. This may help other networks develop values-driven services in the digital stewardship sector and advocate for the digital preservation needs of cultural heritage organizations.

Ultimately, this project aims to set the groundwork for a future development and implementation project for this service model. The next steps will include:
- Using the service model and white paper to recruit other potential partners;
- Creating a roadmap for development, outlining major development priorities, milestones, and strategic alignment; and
- Securing funding for development and implementation.

This project will represent a significant collaboration between six major digital preservation service providers who, up until this point, have made coordinated but unfunded contributions to the field through the sheer power of shared values and goals. As the challenges of digital preservation grow, and it becomes increasingly difficult to advocate for digital preservation resources in the narrowing budgets of cultural heritage organizations, this kind of networked approach is even more urgently needed. In the digital information age, digital preservation is a dependency for future access. The continued availability of services that prioritize transparency and accountability to the cultural heritage organizations they serve is necessary for these organizations to grant broad and sustained access to their digital materials.

Schedule of Completion

	2022					2023												2024
	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan
WORKSTREAM I: RECRUITMENT																		
Hire Consultant	■	■																
Project pitch deck development	■	■	■															
In-person kick-off meeting planning	■	■	■															
In-person kick-off meeting			■															
Intake survey development			■															
Recruit Advisory Board			■	■	■													
Recruit Service User Group			■	■	■													
WORKSTREAM II: REQUIREMENTS GATHERING																		
Research instrument development		■	■	■	■													
Stakeholder survey						■	■	■										
Comparative analysis of services						■	■	■										
Data analysis and synthesis									■	■								
Present findings to stakeholders											■		■					
WORKSTREAM III: DESIGN																		
Service model design and planning: first iteration											■	■	■					
Service model design and planning: second iteration														■	■	■		
Presentations on findings and service model design																■	■	■
Virtual closing forum															■			
White paper																■	■	■
Strategic communications campaign																		■
Webinar																		■
ONGOING MEETINGS AND OUTREACH																		
Partner meetings	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Advisory Board meetings				■			■				■					■		
Service User Group meetings						■							■					
Outreach to funders						■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
ONGOING EVALUATION ACTIVITIES																		
Internal assessment and evaluation: effectiveness, efficiency, timeliness						■					■							■
Stakeholder feedback surveys: effectiveness, efficiency, quality														■		■		■
Public feedback survey																		■
Consultant work log submission					■			■			■			■			■	
Summative evaluation																■	■	■

Digital Products Plan

Type

The digital products expected from this project include:

- A white paper that will share requirements gathered and lessons learned during the project, as well as the design for the future development of a values-driven, community supported digital preservation service model;
- A project pitch deck, which will be used to recruit stakeholders and introduce funders to the project;
- Qualitative research instruments for requirements gathering among Service User Group and partners, which may include interview protocols, focus group protocols, and survey questionnaires;
- Research data, which may include interview transcripts, focus group notes, and survey responses; and
- A closing webinar video recording and presentation, which will include a transcript and presentation slides.

The white paper, project pitch deck, qualitative research instruments, closing webinar transcript, and closing webinar slides will be made available as digital download in PDF format. The closing webinar video recording will be made available as digital download in MPEG-4 video format.

Availability

All public-facing outputs (white paper, research instruments, and closing webinar recording, transcript, and presentation slides) will be made available on Educopia's website (educopia.org) on a dedicated webpage for the project. The deliverables will be promoted widely through Educopia's newsletter and blog, various social media accounts, and relevant listservs.

The recording of the closing webinar will exist on Educopia's YouTube channel (https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCclexiRJem2DBWg8ApmrBHA).

No data that would allow individuals to be individually identified will be included in the public outputs without proper consent.

Access

All public-facing outputs will be licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution (CC-BY) license for the widest possible dissemination and attribution. We will assert no ownership rights beyond the basic attribution clause in the CC-BY license.

Sustainability

All public-facing outputs will be uploaded through an open-access repository (e.g., Zenodo) and assigned an individual DOI. Educopia will manage hosting and backup of this asset by utilizing WordPressEngine. Additional back-up files will be housed in a private, protected drive only accessible to Educopia staff and project partners.

<u>Organizational Profile</u>

Mission: The [Educopia Institute](#) empowers collaborative communities to create, share, and preserve knowledge. Every activity we undertake is explicitly designed to encourage system-wide transformation as organizations work collectively to ensure knowledge is sustainably produced, widely shared, and preserved. Since 2006, Educopia has specialized in:

- Working with community leaders to harness state-of-the-field research while developing organizational frameworks, governance structures, and economic models that provide the foundation for community-driven growth and sustainability.
- Offering advising and consulting services to libraries, consortia, and associations; producing reports, publications, and policy documentation; and hosting symposia, seminars, and workshops.
- Catalyzing cross-institutional projects with academic and cultural institutions, applying for grants on their behalf, and administering and facilitating such grants when awarded.

Service Areas:

Communities: Educopia is a fiscal host to collaborative communities dedicated to creating, sharing, and preserving knowledge. All of our hosted communities are mission-aligned, but range widely in terms of their focus, activities, services, and revenue models. Affiliated Communities include: BitCurator Consortium (members include research libraries, government archives, and other cultural heritage institutions), Library Publishing Coalition (members include research libraries and consortia), MetaArchive Cooperative (members include research libraries, consortia, and museums), and the Software Preservation Network (members include research libraries, archives, and museums).

Research: Through research, Educopia seeks to transform entire disciplines, going beyond individual institutions and communities to bring about systemic change through state-of-the-field studies and focused action plans. We seek to leverage the power of applied research to advance not just libraries, research centers, museums, or publishing groups, but the entire fields in which these institutions operate. Current research tracks for the Educopia Institute include: digital preservation, scholarly communication, and community cultivation. In these areas we manage research teams comprising research libraries and archives, association directors, and others, primarily from across the libraries and archives fields.

Consulting: Educopia provides consulting services for a wide variety of academic, research, and memory institutions on areas relevant to its networks and communities. We tailor our training, facilitation, and tools to every client by understanding the organization's current development through the lens of Educopia's [Community Cultivation Framework](#).

History: The Educopia Institute is a 501(c)(3) organization founded in 2006, to serve and advance the wellbeing of libraries by catalyzing the advancement of shared information systems and infrastructures. We are an intentionally small, virtual organization currently comprising 14 employees.