Cornell University Library Repository Principles and Strategies Handbook

Introduction

In order to better coordinate a repository ecology that includes multitudinous individual systems, and synthesize staff knowledge and expertise that spans decades, the Repository Principles subgroup of CUL's Repository Executive Group (RepoExec) has created this open handbook of repository principles and strategies.

The handbook provides support for both new and existing repository managers, comprising both recommended practices and specifically identified action steps that will allow them to track their progress and identify gaps. Each section of the handbook covers a different strategic area of repository management, standing largely on its own and linking to other sections when appropriate. Although there is no primary section order, we recommend starting with Repository Scope and Service Planning.

The handbook specifically addresses principles and practices pertaining to digital repositories, where a digital repository can be defined as: a system, the purpose of which is to store, present, and preserve a collection of data for which the library provides services. That is, the term refers specifically to the application as opposed to the content (collections, objects and metadata) within.

Additionally, the handbook is designed to engender a larger conversation about repository management practices, both at Cornell and beyond. As such, it is a living document that RepoExec will continue to edit and update in response to changes in the repository landscape and feedback from readers. While the handbook points to Cornell-specific service centers for providing in-house services and consulting, it is our hope that the document may be useful to a readership beyond the Cornell University Library.

Feedback welcome!
We encourage readers to provide feedback on both the content and presentation of the handbook in one of two ways: (1) by using the comment section at the bottom of each section (best for general observations about the section as a whole) or (2) by using the inline comment feature (best for comments that are specific to a particular element within the section). Please see the Confluence Support Blog for guidance on how to add inline comments.

A single document version of this handbook exists in Cornell's institutional repository, eCommons: http://hdl.handle.net/1813/57034

Below you will find the grounding principles that underlie the handbook, and repository work at CUL; the sections that comprise the handbook; and the terminology used within the handbook for the roles that should be filled when providing repository services.

Grounding Principles

1. Repositories are services that require support; they are not discrete projects or information silos; they exist within a larger Cornell repositories ecosystem.
2. Repository services are dedicated to preserving and providing access to digital objects and their metadata.
3. Repository services should be developed with users' needs, ethos, and workflows in mind.
4. Repository services are dedicated to sustainable support and access of the objects for users.

Sections

The handbook is divided into the following sections. Each section was written by a pair of primary authors, selected for their interest and expertise in the topic covered, with revisions and additional material provided by the subgroup as a whole.

- Defining repository scope
- Service Planning
- Access: Discovery and Delivery
- Assessment of Impact
- Curation
- Policy and Documentation
- Infrastructure and Interoperability
- Metadata Design and Best Practices
- Outreach
- Preservation
- Rights Management

Role Identification
The following terminology is used throughout the handbook to describe individuals who fulfill key roles in supporting repository services. The assignment of these roles, and even how many roles an individual may fill, can vary depending on a variety of factors. Furthermore, some of these roles will be filled within a given team or department providing repository service support, while other may be functional experts within CUL.

Once the identities of the **Service Sponsor** and **Repository Service Owner** have been determined, they should work together to identify individuals who will fulfill the other roles.

- **Service Sponsor**: Often at the senior manager level, the Service Sponsor is responsible for providing fiscal sponsorship of the repository service, as well as high-level leadership and representation to the Library Executive Group (LEG). The service sponsor may also make final determination on collection model (active or passive), as this has major implications for staffing needs.

- **Repository Service Owner**: Provides leadership on the essential aspects of operating the application, including contract negotiation and policy writing. Serves as the main point of contact for functional concerns, including identification of appropriate format types and interoperability with other repository services. May partner with others on outreach efforts, including the Content Selector. May route concerns to technical support team, if present.

- **Repository Service Manager**: Under the guidance of the Repository Service Owner, the Repository Service Manager may be responsible for identifying and responding to technical support of the repository service, with tasks including: installation; maintenance; upgrades and migrations; and monitoring or routing break/fix responses.

- **Content Creator**: Responsible for the creation of content that is included in the repository. This role is usually independent of or external to the library and/or repository service provider. The issues surrounding this role are covered in more depth in the Curation section.

- **Content Selector (a.k.a. Collection Curator)**: As with the Content Creator, this role may be fulfilled by a stakeholder who is external to the Library. There may also be multiple Content Selectors for a given repository service. At minimum, the Content Selector is responsible for defining the conditions of acceptance and determining which intellectual content will be included in repository, as well as serving as the main point of contact for a collection. Depending on the collection model, the Content Selector may also define primary user communities, oversee selection and collection strategies, as well as supervise the Metadata Capturer to ensure basic metadata quality control. May provide leadership on evaluating quality of analog objects for potential digitization and ingest.

- **Metadata Strategist (a.k.a Data Modeler)**: Responsible for identifying functional requirements and selecting appropriate metadata modelling to ensure interoperability and reusability of metadata outside of its home repository. May also perform metadata maintenance and clean-up using manual as well a batch processes. It is highly recommended that you consult with CUL Metadata Services.

- **Preservation Strategist**: Responsible for consulting as needed on aspects of digital preservation and curation. It is highly recommended that you consult with Digital Scholarship & Preservation Services.

- **Rights Management Strategist**: Responsible for performing permissions analysis and consulting as needed on more advanced rights management concerns. It is highly recommended that you consult with the Copyright Information Center.

- **UX/UI Strategist**: Responsible for the design, testing, and management of the user interfaces -- both public-facing and back-end -- of the repository. They are responsible for managing accessibility audits and usability testing for these systems. It is highly recommended that you consult with Digital Scholarship & Preservation Services.

Depending on the platform, collection model, and type of content intended for the repository, other roles and responsibilities may include:

- **Metadata Capturer**: Responsible for capturing and entering required metadata as defined by the Metadata Strategist, using appropriate templates and standards as provided. This role may be fulfilled by a stakeholder who is external to the Library.

- **Digitization Team**: Responsible for working with the Content Selector to evaluate quality of analog objects for potential digitization and to then actually digitize content. It is highly recommended that you consult with Digital Consulting & Production Services (DCAPS).

- **Technical Support**: With leadership from the Repository Service Manager, the technical support team may assist with installation, maintenance, upgrades and migrations, and monitoring/routing break/fix responses. It is highly recommended that you consult with CUL IT.

### Related Documents

- Repository Inventory
- IR User Stories

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