Registering Our Preservation Intentions

A collaborative workshop on digital preservation registries

| **Ross Spencer** | **Paul Wheatley** | **Euan Cochrane** |
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| *Ravensburger AG*  *Germany*  [*ross.spencer@ravensburger.ag*](mailto:ross.spencer@ravensburger.ag)  *0000-0002-5144-9794* | *Digital Preservation Coalition*  *UK*  [*paul@dpconline.org*](mailto:paul@dpconline.org)  *0000-0002-3839-3298* | *Yale University Library*  *United States*  [*euan.cochrane@yale.edu*](mailto:euan.cochrane@yale.edu)  *0000-0001-9772-9743* |
| **Kate Murray** | **Andrew N. Jackson** | **Francesca**  **Mackenzie** |
| *Library of Congress*  *United States*  [*kmur@loc.gov*](mailto:kmur@loc.gov)  *0000-0003-1325-0829* | *The British Library*  *UK*  [*Andrew.Jackson@bl.uk*](mailto:Andrew.Jackson@bl.uk)  *0000-0001-8168-0797* | *The National Archives*  *UK*  [*francesca.mackenzie@nationalarchives.gov.uk*](mailto:francesca.mackenzie@nationalarchives.gov.uk)  *0000-0002-1863-7662* |

**Registries that describe the technical context within which our digital data resides make up a critical part of our digital preservation infrastructure. This workshop seeks to bring together those involved in developing, supporting and utilizing preservation registries along with the wider community of users and contributors. It aims to provide a space for discussion on the future of the preservation registries landscape, identifying gaps in provision, understanding changing user needs, and exploring opportunities for collaboration.**

**Keywords – File formats, Preservation Registries, Preservation Tools**

**Conference Topics – Innovation, Community**

1. The Preservation Registry Space

The digital preservation community has long sought to capture and describe information about file formats, software, environments and the wider technical infrastructure it operates within. It has worked to develop registries in which to record this information and provide access to it in ways that might support the understanding, rendering, use and ultimately the preservation of digital data. This journey has been long and at times a somewhat rocky road. Some repositories have fallen by the wayside. But the community has learned a great deal from “doing” over the long term. The current landscape of preservation registries has benefitted from this learning and shows much promise for the future. The following list includes some of the most well known preservation registries but is certainly not exhaustive:

* PRONOM [1]
* WikiData [2]
* COPTR [3]
* LoC Sustainability of Digital Formats [4]

1. A Collaborative Registry Workshop

This workshop will seek to bring together a number of key groups and individuals involved in the development, maintenance, feature enhancement and everyday use of our preservation registries. It will seek to foster communication and collaboration between these groups in order to support and advance our digital preservation capability. Specifically it will aim to:

* Provide an update on the state of the art of current preservation registries
* Explore potential gaps in the preservation registry landscape (and how they might be filled)
* Foster collaboration between our registries and utilization of them, in particular looking at how registries might better cater for new and innovative uses

The workshop will aim to support those playing a range of roles relating to preservation registries, including:

* Registry developers and maintainers
* Vendors and other software developers whose applications utilize registries in the delivery of preservation functions
* Other registry users, including those active in connecting registries and their data in novel and helpful ways

1. Workshop Structure

The workshop will use a lightweight structure with the aim of being adaptable to the conversations and needs of the attendees. It will begin with an opportunity for those involved to update the group on the current status of their registry work, whether as part of maintaining a registry, contributing data to a registry or utilizing the data in registries to deliver preservation value. It will then apply an unconference approach to shape the remaining agenda, most likely with the use of break out groups to allow a number of different challenges to be explored through discussion, collaboration and possibly even hackathon type experimentation on the day.

1. Workshop Outputs

There will be three key outputs from the workshop:

1. The results of interactions and idea generation which will aim to spark innovative and beneficial registry development and exploitation post-iPres.
2. Follow up meetings/workshops/forum to coordinate further collaboration and discussion as appropriate (with support offered from the DPC).
3. A write up of the current state of the art of preservation registries with a focus on supporting practitioners in seeking information from preservation registries, which will take the form of a DPC Technology Watch Guidance Note.

REFERENCES

1. PRONOM, [Online], <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/pronom/>
2. Wikidata for digital preservation, [Online], <https://wikidp.org/>
3. Community Owned digital Preservation Tool Registry, [Online], <https://coptr.digipres.org/>
4. Sustainability of digital formats, [Online], <https://www.loc.gov/preservation/digital/formats/>