

Know your Collection

Defining the characteristics of your collection will help you to get a better understanding for the requirements of its care.

How many works do you have in your existing collection? *1-50 titles, 50-100, 100-500, over 500?*

Which of the following categories can be found in your digital collection?

- File-based video art
- Tape-based video art
- Audio art
- Software art
- Net art
- Digital design
- Film
- Slide-based art
- Other digital assets

File-based video art

How many file-based works do you have?

What digital video codecs are in your collection? e.g. *ProRes, Uncompressed, H.264*

How much space do they currently occupy? *On hard drives, USB sticks, RAIDs, server systems*

How many hours/TB on each video codec?

Do you have different versions for one artwork? e.g. *you might have different formats for one work e.g. Uncompressed master file, H.264 (compressed) exhibition file, MP4 access copy?*

How many hours of material does the artwork consist of? Are there several channels?

Are there any other AV materials that are not masters but may be relevant to the production history of the work? e.g. *rushes*

Tape-based video

How many tape-based video works do you have?

What kind of [tape formats](#) do you have in your collection?

How many tapes do you have per videotape format?

How many hours per video tape format?

Audio art

How many tape-based audio works do you have?

What kind of audiotape formats do you have in your collection? e.g. *cassette, open reel*

What digital audio codecs are in your collection? e.g. *.WAV, .MP3*

Software and Net Art

What type of software-based art can be found in your collection? *Including operating systems, programs, and related digital assets.*

What type of Net art can be found in your collection?

Is it hosted by you and/or backed-up on your internal computing infrastructure?

Digital Design

What digital design collections can be found in your collection? e.g. *fonts, digital architectural drawings such as Computer Aided Design files, files for digital printed wallpaper, Apps*

Film

What celluloid film elements can be found in your collection? e.g. *Negatives, prints*

What digital film elements can be found in your collection? e.g. *DPX, ProRes, H.264*

Slide-based art

What digital elements can be found in your collection? e.g. *TIFF, JPEG*

What slide film elements can be found in your collection? e.g. *35mm, medium format*

Other digital assets

What other digital elements can be found in your collection? e.g. *TIFF, JPEG*

Estimate your Growth

Estimate the continuing growth of your collection, in order to help predict the amount and speed of that growth.

Migration

Do you currently digitize and migrate videotapes and disc-based media to files?

If yes, how many tapes to GB/TB do you migrate per year? How long until you will have transferred everything?

If not, estimate how much storage space you would need if you migrated all your tape-based material, using a [video storage size calculator](#).

Do you have exhibition formats on media such as laser discs or DVDs? These too require migrating if they are important to the history of the artwork and differ slightly to the master tapes.

Over what period of time will you be migrating?

Acquisition

How many new video artworks do you acquire/produce on average per year?

How many GB or TB did you acquire last year?

How many videotapes did you acquire last year?

Production

Will you produce file formats for exhibition and/or viewing on ingest? In what format/compression?

Existing Systems and Practice

Investigate your existing systems to see how they can be adopted to serve your media art collection.

Metadata, Collections Management and Policies

Do you have a collection information management system?

Do you have a way of linking your digital objects to their records in the Collection Information Management system?

Do you have acquisitions policies in place? That is, do you have guidelines on what master materials you require from artists/galleries?

Do you hold descriptive and technical metadata for each digital object? e.g. *information about video/audio containers, codecs, tape formats, file sizes etc.*

Do you have automated processes for extracting and storing this metadata?

Do you reference published metadata strategies? e.g. *Preservation Metadata: Implementation Strategies (PREMIS)*

If you hold metadata, where is the metadata stored? e.g. *separate Database and/or associated with the file*

Do you have a long-term preservation policy for your digital collection?

Storage

What is your existing primary storage infrastructure?

- DVD
- External hard drives
- Videotape
- Internal Hard drives
- LTO
- Servers
- Mirrored RAID
- Disk based back-up
- Mirrored disk back-up
- Cloud
- Other

Do you have backup procedures in place?

Do you have multiple copies of each digital file? Are these held in different physical locations?

How much storage do you use for the different digital categories?

- Video art
- Audio art
- Software and Net Art
- Digital Design
- Film
- Slide

Who is responsible for the maintenance of the storage?

Do you have fixity checks in place?

Are these run:

- On acquisition?
- Whenever the file is moved to a new location?
- Whenever the file is accessed?
- As part of a regular system audit?

Digital Repository Functionality

Do you have a repository management system?

Do you monitor and record preservation risks facing your collection?

e.g. file format obsolescence, hardware and software dependencies.

Does your repository management system include an API (Application Programming Interface) to allow integration with other systems?

Do you have an integrated access system, for access to viewing surrogates?

Budget

Calculate the costs associated with your media art collection.

What current financial resource is allocated to preservation digital objects?

- Do you allocate budget for tape to file migration?
- Do you allocate budget for film to file migration?
- Do you allocate budget for slide to file migration?

Do you have a budget allocated to maintaining your digital storage?

Skills

Scope your existing personnel skill sets.

Do you have a person or team responsible for your video collection?

Is that person a:

- Artist
- Collection manager
- Curator
- Registrar
- AV Technician
- Conservator
- Archivist
- Other
- Combination of the above

Do you have an IT specialist/IT team?

Can they support your storage solution?