

**Title: Digital Preservation Policy**

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**1. Purpose**

To articulate the State Library of South Australia's position on Digital Preservation.

**2. Scope**

This Policy applies to all SLSA staff.

**3. Context**

The Libraries Board of South Australia is a statutory authority operating under the provisions of the Libraries Act 1982. The Board is responsible for library policy and administration of the State Library of South Australia (SLSA) and Public Library Services, reporting to the Minister for the Arts.

Section 14b of the Act states that one of the functions of the Board is "to establish, maintain and expand collections of library materials and, in particular, collections of such materials that are of South Australian origin, or have a particular relevance to this State". Section 35 of the Act addresses legal deposit and the responsibility of those publishing material in South Australia to lodge copies of the material with the Libraries Board.

SLSA undertakes the management and preservation of all deposited materials, regardless of format, and makes these as accessible as possible. Selecting, preserving and providing access to digital material is critical to South Australia's ability to tell its stories in the future. SLSA has embedded the importance of digital preservation in its Strategic Plan Priority 3 "*Guarantee access for present and future generations*".

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Preservation Policy, Collection Development Policy and other policy documents and guidelines relevant to the way SLSA digital resources are created, selected, acquired, described and accessed.

**4. Policy Position**

Digital preservation requires active management of digital objects through-out their life-cycle to ensure authenticity, integrity and accessibility for as long as necessary. SLSA is committed to ensuring that our digital collections will survive and be accessible as far into the future as possible. The preservation of metadata providing information about the provenance, authenticity and integrity of digital objects over time is also essential. Access to digital collections occurs through a range of online and onsite services and is typically based on the creation of 'access' copies from 'master' files. Access copies may be in low-bandwidth formats suitable for online discovery services. At all times permissions and associated rights are respected.

#### 4.1 Objectives

SLSA aims to preserve the integrity and authenticity of our digital objects to ensure access for current and future generations.

#### 4.2 Challenges

- Digital information is ‘fragile’ in nature and highly susceptible to loss, alteration or corruption
- File formats, media formats, software and hardware can become obsolete, threatening accessibility
- A wide variety of file formats need to be understood and managed
- Encryption and security devices may prevent access to data
- A lack of description or contextual information may make the records difficult to find, identify or interpret
- Managing the related metadata can be difficult
- Rapid technological change makes it difficult to have the level of ICT expertise needed for digital preservation. It can also mean reassessment of preservation processes
- There is an ever increasing volume of digital records being created and transferred to SLSA along with the continued collection of physical formats
- SLSA must be wary of patents, intellectual property rights or other rights attached to the format

#### 4.3 Principles

- Preserve the accessibility of digital collections
- Actively address digital obsolescence to ensure that proprietary file formats are accessible in the long-term
- Use sustainable and standards-compliant tools and processes
- Protect data authenticity and integrity
- Ensure that standards of provenance and original order are met for archival records and published material
- Minimise the number of preservation treatments applied to each digital record
- Store digital objects in their existing format
- Ensure long-term independence from information technology vendors and providers.
- Ensure interoperability and the opportunity for cooperation and collaboration by employing open source software solutions
- Contribute to existing community-based, open standards in developing the technical and organisational capability for digital preservation.

#### 4.4 Significant properties

SLSA aims to capture the characteristics of original digital objects that are essential to preserve the meaning, appearance, structure and context of the original material. In some cases, the behaviour of a digital object is also needed to be captured. By preserving the significant properties of digital material, SLSA ensures that the material retains its authenticity and integrity.

#### 4.5 Cooperation / Collaboration

SLSA seeks to collaborate and cooperate with other agencies and institutions, in particular the National and State Libraries Australasia (NSLA) network and Council of Australasian Archives and Records Authorities (CAARA) who are also experiencing the challenges of digital preservation.

#### 4.6 Roles and responsibilities

- The Director, SLSA has responsibility for advising the Libraries Board of South Australia on matters relating to digital preservation and storage.

- The SLSA Collections Group is responsible for ensuring that digital preservation activities are carried out in line with this policy and the related policies.
- The Online and ICT Services Group is responsible for the technical aspects and support of processes and systems, including data security and back-up.

## **5. Supporting Documents**

- [SLSA Strategic Plan 2014-2017](#)
- Preservation Policy
- [Collection Development Policy](#) (Feb 2006)
- [Copyright and our collections](#)
- Retention Policy - Withdrawal of Materials (Mar 1998)
- [Takedown Policy](#)

## **6. Review**

The Group Manager, Collections will review this policy annually.



Alan Smith  
Director, State Library of South Australia

26 July 2016