Digital Cultural and Heritage Collections of the Future: Enabling Innovative Access and Expanding Research

CRKN Conference, Montreal
November 2, 2022
Agenda

1. CRKN’s Cultural and Heritage Collections and Infrastructure: Where We Are and Where We Are Going
2. CRKN’s Researcher Council: Findings to Date
3. Break (10:45-11:00)
4. Digital Cultural and Heritage Collections of the Future
   Facilitated Discussion - Part 1
5. Lunch (12:00-1:00)
6. Digital Cultural and Heritage Collections of the Future
   Facilitated Discussion - Part 2
7. Sustainability and Resourcing
CRKN’s Cultural and Heritage Collections and Infrastructure: Where We Are and Where We Are Going
Speakers

**Ken Hernden**, Chair, PAC and University Archivist and Associate University Librarian, Queen’s University

**Mark Jordan**, Chair, PTSC and Associate Dean of Libraries, Digital Strategy, Simon Fraser University

**Brittny Lapierre**, Application Developer, CRKN

**Natalie MacDonald**, Senior Metadata Analyst, CRKN

**Ian Milligan**, Member, PAC and Associate Vice-President, Research Oversight and Analysis and Professor of History, University of Waterloo
Looking to the Future - Canadiana as Open Infrastructure

Creating innovative research and collaboration capacity across Canadian digital heritage collections
Last year’s member discussion
Infrastructure

Custom Code

Paid Service Model

No Charge Access

Open Scholarly Infrastructure:
Access and preservation

Open Knowledge
Partnerships

Build upon existing relationships made through both the licensing and heritage programs

Collaborate with groups already in this space

Focus on Open Knowledge and partnering with organizations with similar values
## Content

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<tr>
<th>Why Are We Here</th>
<th>Recognize the research potential of cultural and heritage content</th>
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<tr>
<td>What Do We Want to Do</td>
<td>Collaborate collectively to build sustainable open infrastructure for access and preservation of cultural and heritage content</td>
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<td>How We Are Going to Do It</td>
<td>Become a member driven infrastructure hub for research</td>
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Member & User-Driven Content
Research in the Present

> 90,000 monographs
  ● pre-1920
  ● Subject areas include:
    ○ women’s history
    ○ indigenous history
    ○ immigration
  ● 47 different languages, including 14 Indigenous languages

> 4,000 serials
  ● Early Canadian Periodicals
  ● Annuals
  ● Historical newspapers from across Canada
    ○ From Toronto World to Robochyi narod (The Working people)
Research in the Present
Expand Research Potential

- Intentionally adding content
- Protecting long-term access to content
- Prioritizing representation and diversity in content development
- Using CRKN’s negotiating power to include copyrighted material
- Building upon partnerships to strengthen access to content
Expand Research Potential

As Members, are we ready to …

Add content from our collections to Canadiana?

Rethink the scope of Canadiana?

Be adventurous and innovative with Canadiana?
Member & User-Driven Preservation
CRKN’s Trustworthy Digital Repository (TDR)

Where We Are Now
- One of six existing TDR’s internationally
- Only preserves Canadiana content

Where We Will Be in the Near Future
- Running Archivematica
- Preserving member content
Open Future of the Canadiana Infrastructure

- Improvements on the status quo
- A preservation service for members
- National preservation infrastructure
Expand Preservation Potential

As Members, Are We Ready to …

- expand the preservation scope of the Canadiana TDR?
- consider the TDR as national preservation infrastructure?
- leverage CRKN’s expertise and infrastructure for institutional preservation?
Member & User-Driven Development
Member & User-Driven Development

- Incorporate User Feedback
- Implement Open Standards
- Collaborate with Community
Member & User-Driven Development

Short-Term Goals

- User Testing
- Roadmaps
- Standardizing Metadata
Member & User-Driven Development

Medium-Term Goals

- Feature Planning
- Community Engagement
- Implement standards
  - Rights Statement
  - Linked Open Data/DOIs
Member & User-Driven Development

Long-Term Goals

- Reduced technological friction
- Improved national governance
- International collaboration
Supporting the Transformation
Supporting the Transformation

- Heritage Infrastructure Business Plan Task Group
- CFI Application Strategy Task Group
- Researcher Council
- Preservation and Access Committee
- Ithaka S&R
- Internal Project Committee
CRKN’s Researcher Council: Findings to Date
Speakers

**Susan Brown**, Co-Chair, Researcher Council and Professor and CRC in Collaborative Digital Scholarship, University of Guelph

**Camille Callison**, Co-Chair, Researcher Council and University Librarian, University of the Fraser Valley

**Alyssa Arbuckle**, Member, Researcher Council and Associate Director, Electronic Textual Cultures Lab, University of Victoria

**Maxime Gohier**, Membre, Conseil des chercheurs du RCDR et Professeur régulier, Université du Québec à Rimouski

**Dan Malleck**, Member, Researcher Council and Professor, Brock University
Introduction to the CRKN Researcher Council
In July 2022, the CRKN Board of Directors launched the CRKN Researcher Council, which includes 16 multidisciplinary researchers who are providing advice and input on the Digital Cultural and Heritage Collections of the Future project.
CRKN Researcher Council

Camille Callison  
University of the Fraser Valley

Susan Brown  
University of Guelph

Dan Brown  
University of Waterloo

Rebecca Dickson  
COPPUL

Jada Watson  
University of Ottawa

Alyssa Arbuckle  
University of Victoria

Camie Augustus  
Vancouver Island University

Jennifer Bain  
Dalhousie University

Sabeen bin Zayyad  
University of Calgary

Colleen L. Renihan  
Queen’s University

Jeremy Heil  
Queen’s University

Dan Malleck  
Brock University

Kim Martin  
University of Guelph

Sheila Petty  
University of Regina

Stacy Allison-Cassin  
(Dalhousie University),  
Maxime Gohier  
(Université du Québec à Rimouski), and  
Jane Griffith  
(Toronto Metropolitan University)
CRKN Researcher Council

How can the content in Canadiana be best used to advance the Canadian research field?
Mission

To build a comprehensive, collective digital library of Canadian cultural heritage content that provides a respectful and representative historical narrative and enables transformative research and equitable access to knowledge.
Vision

Accelerating Canadian research and innovation objectives at a system-wide level

Preserving Canada’s heritage content for future generations

Ensuring state-of-the-art, researcher-driven access to heritage content

Integrating cultural heritage content into the research ecosystem

Building an equitable and inclusive future through understanding

Enabling transformative research

Increasing the resiliency of the Canadian GLAM sector
Researcher Council
Findings to Date
Exploring a Paradigm Shift

Envisioning an innovation research platform that:

- Intentionally moves away from static content
- Allows researchers to be both content consumers and content producers
- Provides context and links
- Enables interactivity
Summary of Findings

- Findability
- Access
- Searchability
- Content
- Support services & documentation

Equity, Diversity, Access, and Inclusion

Truth and Reconciliation
Findability

Making it easier to search for and find relevant content

- Improved search functionality and filtering
- Structured metadata to serve specialized and citizen researchers
- Capacity to replicate and automate searches via linked open data
- Interoperability between different databases and collections
Findability Example

Dwynwen

An example of how linked open data supports findability, Dwynwen is a search and display engine for visual artworks of the National Library of Wales.
Access

Breaking down barriers to making content widely accessible

- Enhancing access to community materials for Indigenous peoples
- Prioritizing access for residential school survivors
- Welcoming diverse groups of researchers
- Ensuring inclusive design principles
- Multilingual infrastructure
- API access to metadata and content
Using Mukurtu CMS as the platform for the Portal allows tribes to determine culturally appropriate access to their cultural heritage and knowledge.
Searchability

Improving the search experience

- Improving the functionality of searching within an item
- Allowing users to understand the quality of the text recognition of each item
- Maintaining the ability to flip from page to page
Searchability Example

Amsterdam City Archives

Using Transkribus Handwritten Text Recognition (HTR), allows for searching within hundreds of thousands of documents inside the Amsterdam Notarial Archives.
Content

Making important content and its contextual information available

- Inclusion of robust contextual information with each item
- Consistent access to government records
- Researcher-produced digitized content
- Preserving fragile and at-risk material
- Audiovisual content
- Content relating to land claims while also respecting Indigenous data sovereignty
- Completeness of content
Plantation slavery and settler colonialism are defining aspects of the early Caribbean. The ECDA works to decolonize the archive using digital tools to remix and recontextualize the archive.
Support Services & Documentation

Empowering and supporting users

• Sophisticated training for large scale datamining, filtration, and analysis
• Accessible search guides and finding aids
• Clear documentation of search functionality and metadata
• Identification of resources relating to Indigenous peoples on a national level
• Open metadata models and schemas for users to add their own content
The Indigitization Toolkit is a collection of resources to support and guide digitization projects in Indigenous communities.

**Language Revitalization**

- New Audio Recordings with Zoom Recorders
- Indigenous Language Apps (coming soon)
- Transcription and Translation of Language Content (coming soon)
Researcher Council Member
Lightning Presentations
## Lightning Sessions

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<th>Presenter</th>
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<td>Policy, medicine, and historical sources: Confronting strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and “threats” of digital sources</td>
<td>Dan Malleck</td>
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<td>Nouvelle-France numérique : une expérience de partenariat global dans la recherche sur le patrimoine documentaire et la gestion des données</td>
<td>Maxime Gohier</td>
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<tr>
<td>Open Social Scholarship and the INKE Partnership</td>
<td>Alyssa Arbuckle</td>
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<tr>
<td>Connecting Research to Cultural Content Online: The Linked Infrastructure for Networked Cultural Scholarship</td>
<td>Susan Brown</td>
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Questions For Consideration

• Does this envisioned future align with your goals?
• What other projects/platforms should CRKN draw inspiration from? Are there any national examples of initiatives that have EDIA and Indigenous cultural sensitivity woven into the project from the beginning?
• What are your recommendations for building this initiative in a way that centres Truth and Reconciliation and that respects Indigenous cultural sensitivity?
• What initiatives are happening at the institutional and regional level and how would these initiatives support or enhance existing access and preservation programs/infrastructures?
• Are there other themes that should be considered/explored as part of this initiative?
Break
Future of CRKN’s Heritage Program
Future of CRKN’s Heritage Program

- Vision and scope
- CRKN’s role in digital heritage
- Research potential
- Institutional needs
- Supporting the project
- Short, medium, long term vision
Future of CRKN’s Heritage Program

Path 1
Status Quo: Mainly Maintenance
Maintain current infrastructure

Path 2
Community Open Infrastructure
Work with members to expand current infrastructure

Path 3
Transformational Open Research Infrastructure
Partner with members and researchers on research, innovation
Future of CRKN’s Heritage Program

Requires significant funding and resourcing (e.g. CFI Innovation Fund)

- Opportunities to think big with regards to how we provide access to and preservation of heritage and cultural content
- Inspired by examples of transformation & leading by example

Path 3
Transformational Open Research Infrastructure

Partner with members and researchers on research, innovation
Digital Cultural and Heritage Collections of the Future: Enabling Innovative Access and Expanding Research - Part 1
Integrating Innovation & Defining Value

What is the distinct value that CRKN currently delivers to members through Canadiana? How might that value evolve in 5 years?

What kind of innovation in national cultural and heritage infrastructure is needed to enable transformative research and what is CRKN's role in enabling it?
Digital Cultural and Heritage Collections of the Future: Enabling Innovative Access and Expanding Research - Part 2
Today: Three Paths towards the Future

- Status Quo: Mainly Maintenance
- Community Open Infrastructure
- Transformational Open Research Infrastructure
Status Quo: Mainly Maintenance

Continue supporting Canadiana in its current state

- basic development to maintain platform
- limited capacity for new content
- maintain member commitment to support Canadiana
Community Open Infrastructure

Canadiana becomes community-driven infrastructure

- intentional collection development with member content
- new content formats
- significant technological development
- extend member commitment to support Canadiana
- diversified portfolio for funding sustainability
Transformational Open Research Infrastructure

Enhanced version of the Community Open Infrastructure approach for CFI IF

- mobilize content as research data
- leverage member connections
- extend and increase member commitment
- resource additional capacity in CRKN team
- diversified funding portfolio plus CFI IF
What are we collectively building?

What are some of the ways that your institution could support the development and resourcing of this future? E.g. in-kind support, expertise, connections to researchers from your University, technology, co-development of tools, content, CFI envelope.

Where should we, as a member community, devote our collective energy and resources?

• Towards maintaining the status quo?
• Towards transitioning Canadiana to open scholarly infrastructure?
• Towards partnering with members and researchers on research and innovation through the creation of transformational open research infrastructure?
Sustainability and Resourcing
Future of Canadiana Project Governance

Heritage Infrastructure Business Plan Task Group

CFI Application Strategy Task Group

Researcher Council

Preservation and Access Committee

Ithaka S&R

Internal Project Committee
Heritage Infrastructure Business Planning Task Group

Original role

budget planning for the CFI project

Updated role

sustainably funding CRKN’s heritage program
Prospective Administrative Host Institution

Builds on past partnerships between uOttawa and CRKN, including CRKN’s two previous successful CFI applications in 2000 and 2004, with uOttawa acting as host organization.
CFI Innovation Fund - Draft Timelines*

*As the next Innovation Fund call has not yet been issued, these are based on the timeline of the 2023 Innovation Fund Call
Gut Check: Where are we going?

Status Quo: Mainly Maintenance

Community Open Infrastructure

Transformational Open Research Infrastructure
Engagement

What can we provide to enable our collective path forward?

- Full project vision and description
- 1-pager about CRKN and the project
- Project webpage
- Slide deck with project information

What would you, as UL/decision maker for your institution, need to get support and secure funding for this project?
What We Need from Members

- Commitment on path to move forward together
- Connect with researchers at your institution
- Connect with librarians, archivists, and infrastructure support providers at your institution
- Input on transformational research potential
- Outreach to your VP Research
Next Steps

Commitment to collectively drive this project together

Continue these conversations with:
- Project governance groups
- Potential partners
- CRKN Members

Introduce project to:
- Your institution
- Researcher community
Wrap up
Strength in Community

CRKN members: working as a community to build a future where knowledge is accessible by all

Designing the Future of Open Scholarship in Canada
Digital Cultural and Heritage Collections of the Future
Voting Cards

Reminder for voting members to collect their voting cards at registration desk