Using ePADD for Email Preservation

Implementing the ePADD+ Project Enhancements

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Sally DeBauche** | **Ian Gifford** | **Tricia Patterson** |
| *Stanford University*  *United States*  *debauche@stanford.edu* | *University of Manchester*  *United States*  *ian.gifford@manchester.ac.uk* | *Harvard University*  *United States*  *tricia\_patterson@harvard.edu* |
|  |  |  |

**Abstract – For decades, email has been a ubiquitous and critical record of humanity. The ePADD+ project enhanced the open source email archiving tool, ePADD, with new features supporting effective long-term preservation, including additional format eligibility, retention of original order, format normalization, preservation and provenance metadata, and export for archival repositories. In this tutorial, attendees will learn about the new functions offered in ePADD and how they are implemented in the workflows of the ePADD+ partner institutions. Authors will do a live demonstration of the tool, utilizing the new functions and guiding attendees through optional hands-on participation. The authors will engage attendees in a broader discussion around the future development road map for ePADD and strengthening the sustainability of the community supported tool.**

**Keywords – email, preservation, open source, collaboration, sustainability**

**Conference Topics – Innovation, Community**

1. Introduction

Email has persevered as a cornerstone of communication for decades and, consequently, a critical individual, institutional, and cultural record of our time. As collection policy and capacity evolve, email records are proliferating in archival collections. Originally developed by Stanford University in 2015, ePADD is a popular open-source tool in the digital archives community supporting appraisal, processing, discovery and delivery of email collections. In 2021, Stanford, Harvard University, and the University of Manchester began collaborating on a grant-funded project to embed preservation functionality into ePADD in order to consolidate the number of tools needed to steward email records. The resulting enhancements enable the tool to package collections for proactive long-term archival care. The enhanced ePADD tool has a more robust set of preservation metadata users can track and record, as well as the optional inclusion of a complete set of original email, preservation copies, and dissemination copies. As part of the Email Archives: Building Capacity and Community regrant program, the ePADD+ project additionally sought to strengthen the sustainability of the open source, community supported project.

In this tutorial, Harvard, Manchester, and Stanford will demonstrate ePADD’s new features and discuss how these are utilized in their own institutional workflows for preservation of email records. The workshop will walk attendees through a hands-on exercise of generating a preservation-ready export from ePADD, with optional participation from attendees that have an instance of ePADD installed. It will conclude with a facilitated conversation around sustaining ePADD as a community-supported tool, prioritizing enhancements, and expanding the community of code contributors.

1. Tutorial Agenda
   1. *Overview*

The authors will open the tutorial with an overview of the ePADD+ project, introducing the project’s objectives, partners, and outlining the resulting preservation enhancements with which ePADD is equipped.

* 1. *Incorporating ePADD into Preservation Workflows*

Each partner institution (Harvard, Manchester, and Stanford) will introduce their email preservation workflows. This will provide attendees with a model for how to incorporate ePADD into different institutional contexts, including the customization of preservation packages in accordance with the institutions’ distinct preservation repositories.

* 1. *Demonstration and Hands-On Exercise*

Once the attendees have an understanding of the new tool functions and have synthesized the implementation of these functions, the authors will do a live demonstration of ingest, appraisal, and export of a preservation-friendly package from the ePADD Appraisal module. Participants that have a recent download of ePADD on their laptops can optionally follow along with the demonstration to gain hands-on experience utilizing the preservation functions.

* 1. *Discussion*

The tutorial will conclude with a facilitated discussion about the future sustainability and development of the ePADD tool.

1. Acknowledgements

The ePADD+ project is supported by the Unviersity of Illinois (#098468-18280) as part of its Email Archives: Building Capacity and Community (EA:BCC) initiative, funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation (#1905-0768).

REFERENCES

1. “EPADD,” *Stanford Libraries*. [Online]. Available: https://library.stanford.edu/projects/epadd.
2. “RFC 8493 - The Bagit File Packaging Format (v1.0),” *Document search and retrieval page*. [Online]. Available: https://datatracker.ietf.org/doc/html/rfc8493.