



Canadian Research
Knowledge Network

Réseau canadien
de documentation
pour la recherche

Member Digitization Projects Guide for Applicants

About the Initiative

[Member Digitization Projects](#) is an initiative by the Canadian Research Knowledge Network (CRKN) to help plan and prioritize our Canadiana collection development and digitization work over the coming year. It is overseen by CRKN's [Canadiana Content Sub-Committee](#) and the [Preservation and Access Committee](#).

As collective owners of the Canadiana Collections and Infrastructure, this initiative provides the opportunity for CRKN members to leverage Canadiana's national-scale infrastructure to enhance digital access and preservation for their priority collections, while expanding access to knowledge for the public good.

Who can submit an application

A call for applications is open to CRKN members as well as to external organizations with a connection to, or endorsement from, a CRKN member (for example, a campus museum). External organizations and member institutions should collaborate on the project application before submitting it, ensuring that the member's support for the project is clearly stated.

What's involved: from start to finish

1. Select a collection from your institution's holdings that meet our [Criteria](#) and [Priorities](#).
2. Submit a project application to CRKN.
3. CRKN staff and the Canadiana Content Sub-Committee review your application for feasibility and content priorities.
4. If your application is accepted, CRKN works with you to develop a timeline, statement of work, and license or repository agreement (to document copyright and/or stewardship permissions) for the project. Before final selection of the project, there will be an exchange between CRKN and the applicant about anticipated project costs to ensure everyone is on the same page.
5. CRKN staff will contact you as your project progresses with any questions, concerns, or updates.
6. When your project is complete, CRKN will contact you and coordinate public communications to share the good news!

Selecting the Member Digitization Projects

There are two streams of Member Digitization Projects:

- digitization projects; and,
- digital content sharing projects.

A digitization project involves an institution sending CRKN physical materials to be digitized and added to Canadiana, while a digital content sharing project involves an institution sending us files from a previously digitized collection to be added to Canadiana.

As of 2026, both types of projects must only contain **published textual material** (i.e. books, newspapers, maps, annual reports, pamphlets, etc.). In the future, CRKN will be able to add more types of material to Canadiana.

Important: If you have a project in mind, please [search Canadiana](#) with the title(s) of your content to ensure it is not already available in the collection. We also recommend searching other digital heritage collections or Google to check if your material is already online. CRKN may accept digital content sharing projects that are already available elsewhere, but we aim to avoid duplicating digitization efforts.

CRKN's Canadiana [Criteria](#) and [Priorities](#) documents (linked on the Member Digitization Projects [webpage](#)) guide how CRKN selects material to add to Canadiana. At a glance, our requirements are summarized below.

CRKN prioritizes the following types of materials for Canadiana:

- Content reflective of the diversity of Canadians such as, but not limited to, diversity of race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexuality, class, and abilities; also under consideration are diversity of time period, geographic location, types of communities such as social, cultural, or political communities, and improving representation in the digital historical record.
- Content at risk due to factors such as, but not limited to, potential physical deterioration or financial constraints at its home institution.

Institutions should also ensure that their project content:

- Is of adequate quality and condition for digitization or ingestion into Canadiana¹
 - For digital content sharing projects, ensure that content is available in **JPEG or TIFF** and digitized at **300 pixels per inch (PPI)**
- Is in the public domain or permission has been given by the rights holder to it (see more details in the Copyright section of this document)
- Is free of private or culturally sensitive information, or contains some private information approved for widespread use
- Is accompanied by metadata, even if not complete

Submitting a project application

Application forms and instructions on submitting are available on the Member Digitization Projects [webpage](#).

Examples of past projects

Learn more about these projects that were selected as part of a pilot initiative on the Member Digitization Projects webpage.

- Acadia University, [The Athenaeum](#) (student publication)
- Dalhousie University, [Wayves/GAEZETTE](#) (community publication)
- McGill University, [Ontario Historical County Atlases](#) (atlases/maps)
- OurDigitalWorld, [The Provincial Freeman](#) and [The Voice of the Fugitive](#) (newspapers)
- Western University, [London Advertiser](#) (newspaper issues continuing an already existing series on Canadiana)
- University of Alberta, [La survivance](#) (community newspaper)

Copyright, Privacy, and Traditional Knowledge

Note: The following sections provide information about CRKN's approach to copyrighted material, material that may pose privacy risks, and material that may contain Traditional Knowledge or sensitive cultural property. CRKN may ask for documentation on rights and permissions before projects are selected.

¹ Please note that CRKN is not able to digitize materials that pose a health hazard, such as materials with significant levels of mold damage or vinegar syndrome.

Copyright

In most cases, material added to the Canadiana collection must either be in the public domain or be cleared by the copyright holder to be reproduced. We may consider material with an undetermined copyright status in certain cases.

Material in the public domain

In general, the copyright term for works with a single author expires 70 years after the author's death. For works with multiple authors, the copyright expires 70 years after the last author's death. If you are unsure if copyright has expired in the collection you are submitting, consider checking with your copyright office or consult the resources listed below to determine if the material has entered the public domain. If the public domain rationale in your application is unclear, CRKN will conduct a copyright risk assessment² for the material.

Material in copyright

CRKN accepts materials in copyright into Canadiana if permissions have been obtained from the rights holder to reproduce and share the material. To ensure there are no delays if your project is selected, we require that permissions are in place by the time you submit your application.

Material with undetermined copyright status

CRKN may accept materials with an undetermined copyright status on a case-by-case basis. If your institution has conducted a review of the materials and deemed them to be low risk, we will take that decision into consideration. Please include information on your review process in your application.

Process for copyrighted material

If your project containing copyrighted material is selected, CRKN will work with you on the following steps:

1. Providing your institution and the rights holder a [template license agreement](#) for reproducing the materials on Canadiana
2. Modification of terms and conditions in the license agreement, as necessary
3. Selecting a copyright statement for the material (option to select from the statements available at [RightsStatements.org](#))
 - a. Example 1: https://www.canadiana.ca/view/sru.00002_1952/1
 - b. Example 2: https://www.canadiana.ca/view/mw.00001_14/1
4. Signing the license agreement between the rights holder and CRKN

Process for material with undetermined copyright status

If your project contains material with undetermined copyright status and is selected, CRKN will work with you on the following steps:

1. Providing your institution with a repository agreement (an agreement modified from [our template license agreements](#)) for reproducing the materials on Canadiana
2. Modification of terms and conditions in the license agreement, as necessary
3. Selecting a copyright statement for the material (option to select from the statements available at [RightsStatements.org](#))
 - a. Example: <https://www.canadiana.ca/view/aeu.00022/1>

² A copyright risk assessment typically involves researching the original rights holder, investigating who may hold the rights today, and investigating if the material is currently available elsewhere on an open or closed/paywalled basis.

4. Signing the repository agreement between your institution and CRKN

Copyright Resources

- [University Copyright Guides](#) (Canadian Association of Research Libraries)
- [Canadian Copyright Term and Public Domain Flowchart](#) (University of Alberta Copyright Office)
- [Frequently Asked Questions About Term Extension for Authored Works](#) (Canadian Association of Research Libraries)
- [Navigating Copyright for Crown-Published Works: A Code of Best Practices for Libraries](#) (Canadian Association of Research Libraries)
- [RightsStatements.org](#)
- Canada's [Copyright Act](#)

Privacy

Applicants are encouraged to consult within their institutions before submitting projects that may pose privacy concerns, particularly for materials published in recent decades. CRKN may refuse projects that pose a clear privacy risk.

CRKN's [Review Request Process](#) for sensitive content in the Canadiana Collection is linked at the bottom of the Canadiana homepage. Please note that this process is reliant on feedback from users regarding sensitive content. We welcome any questions or feedback about this process.

Traditional Knowledge

While we welcome projects that include Indigenous works and perspectives, Canadiana currently does not have access control limits and is not an appropriate repository for materials containing Traditional Knowledge or sensitive cultural property that should not be shared broadly. Applicants are encouraged to review material that may contain Traditional Knowledge or cultural property with representatives of the community concerned, before submitting a project application.

Please note that CRKN's [Review Request Process](#) also applies to concerns around Traditional Knowledge and cultural property.

Metadata Information

CRKN requests metadata for selected projects, even if it is incomplete or conforms to a different standard to those listed below. We will also ask for a metadata sample as part of your project application.

Monographs (e.g. books, pamphlets, or other documents published individually)

CRKN uses the MARC21 metadata standard for monographs. Metadata can be submitted in MARC binary or MARC XML format in a single file. If MARC21 is not available for your project, please identify the format or standard you are using in the sample you provide.

Serials (e.g. newspapers, magazines, or other documents published periodically)

CRKN uses MARC21 for series-level and issue-level records, but if you are submitting Dublin Core metadata, we ask you follow [this schema](#). Please include all the issue-level metadata for each title in your project in a single CSV file.

Additional information

Our systems process MARC-21 files that adhere to our metadata schema. We can accept CSV, XML, and Json files as well other structured data files on a limited basis, though CRKN staff will have to convert them before use.

If your institution has a symbol available in the [Canadian Library Symbols](#) database, CRKN will use this symbol as your depositor ID in Canadiana. If your institution does not have a Canadian Library Symbol, we will assign you a depositor ID based on your organization's name. If your institution has already deposited material in Canadiana, we will use the depositor ID already assigned to you.

Delivering Project Materials

Digitization

Digitization projects are completed at our digitization studio in Ottawa. Materials must be shipped to one of the following addresses depending on courier service:

All couriers except Purolator:

ATTN: Rebecca Dempsey (613-407-5003) CRKN/Heritage (PANL)
c/o Library and Archives Canada
395 Wellington St. Ottawa, ON
K1A 0N4

Purolator:

ATTN: Rebecca Dempsey (613-407-5003)
CRKN/Heritage (PANL)
c/o Library and Archives Canada
395 Wellington St.
Ottawa, ON
K1A 9Z5

Please provide all materials in a single shipment. CRKN will retain the materials until all deliverables have been accepted by your institution. Once deliverables have been accepted, CRKN will return all materials and digital deliverables (e.g. a hard drive with copies of the digitized files) to you via the shipping address that you provide.

Additional details, including a delivery date, will be available in the Statement of Work which we will provide you once your project is selected.

Digital content sharing

CRKN can receive digital files in several ways. Methods include:

- Images delivered on a physical hard drive
- Tools such as Microsoft OneDrive or WeTransfer
- File Transfer Protocol (FTP) – *Please note that if you would like to send your files via FTP, we will ask for your institution's FTP server information and account, as CRKN does not have its own server.*
- IIIF harvest – *Please note in your application if your materials are currently hosted on Internet Archive or can be harvested through a IIIF endpoint, and CRKN will explore this option with you.*

Files for digital content sharing projects should be organized with one folder per monograph/per issue, using the following folder naming conventions.

- Monographs and series title level records: [Your depositor ID].00001
 - Examples: NSHD.00001, NSWA.00001

- Serials: [Your depositor ID].00001_YYYYMMDD
 - The day or month can be omitted if not known, and additional suffixes such as _supplement may be added as required
 - Examples: NSHD.00001_19850304, NSWA.00001_189009_supplement, AEU.00037_1968

Important: If you are submitting multiple titles as part of your project (including serials that changed titles throughout their span of publication) please include sequential identifiers for each title; for example, NSHD.00001 and NSHD.00002. For institutions which have already completed projects on Canadiana, we will reach out to you individually about naming, since your identifier will not begin with 00001.

As part of your application, please provide both a sample file and a screen capture that shows how the files are organized and named.

Post-Project

CRKN staff will contact you when your project is complete (for digitization projects, this will also include coordinating the return of your project materials).

We will also contact you to arrange communications for your project, which may include a summary on our website, social media posts, inclusion in the CRKN newsletter, and other messaging as required. We are happy to work with you on planning communications for your project, including a timeline.

North/Nord Collaboration

CRKN is pleased to collaborate with [North/Nord: The Canadian Shared Print Network](#). North/Nord works with libraries to facilitate shared print initiatives in Canada, ensuring that a national collection of print materials is preserved while minimizing redundancy and supporting sustainable collection management.

Institutions whose projects have been selected as part of the Member Digitization Projects initiative are invited to commit to retaining the physical print copies of their project through North/Nord. Informational letters will be sent to participants on behalf of North/Nord when projects are selected. For more information about North/Nord and shared print, contact Katya Pereyaslavskaya, North/Nord Network Coordinator at north-nord.coordinator@coppul.ca.

Questions?

Please contact us at digitization@crkn.ca with any questions regarding Member Digitization Projects.

Application Checklist

- ☐ Complete PDF application form
- ☐ Metadata sample for each title in your project
- ☐ (For projects in copyright) Proof of permission to reproduce each title in your project and share it in Canadiana, or information on a risk assessment process from your institution
- ☐ (For digital sharing projects) Digital image sample for each title in your project
- ☐ (For digital sharing projects) Screen capture showing file organization/naming.
- ☐ Submit your application form and project samples to digitization@crkn.ca.