

Appraisal and Acquisition of Actively Curated Collections

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In looking forward to future Data-PASS preservation activities, the operations committee identified a need to appraise and acquire living collections that are actively curated either by the archive or by a third party.

Appraisal of actively curated collections is inherently more complex than appraisal of static collections. Like static collections, the current content must be appraised for its value and fit with the acquiring archive. In addition, the current curating institutions (or individuals) and process by which the content is added to the collection must be evaluated. Finally the collection should be examined at regular intervals to verify that it continues to be consistent with Data-PASS selection and appraisal criteria.

Appraisal of Collection Content

The content of the collection should be appraised using the Data-PASS guidelines for content appraisal (<http://www.icpsr.org/DATAPASS/pdf/appraisal.pdf>). In particular, the content should be evaluated for:

1. research value,
2. source and content,
3. uniqueness,
4. usability,
5. time frame,
6. relationship to other data, and
7. volume of data.

The emphasis of the appraisal should be on evaluating the value of content *as a whole*, taking into account the expected value of future contributions to the collection.

Evaluation of Curation Plan

Each appraisal of an actively curated collection should summarize *briefly*, (ideally in a few sentences), the plans for continued curation.

For collections curated by a member archive, this should state:

8. the collection development goals for content subject, coverage, usability, source, uniqueness, volume, and format;
9. the expected frequency and size of updates to the collection. Collection plans for third-party curated content should¹ also *briefly* describe:
10. the organizations and/or individuals responsible for adding content to the collection;
11. how the archive will be notified when new content becomes available,²

1 Collections curated by member archives should describe 3-12 only where terms differ from the standard Data-PASS partners terms.

2 Preferably, notification and incorporation of content into the catalog will be automatic, such as through use of the Dataverse Network, however this is not required.

12. recommend an approximate schedule for future review.

In addition, documentation of third-party curated collection acquisitions should clearly state under what legal terms and conditions future content will be acquired, including:

13. Does the curator of the collection warrant that *future* contributions will be compliant with the current standard Data-PASS deposit terms?³ If not, will content that is compliant be unambiguously identified so that that content can be selectively acquired?
14. Under what terms may the content be used by end-users? Are there variations in usage terms across the collection, and if so how are they documented?
15. Under what conditions will the acquiring archive accept new content?
16. May content be removed from the collection, and if so under what circumstances?
17. How will new versions of existing content be clearly identified, and documented? (While the curator remains free to replace old content with newer versions for public view, Data-PASS will retain the right to preserve (and may disseminate upon request) prior versions under the original archives terms of use.)
18. Is the agreement on-going or for a fixed period? What terms may be changed by each party unilaterally, and what is the notification method for such changes and/or how is the agreement renewed?
19. Confirm that future deposits⁴ are subject to ongoing evaluation, as below.

Ongoing Reexamination

The operations committee will keep a record of the approved collections and will review approved actively curated collections regularly and as needed. The time and frequency of the review will be determined by the committee, which may weigh factors including:

- (1) the recommended review schedule, as above;
- (2) a significant change in the volume or other characteristics of new content;
- (3) perceived changes in collection focus;
- (4) significant changes in the curatorial responsibility for the collection (including change of curators, or change within curating institutions), and
- (5) change in an owning Archive's Data-PASS membership status.

If the committee determines that already existing content does not meet the Data-PASS deposit terms, such content may be removed from Data-PASS holdings.

If the committee determines that the collection is no longer consistent with Data-PASS acquisition and selection criteria, either because of a change in the collection mission (etc.), or because of a change in Data-PASS criteria, the committee may temporarily or permanently suspend the acquisition of new material from that collection in to Data-PASS.

In making these determinations, the committee should make a reasonable attempt to contact the collection curators, and to deliver a copy of any removed content to the curator.

3 It is **strongly preferred** that accepted collections conform to Data-PASS standard terms for present and future content.

4 Future deposits should be read to include to new versions of existing content in the collection.