Digital Initiatives Collections Development Policy

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Iowa State University Library Digital Initiatives Unit
Digital Collection Development Policy

The Digital Initiatives Unit at the Iowa State University Library draws from across the University Library’s rare and unique local collections to develop open access digital resources that support teaching, scholarship, and learning. This policy is focused on the digital collections, overseen by the Digital Initiatives Unit, which contains digitized materials from the ISU Library and occasionally beyond. Digital Collections are selected from the library’s collections, including the Special Collections and University Archives Department.

The Digital Initiatives Archivist oversees the selection of materials for the digital collections, which can include collaborative work with university faculty, staff, and students. Digitization projects proposed outside of the Digital Initiatives Unit will be chosen through consultation with Digital Initiatives Unit staff and other stakeholders.

Mission:
For the Digital Initiatives Unit mission, see: http://digitalinitiatives.lib.iastate.edu/about-us

Policy Goals
The goal of this policy is to outline the considerations which take place during the planning stages and when a digital collection is created, generating a consistent and structured approach to the decision-making process.

This policy should be used to set priorities, develop digital project proposals, and provide the Iowa State University community with an understanding of how and why digital collections are undertaken.

Policy Scope
This policy covers the selection criteria for digital collection projects, which are overseen by the Digital Initiatives Unit. The policy covers any level of selection, from an entire project to a single item. It does not include the Digital Repository nor the Digital Press, the goals and strategies of which are described elsewhere.

For questions related to digital material oversight, see the library’s Digital Materials Stewardship Policy.

Prerequisites
Digitization projects must meet all prerequisite criteria before they will be considered.

Strategic Goals
- Digitization projects should align with the missions and strategic directions of Iowa State University and the University Library
- Digital collections are primarily created from the library’s General Collection and Special Collections and University Archives holdings, and should follow the respective collection development policies of the Iowa State University Library.

Rights
Material considered for digitization should fall into at least one of the following categories:
- Works in the Public Domain.
Selection Criteria

Digital Collections as a whole emphasize the unique collection strengths of the Iowa State University Library, especially those as described in the Special Collections and University Archives Collection Policy. The following criteria need to be taken into consideration when selecting a collection or item for digitization, and when prioritizing digitization projects.

Rights, Privacy, and Ethics

- **Cultural Sensitivity.** When working with culturally sensitive materials, respect will be given to the documented culture. When the materials document indigenous materials, the Protocols for Native American Archival Materials (Society of American Archivists) will be consulted.

- **Orphan Works.** Orphan works may be considered for digitization when a reasonable effort has been made to identify and locate the copyright holder, following the Orphan Works: Statement of Best Practices (Society of American Archivists approved standard).

- **Privacy.** The privacy of individuals and groups will be taken into account during the selection process, especially when they had no voice or role in its dissemination. United States and Iowa law, as well as campus policies, pertaining to privacy will be followed (FERPA, HIPAA, etc.).

- **Time and Effort.** If a significant portion of the digitization project will involve efforts related to rights, privacy, and ethics – such as obtaining written permissions to digitize and/or investigate orphan works - a lower priority will be given to the project since these have the potential to require an extensive amount of time and resources.

Collaborative Support

- **Assistance.** Digitization projects may be suggested by the Iowa State University community, with the understanding that if the project is selected, they may be expected to collaborate and contribute to the creation of the digital collection. In addition to benefitting the project as a whole, collaboration will increase the project’s likelihood of acceptance and priority.

Access and Use

- **Added Value.** Digitization would enhance value to users. This includes improved discovery, unrestricted remote access, and distinctive and/or transformative use available only through digitization.

- **Critical Need.** Materials are needed for outreach, campus events, exhibits, and anniversary celebrations.

- **Demonstrated Interest.** Interest for purposes of research, teaching, or study. In particular, ongoing use by the Iowa State University community for classroom project(s) and/or research and scholarship will be taken into particular consideration.

- **Evidence of Use.** Materials are in high use or have the potential for high use once digitized. Physical condition will be taken into particular consideration for high use materials.

- **Organization and Metadata.** Ideally, collections and items should have an access point before being selected for digitization, such as a catalog record and/or finding aid. Archival collections must be processed, described, and ready for use. Extent of organization and description effects
time and effort spent on selection and digitization (especially larger collections), and will be considered during the selection process.

- **Restrictions.** Priority will be given to works which are not restricted – including restricted to internal (Iowa State University) use.
- **Unique and Rich in Content.** Materials are unique or rare, and provide information, insight, or perspectives not well-documented by other materials within or beyond the Library.

**Relationship(s) to Other Holdings**

- **Cohesive and/or Complimentary in Nature.** Materials form a coherent collection on their own, fill gaps in existing collections, or complement existing collection strengths. Materials which build on existing digital collections, whether at Iowa State University or elsewhere, can increase the research value of materials. Potential for collaborative collection building provides an additional benefit.
- **Collaborative Potential.** Potential for collaborative collection building and/or relationships with other institutions and stakeholder groups. This includes uniting materials dispersed across geographic locations through digitization.

**Preservation and Risk**

- **Condition Limits Use.** Physical condition or current access of the originals limits use.
- **At Risk of Loss.** Materials are at high risk because of fragility, chemical instability, high risk for theft, etc. Materials at risk of loss due to deterioration may have a higher priority.

**Development and Funding**

- **Funding requirements.** Donors and grant-making agencies may stipulate funding priorities that will impact digitization priorities.
- **Funding Potential.** Digitization offers the potential to attract funding.

**Limitations**

The following factors (most of which are discussed above) will be taken into consideration for materials that meet digitization priorities but may not warrant digitization because:

- **Rights Ethics, and Privacy.** Cannot be shared without violating copyright law and privacy rights. Presents one or more ethical and/or privacy concern(s) when put online for wide use and discoverability.
- **Duplication.** Is duplicative of material digitized elsewhere.
- **Completeness.** Does not comprise a complete work (e.g. a single page from a book).
- **Preservation Requirements.** Preservation needs may limit the ability for a collection or item to be digitized. Especially if extremely rare or unique, the material should be digitized safely without damaging or destroying the originals. A lower priority will be given to the project or item if the material requires extensive preservation work, unless the project allocates funding and/or staff time for said preservation treatment.
- **Potential for harm.** Digitization will compromise the physical integrity of the item to be digitized, especially if the item is unique, irreplaceable, and its intrinsic value necessitates keeping the item in its original form.
Digitization Project Categories
Selection of digital materials will fall into one or more of the following distinct categories:

- **Ongoing.** Ongoing digitization projects for specific digital collections. These projects are generally not subject to specific deadlines, and are most often formulated by the Digital Initiatives Unit.

- **Funded.** Specifically-funded digitization projects made possible through grants or gifts. These will often involve short-term staff and will usually be subject to specific deadlines and specific parameters.

- **Proposed.** Projects submitted through the digitization proposal process. These include requests by researchers and faculty for teaching purposes. Although single-purpose digitization is necessary, it is not the focus of digitization projects. Proposals will be evaluated based on the selection criteria outlined in this policy.