



Collection Development and Management Policy

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I. Mission

A. Organization Mission Statement

The Mission of The Arc/k Project is “the digital conservation and protection of humanity’s collective culture and history to ensure the preservation of thousands of years of artistic brilliance and creativity - a legacy for current and future generations.” To this end, The Arc/k Project actively pursues and assists in ethical digital documentation of cultural heritage by providing tools, support and preservation practices developed for the global community. Through creative uses and expansion of cutting-edge digital technology, the systematic preservation of cultural heritage by culturally affiliated stakeholders is becoming increasingly achievable. Through sharing technology, methods, and virtual platforms, The Arc/k Project seeks to assist and empower cultural heritage caretakers, experts, and community members around the world to digitally preserve their own cultural heritage locations and objects in accordance with their traditional ways of knowledge and protocols, with an emphasis on emergency archiving, crowd-sourced photogrammetry, and citizen scientist centered captures.

B. Collections and the Organization's Mission

Digital collections are essential to the mission of The Arc/k Project. To protect and preserve cultural heritage in the face of destruction, digitization offers a path for stakeholders to save a virtual copy of objects and/or locations through photogrammetry, providing an authentic digital archival record. The main purpose of the digital source images is to reproduce through an analytical process the object in the most neutral and objective way possible in order to allow for the object's or location's unequivocal identification. Digital source images can be preserved using present archival standards with multiple copies stored in various geographic locations ensuring preservation in the face of technical or local disasters. Preserved and accessible digital collections can provide current and future generations the opportunity for research and educational applications as well as allow for virtual experiences of cultural heritage objects and locations even after loss, vandalism or destruction of the terrestrial works. Physical objects can also be protected from harm through reduced handling and display. Furthermore, digital collections provide a variety of intellectual controls that can be customized to reflect a culture's unique protocols and contextual requirements. With stakeholders approval of access, collections can be shared with audiences around the world through websites and virtual reality via exhibitions or interactively through virtual classrooms.

C. Collections Program Mission

Collections management strives to preserve digitized cultural heritage for present and future generations by helping to pioneer and employ emerging archival preservation standards for 3D, VR and other digital formats. Although public access and use of the collection can benefit scholarly research and cultural understanding, it is important that access is balanced by sufficient safeguards that ensure the collection is not misused, copied or displayed without the proper context desired by the stakeholders.

This Collection Policy and related organizational policies guide The Arc/k Project's Collection Program. This program includes planning and providing for the preservation, control, proper use and documentation of the digital objects and locations held in The Arc/k Project's Archival Collection. It ensures that proper legal requirements as well as ethical and practical archival standards are observed.

II. Ethics

The Arc/k Project recognizes and accepts its responsibility to provide the proper management, preservation and use of the collections and associated information it holds in its care.

The Arc/k Project's staff have legal, ethical and professional obligations to maintain high levels of honesty and integrity in their work with partners and volunteers who contribute intellectual or digital assets to its collection.

When working with cultural heritage objects or locations, special care is taken to identify and accommodate culturally affiliated stakeholders and adhere to their unique practices, contextual descriptions and protocols. The Arc/k Project recognizes that Indigenous peoples and communities have historically suffered theft and financial exploitation of their cultural heritage by institutions and non-indigenous peoples in the past. The Arc/k Project stands in opposition to these past colonial practices and believes that culturally affiliated communities are important stakeholders of their own cultural heritage - for physical artifacts and locations as well as digital representations derived from them. For more information, see The Arc/k Project Collection Policy for Indigenous Communities

III. Scope of Collections and Collection Development

A. Scope of Collection

The Arc/k Project seeks to collect and preserve humanities collective culture in a variety of digital formats. Tangible culture can take a variety of physical forms such as:

- material objects and possessions acquired by a group of people in the course of generations
- traditional clothing, tools, buildings, artwork, monuments, and modes of transportation
- an expression of the ways of living and knowledge developed by a community, passed on from generation to generation, including customs, practices, places, objects and artistic expressions
- the ordinary as well as in the extraordinary
- tangible representations of the value systems, beliefs, traditions and lifestyles. As an essential part of culture as a whole, cultural heritage contains these visible and tangible traces from antiquity to the recent past
- built environments (buildings, townscapes, archaeological remains)
- natural environments (rural landscapes, coasts and shorelines, agricultural heritage)
- artifacts (books & documents, objects, pictures)

Intangible heritage includes voices, values, traditions, and oral history. Popularly this is perceived through traditional skills and technologies, religious ceremonies, performing arts, storytelling. Tangible heritage is inextricably bound up with intangible heritage. In conservation projects, The Arc/k Project aims to preserve both tangible as well as intangible heritage via a variety of innovative digital formats and experiences, guided by culturally affiliated communities unique ways of knowledge and expression.

B. Provenance Guidelines

- **Inquiry and Research**

Depicted physical objects should be researched to determine the provenance of the work prior to digitization. Digital acquisitions must comply with applicable law. Research should include:

- Object history of ownership and exhibition
- Prior digital publication(s) of the work
- Whether any claims on the ownership of the work have been asserted
- The circumstances under which the work is being offered to The Arc/k Project
- Whether the work appears in any stolen works databases, including but not limited to, The FBI National Stolen Art File, The Art Loss Register and The INTERPOL Stolen Works of Art Database

- **Accessioning and Publication**

Upon the completion of inquiry and research, acquired digital content will promptly be recorded and cataloged in accordance with The Arc/k Project's standard operating procedures.

C. Deaccessions

To maintain The Arc/k Project Collection at the highest quality and ethical standards possible, it may find it necessary to amend the collection through the removal (or deaccession) of objects that the organization is not bound to preserve or collect via Memorandums of Agreement or legal restrictions imposed upon donation. In cases of removal, The Arc/k Project

will make a good faith effort to notify the donor and return copies of the digital content to the donor upon request. There is no term of possession for donations unless specified in a Memorandum of Agreement. The Arc/k Project will retain catalog records for all deaccessioned digital content, including notes on the circumstances of its removal from the collection. The purpose of removing objects is to strengthen The Arc/k Project Collection and abide by any legal or ethical restrictions or requirements.

1. Criteria

Objects may be removed from The Arc/k Project Collection for any of the reasons below without limitation:

- a) The object and/or source images are unsuitable to the overall standards of the collection
- b) Possession of the digital content violates the law or applicable Arc/k policies
- c) The object is a forgery or reproduction
- d) The digital content does not belong within the scope of the collection
- e) The condition of the digital content is such that it is a false representation of the physical object and will render the digital object inauthentic.
- f) The object and/or source images are duplicative and deemed unnecessary to retain

D. Care of the Collection

The Arc/k Project is entrusted with the care of its collection and is guided by respect for the integrity and preservation of the content. Conservation and preservation is essential to The Arc/k Project's mission and stewardship of its collection. As The Arc/k Project is dedicated to preserving digital cultural heritage content for current and future generations, it shall preserve digital content in a safe, reliable and secure environment that maintains appropriate archival standards for digital content in accordance with The Arc/k Project Digital Preservation Plan.

E. Catalog Records

The Arc/k Project, through its Digital Archivist, shall regularly maintain and update digital records for all objects in the collection. Records will be created upon receipt of content via donation or an Arc/k staff member. Records should be recorded in The Arc/k Project's Digital Assets Management platform as well as a copy of said record saved on Arc/k internal servers via catalog sheets. Records should contain administrative, descriptive and technical metadata that is embedded in the digital object file. Record information should at a minimum include a unique identifier (ArckID), provenance information (donor contacts) as well as any legal information in regards to ownership and licensing.

All records and documents created or received in the transaction of Arc/k's proper business is the property of The Arc/k Project and must not be destroyed or dispersed without consent of the Arc/k Director of Operations and Digital Archivist.

F. Collection Access

The Arc/k Project is dedicated to the digital conservation and preservation of cultural heritage - as a legacy for current and future generations. To this end, The Arc/k Project pursues its mission for the benefit of collective humanity, which includes not only scholars and others interested in academic research, but the general international public. Digital collection access is currently available through The Arc/k Project's online catalog and promoted through social media, conference workshops and interactive forms of engagement such as academic multi-campus lectures in Virtual and Augmented sReality.

1. On the Digital Divide

The Arc/k Project recognizes the inequality of access to not only its own digital collection, but to all digital content. The Arc/k Project looks forward to a future where universal internet access is achieved through addressing the root causes of the Digital Divide associated with race, gender, education and poverty. Many positive government, private and non-profit programs have been created to help bridge the gap, but more must be done to allow all of humanity access to digital technology.

2. On Access Protocols for Indigenous Communities

Although The Arc/k Project espouses transparency for all data and provenance related to our digital content, upon consultation with Indigenous communities there may be some cases where access protocols will be applied to content the culturally affiliated community views as sacred or hidden knowledge.

IV. Intellectual Property

The Arc/k Project prefers the use of Creative Commons (CC) Licensing to identify licensing online and embedded in the metadata of digitized objects. If the owner of the digital object has not responded to queries about licensing within a reasonable amount of time, the most restrictive CC license will be applied until otherwise notified by the owner.

V. Effective Date

This Policy shall be effective immediately upon approval.