

Digital Preservation at Oxford and Cambridge

A collaborative research project to evaluate and provide sustainable recommendations for our digital preservation programmes

The Fellows' routes into digital preservation

Posted on [20 October, 2016](#) by [ljp](#)

One of the important thoughts that we took away from iPres2016 is that we are not alone in trying to implement a digital preservation programme at Oxford and Cambridge: we are part of a helpful, collaborative digital preservation community. We were also struck by the variety of backgrounds conference attendees had that brought them to the digital preservation field.

Leaving a debate on the definition of digital preservation aside (we will be blogging on this in the future!), the variety of backgrounds got us thinking firstly about the skills, knowledge and competency survey that we have been tasked with. Secondly – and more importantly for this blog – about the backgrounds and experiences of the Polonsky team and what attributes each one brings to the project team. We put the following two questions to the Fellows:

1. What background and experience do you bring to the project?
2. What particular skills, knowledge and attributes do you bring project?

These are their thoughts:

Dave

I have worked in IT systems design and development for 20 years, recently graduating with a PhD in Information Science. I have worked with museums and archives on digitisation projects. I have knowledge of Information Retrieval that is applicable to the discovery aspects of digital preservation, but I have plenty of expertise of working with data more generally, too.

Edith

I come from a background in the Social Sciences and Archives, which has given me experience in collecting and interpreting evidence. This was the path which brought me into Digital Preservation, as I enjoy constantly learning, problem-solving and of course lovely big chunks of data.

Lee

I have a professional background in records management, archives and UK information compliance with over a decade of experience. I enjoy explaining ideas and systems to people, demystifying seemingly abstract concepts to help people develop their own skills and interests.

Sarah

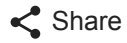
I bring to the field a strong background in photography, alternative processes and the management of photographic collections, physical and digital. Being in that field drew me to digital preservation; the question of “now what?” came up regularly when looking at managing born-digital and digitised photographs over time. I believe important attributes that I to bring to the field are an eagerness for life-long learning and a tenacity towards problem-solving. I’ve found that being willing to learn something new and tackle a problem logically (and with the help of Google or by asking people). Also, just “giving it a go” can go a long way when working in digital preservation.

Somaya

I have a background in the arts and music and have spent over 20 years working at the nexus between creativity and technology. I am a (somewhat lapsed) sound/media artist and have worked in a number of cultural institutions across the GLAM sector in Australia. I’ve worked in a production and tech capacity in

community (they are very helpful!) you are well equipped to at least begin tackling your digital preservation challenges.

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