

Doing digitisation on a budget: a guide to low-cost digital projects

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This guide provides an overview of low-cost heritage digitisation and shares inspiring examples.

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About this guide

We hope this guide sparks creative thinking on how your own digitisation project can use or adapt strategies that have been tried and tested by others.

[This guide is licensed CC BY.](#) This means you can use it as a basis to create new resources that cover other heritage materials or digitisation techniques.

A downloadable version is available from this page.

The guide is produced by Dr Mathilde Pavis, Dr Andrea Wallace and Sarah Saunders for the The National Lottery Heritage Fund.

Defining digitisation

Digitisation is not a singular process, but a set of stages, which in turn are often part of a wider programme.

At its core, digitisation is a combination of releasing digital data about collections and creating digital representations of analogue or physical objects. This definition is by Josie Fraser, taken from the definition developed by the DCMS Digitisation Taskforce, Chaired by Valerie Johnston for The National Archives (Digitisation Taskforce Final Report forthcoming).

At its core, digitisation is a combination of releasing digital data about collections and creating digital representations of analogue or physical objects.

This means digitisation can include making copies of physical originals in digital form, such as by scanning or photographing collections. It can also include projects that improve the quality or management of your existing digital collections, like projects focused specifically on metadata enrichment or preparing digital images or sound recordings for publication on popular platforms.

Opportunities

Low-cost digitisation can bring high returns when heritage materials are made available to a wider audience. Working with a low-to-no budget is an opportunity to think creatively about what materials you use and how to share those materials with the public. You may be surprised about how much you can do on a low budget.

Limitations

Doing a lot with a little requires setting realistic expectations. For example, low-cost digitisation may involve working with a limited range of materials or digitising with equipment you already have on hand.

You might also publish the digital assets on existing platforms instead of creating a new website. And that is fine! Sharing some of your materials with the public is better than sharing none. Plus, starting small is a great way to learn and plan for bigger digitisation projects down the road.

Examples

This guide includes real life examples of low-cost strategies you can use at different stages of digitisation.

Some examples feature institutions which may be larger or better-resourced than your project. Don't let this put you off. Instead, look at what these institutions have done, and how they have done it, to see if you could replicate something similar.

Resources

Many excellent resources are available for free to support you through each step of the digitisation process. Links to these are included below and in the following section.

Key steps to digitisation

This section provides a bird's eye view of the digitisation process organised into ten steps:

- **Step 1.** [Plan your project](#)
- **Step 2.** [Clear rights to access the materials](#)
- **Step 3.** [Organise your team](#)
- **Step 4.** [Organise your equipment](#)
- **Step 5.** [Digitise the materials](#)
- **Step 6.** [Edit the digital materials](#)
- **Step 7.** [Add metadata and rights statements](#)
- **Step 8.** [Store your digital materials](#)
- **Step 9.** [Publish your digital materials](#)
- **Step 10.** [Deposit the digital materials](#)

Step 1. Plan your project

Much of the preparation for your project can be done with no budget at all. Some questions to consider first are:

- What can we do without or before funding?
- What is the plan if we do not receive funding?

You should:

- set your project objectives
- identify the public you want to reach
- list the resources you already have (time, money, people)
- assess your needs to carry out the project

Use the Heritage Fund's [digitisation project planner](#) to prepare your project.

Step 2. Clear rights to access the materials

Your goal is to preserve heritage materials and make them accessible to the public.

If you own rights in the materials, you should plan to publish the digital materials as [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International \(CC BY 4.0\)](#), which permits any use of the materials with attribution.

If no one owns rights in the materials, use the [Creative Commons CC0 1.0 Universal \(CC0 1.0\) Public Domain Dedication](#) tool.

You will need to audit the materials to see whether rights in them prevent you from using CC BY or CC0. For example, you cannot use these if:

- a copyright owner hasn't given permission
- the copyright status is unknown
- the materials are sensitive or have other rights in them

You will also need to comply with data protection laws on any information that you hold and publish about living individuals.

Ask yourself: how many items are there, what rights do we have to publish the materials online and can we use CC BY or CC0 (or another rights statement)?

Divide your materials into these categories:

- no permissions needed
- permissions already given
- permissions can be sought
- unknown copyright status
- publication not possible

If you are working on a tight budget, you might start with materials for which no permissions are needed or with the most useful materials to pilot your digitisation programme.

Resources

- [Digital guide: working with open licences](#) is a comprehensive guide from the Heritage Fund.
- [Rightsstatements.org](#) provides twelve standardised labels that can be applied when Creative Commons licences cannot be used.
- [Creative Commons Licences: A Guide to Data Protection & Copyright](#) from the Heritage Fund.
- [Copyrightuser.org](#) has guidance on copyright law, including copyright exceptions for [museums and galleries](#), [libraries](#) and [archives](#).
- [Naomi Korn & Associates](#) has a range of resources and templates for rights management.

Step 3. Organise your team

Identify and organise your team. Will you use staff, volunteers or consultants? List your team members and allocate responsibilities. Team members may benefit from certain training. Upskilling your team can help reduce costs in the long term related to consultancy or outsourcing.

Volunteers can also play a valuable role, helping you to engage directly with your community. Working with volunteers can help reduce costs related to digitising, cataloguing and publicity. Be aware it is not always a cost-free option. Supporting volunteers with the costs of participation will enable involvement by a more diverse group.

Volunteers contribute most to projects that have:

- a tried and tested workflow
- well-documented tasks
- a well-managed team
- a clear idea of the project scope

A small investment in the above (including volunteer management and costs of participation) can bring significant benefits down the road.

Resources

- [Guidance for Volunteer Cataloguing in the Archives](#) from the National Archives has useful checklists.
- [Digitization for Everybody](#) (Dig4E) offers free online lessons on imaging, audio and video digitisation.
- [Share Museum East](#) provides free training periodically on a range of digitisation topics.
- [Creative Commons](#) runs a [certificates programme](#) for publishing heritage in open access, if you are looking for more advanced training on rights, permissions and licensing.

Step 4. Select your equipment

Decide whether you will rent or purchase the digitisation equipment that you need. What you use will depend on the heritage materials and the digitisation method (scanning, photography, sound recording), as well as the quality of the digital outputs desired and any available budget. You will need to research what equipment is available.

Budget-friendly options include:

- using what you already have, like a smartphone
- renting equipment from another organisation
- buying low-cost equipment

For images, you can use:

- a smartphone
- a document scanner
- a film scanner
- a camera, tripod and lights

For audio-visual materials, you can use:

- a smartphone
- a hand-held recorder
- a laptop or desktop computer
- a microphone connected to a recording device

Ask similar projects what they have used to digitise. Find an expert to help you select the most suitable digitisation methods and equipment for your materials (eg, professional photographer, scanners or suppliers).

Resources

- [Collections Trust](#) has a [digitisation guide](#) with a useful section on selecting equipment.
- [Archivist in a Backpack](#) has created a way to digitise heritage using only equipment which fits into a small bag.
- [ScanTent](#) is an example of an affordable portable digitisation kit that the [Bibliothèque nationale de France](#) provides for visitors to self-digitise.
- You can find buying guides on [film scanners](#) and [photograph scanners](#) online.

Step 5. Digitise the materials

Set up and digitise your materials. If you have not already, now is a good time to get advice from an expert to make sure you are working with the technical specifications suitable for your project.

Resources

- [A Guide to Digitisation](#) by SHARE Museums East.
- [Capture Your Collections - Small Museum Version](#) by Government of Canada.
- [Archives and Access Toolkit](#) by Tate.
- [Digitisation Guidelines](#) by People's Collection Wales.
- [Digitise Documents](#) by Centre for Data, Culture & Society, University of Edinburgh.
- [Rijksmuseum Manual for the Photography of 3D Objects](#) by Rijksmuseum.
- [Glam3D.org](#) is an open resource on the entire process of 3D scanning.
- [Community Archives and Heritage Group](#) has guidance for community archives.
- You can find simple guides on using smartphones to scan [negatives](#) and [photos](#) online.

Step 6. Edit the digital materials

Your digital materials now need editing. For example, you may need to do colour corrections and other adjustments for images. For new audio recordings, you may need to remove background noise or other unwanted sounds. You will need to resize, reformat or compress the assets before publishing them online.

If you are a beginner, practice editing with some of the free and user-friendly software below.

Resources

- [Gimp](#) (or XGimp for mobile phones) is one of many open source photo editing programmes.
- [Photoshop Express](#) is a free image editing programme from Adobe.
- [Audacity](#) is a popular open source software for sound editing, but you might find [Ocenaudio](#) more user-friendly.

Step 7. Add metadata and rights statements

Adding metadata to your digitised materials is the process of cataloguing. It is up to you what metadata to add.

For example, you may want to add information such as the creator, the source materials, the date of creation, the place, object or person represented, and any rights in the materials or permissions on reuse. It is a good idea to look at how other archives have catalogued their collections and take note of the standards they use.

You will need to produce a template (a list of data fields in a spreadsheet) which suits your content, your ability to populate the fields with information, and what information is useful for users. You can record your metadata in a spreadsheet using open source software like Google Sheets or standard software like Microsoft Excel. When you are ready, this information can be added to the digitised materials using free software like Adobe Bridge or during upload to certain platforms like Wikimedia Commons or Flickr Pro.

Use these simple principles to save time and money down the line:

- collect information as close to the source as possible
- you do not need to wait for your online system to be ready – most online databases or uploading software can import spreadsheet data if it is consistent and linked to a filename
- use a standard set of fields for all data entry
- be consistent in how you populate fields (for example, set a date format like DD-MM-YYYY)
- write a guide for administrators and volunteers on how to enter data
- try to separate data types into different fields where possible (for example, place and date)
- use data that will help your users find the content (for example, categories or keywords)
- record any rights and permissions on reuse (for example, CC BY 4.0, CC0 or another rights statement)

Resources on metadata

- [Adobe Bridge](#) is a free program that allows you to preview, organise and add metadata to digitised materials.
- [Inselect](#) by the Natural History Museum, London is an open source application that automates the cropping of individual specimen images from whole-drawer scans.
- [Community Archives and Heritage Group](#) has a list of recommended data fields.
- [Digitisation Guidelines](#) for People's Collection Wales has a section on technical and descriptive metadata.
- [Jisc's infokit](#) has a general guide to metadata.
- [Managing Digital Files](#) by Centre for Data, Culture & Society, University of Edinburgh provides more guidance.

Resources on rights management and labelling

- [Digital guide: working with open licences](#) is designed to help organisations meet the Heritage Fund's open licensing requirement.
- [How-to guide for labelling cultural heritage](#) by Europeana is useful for understanding whether you can apply Creative Commons tools or should use labels from [RightStatements.org](#).
- [Creative Commons](#) provides a range of open licences and tools to publish original and public domain content.
- [RightStatements.org](#) provides twelve standardised labels that can be applied when Creative Commons licences cannot be used.

Step 8. Store your digital materials

Your digital materials now need backing up.

You should back up:

- archival uncompressed files (such as TIFF for images or WAV for audio recordings)
- compressed access files (such as JPEG for images or MP3 for audio recordings)
- metadata contributed to the digitised materials

Always follow the 3-2-1 rule, which says to keep:

- **3** copies of your data on
- **2** different media types (eg, a hard drive and the cloud) and
- **1** back up stored offsite

This is the first step to digital preservation for all collections. Keeping digital materials properly may incur additional costs. Some platforms offer free storage, which can help reduce costs. Consider these for the 3-2-1 rule.

Resources

- [Digital Preservation Coalition](#) offers information and training about storage and preservation of digital files.

Step 9. Publish your digital materials

Select the publication platform for your digital materials. You need to research platforms to identify the right one based on your needs and project objectives. Save time by:

- looking at what other small organisations or comparable projects have used
- speaking to other projects about their experiences with those platforms

Questions to ask when choosing an online platform:

- What are the budgetary requirements and ongoing costs for using the platform? For example, what are the storage and ongoing maintenance costs? Are they manageable for your organisation?
- Do other collections use this platform?
- Does the platform support the licence or label we want to use?
- Does the platform display your content in ways attractive to your users?
- Can you customise the look and feel?
- Is the platform easy to use for users and your team (staff, volunteers)?
- Does the platform follow web accessibility guidelines for people with disabilities?
- Can you catalogue your content online?
- Can you display your cataloguing data properly?
- Is it easy for users to search for content?
- Are there ways of grouping your content into categories to make it easy for users to find?
- Is the platform technology suitable for your users? (eg, access via a mobile phone)
- How is the data stored, backed up and recoverable?

- Is it easy to download the entire collection as backup or to place elsewhere (data portability)?
- What sort of support is accessible or provided by the platform service?
- Is the platform compatible with the rights and permissions in your materials (see Step 2)?
- Does the platform allow you to track user engagement (views, downloads)?

Resources

Examples of free or low-cost platforms to manage and publish your materials include [Flickr Pro](#), [Wikimedia Commons](#), [GitHub](#), [Sketchfab](#), [Europeana](#) and [Art UK](#).

If you need a platform with extended functionality and have the time and interest to engage, [Omeka](#) is an open source content management system for publishing online collections. Omeka may take time to learn, but their open source training and thriving community can help. Omeka has forums, free modules and manuals, and active developer and user groups that you can turn to for support.

Many platforms provide guidance on how to upload materials to their site. Examples include:

- [Uploading and sharing content on Wikipedia](#)
- [How to upload content to Flickr](#)
- [Uploading 3D models on Sketchfab](#)
- [Adding a file to a repository on GitHub](#) and [Upload your project by using GitHub best practices](#)
- Contact [Bookshare](#) to make accessible format copies of books in your collection available to print disabled readers.

Be sure to also advertise your project widely to increase its reach and impact. Use your website and social media accounts to tell users where they can find your materials. Track and collect examples of user engagement. Some platforms record views and downloads and track where your materials are reused.

- [Wikimedia has tools](#) that record how many views your materials receive across the Wikipedia articles where they are used.
- [Flickr Pro](#) also has features and accordances that allow for tracking visitor engagement, and is a low-cost alternative if open licences cannot be used.

Step 10. Deposit the digital materials

Archive or deposit your materials in a repository to ensure the public has access beyond the life of the project. This may be a funding requirement.

How or where you archive the materials will depend on your project and the type of materials it produces. For example, if your project is web-based, the [UK Web Archive](#) aims to collect all UK websites at least once a year. Examples of archived project websites include [Altogether Archaeology](#) and [Castleton Historical Society](#).

With digital assets, datasets or software code, open source repositories allow you to self-archive any public domain or openly-licensed materials. [Museums](#) and others, like the [British Library](#), use [GitHub](#).

Where costs can arise

Costs can arise in different places:

- **Labour:** staff costs, volunteer costs, recruitment, training
- **Equipment:** digitisation technology, software, or software subscriptions
- **Storage:** hard drives, cloud subscriptions, other platform fees (Flickr Pro), website domain and hosting
- **Expertise:** from consultants, suppliers, community members on project planning, collections, digitisation, data, asset and rights management
- **Engagement:** websites, publicity, public engagement, events, travel

Think about what trade-offs you can make to optimise your budget.

Example 1: Use your existing digitisation equipment, a free platform and image management software. This will free-up funds for training to upskill your team.

Example 2: Instead of buying digitisation equipment, invite visitors to photograph pre-selected works on display and upload them to Wikimedia Commons. This will free-up funds for workshops to edit Wikipedia and contribute new knowledge around your collections.

This three-part guide on costing digital projects can help you estimate what to spend on [digitisation equipment](#), [software](#), [collections and digital asset management systems](#), and any [training or outsourced expertise](#).

Low-cost digitisation ideas from real life projects

Learning from other projects can help you think creatively about digitisation on a budget. Your own project can build on strategies that have been tried-and-tested by other organisations.

A digitisation project does not need to involve 'end-to-end' digitisation. You might use materials that are already digitised and focus on one aspect of digitisation for a project, like metadata enrichment or accessibility. Another example includes preparing your digital collections for data aggregators like Europeana. These digitisation projects are important and useful in their own right.

The examples below showcase different ideas to inspire your own digitisation project. While some come from well-resourced institutions, the activities featured do not require significant funds.

Low-cost digitisation ideas

- **Idea 1.** [Digitise with smartphones](#)
- **Idea 2.** [Improve your metadata](#)
- **Idea 3.** [Pilot the work with a small collection](#)
- **Idea 4.** [Use free platforms to publish materials for any reuse purpose](#)
- **Idea 5.** [Use low-cost platforms to publish materials with rights restrictions](#)
- **Idea 6.** [Collaborate with experts on your project](#)
- **Idea 7.** [Invite visitors to digitise collections on display](#)
- **Idea 8.** [Coordinate a volunteer network to digitise materials](#)
- **Idea 9.** [Digitise on demand and for a small fee](#)

Idea 1. Digitise with smartphones

Strategy: Digitise using equipment that most people already have on hand: smartphones

Smartphones can be used to photograph both 2D and 3D heritage materials, as well as to make 3D models using photogrammetry. Some newer iPhone models even have LiDAR sensors, which enable 3D scanning.

Used by: Folger Shakespeare Library

Upon request, reference librarians [use smartphones](#) to quickly take and send people images of particular details from books. These images are then made available in the [Folger Reference Image Collection](#) under the CC0 Public Domain Dedication tool so anyone can modify, distribute and copy them without permission. The current collection has over 5,000 smartphone images.

Takeaways: Something is better than nothing

While smartphone images can be limited in quality, particularly without the use of lighting and other equipment, they can be published at a high enough resolution to make your collections accessible to more people.

Idea 2. Improve your metadata

Strategy: Clean, refine or enrich your collections metadata

You can make your digital collections more useful and accessible to users by adding information about the materials in the digital files themselves.

Start with information you already have about the materials or that you can produce without doing more research – like the date and place of creation or publication, where the materials are located, a description of persons, places or scenes represented, etc.

Used by: The National Library of Wales

The [National Library of Wales](#) converted their existing collections metadata to Wikidata, leading to an enrichment of data and easy access to tools for querying and visualising the collections. The collections selected spanned from paintings and print materials to the [Peniarth Manuscripts](#). The Library first cleaned and refined the metadata so it could be mapped to entities in Wikidata.

The Library made their collections more easily searchable by users and generated new information about trends in the manuscripts by enhancing their metadata.

Takeaways: Working on the backend of your digital collections is worth it

Adding or enriching metadata does not require technical equipment or skills beside a basic computer and Microsoft Excel, or a programme like Adobe Bridge, but it can be time-consuming to add, sort or verify the data.

Idea 3. Pilot the work with a small collection

Strategy: Use a small collection of materials to pilot the work, develop skills and design workflows

Begin by using a small selection of materials, such as a collection that is important to your organisation's mission. Use these materials to pilot your digitisation plan and track any impact. This data can help support follow-on projects and funding applications for new digitisation projects.

Used by: The Royal Albert Memorial Museum

The [Royal Albert Memorial Museum](#) partnered with university researchers from [The GLAM-E Lab](#) to explore open access. The Museum piloted the work using a group of 63 digital reproductions of public domain paintings from the Devon South West area. These [63 digital reproductions are now available under the CC0 tool](#) on [Wikimedia Commons](#).

The Museum then set-up a Wikipedia category page and used an open source tool called [BaGLAMa](#) to record [views and public engagement](#) across Wikipedia. The Museum will use this information, together with other factors, to inform future work on open access and Wikipedia engagement.

Takeaways: Slow but steady wins the race

You can make the work more manageable by starting with a smaller project. You will then be able to test and refine your plans, putting your organisation in a better position to scale-up the work at a later date.

Idea 4. Use free platforms to publish materials for any reuse purpose

Strategy: Use Wikimedia Commons to publish materials that are in the public domain or openly-licensed

In general, you'll find you have more options if your materials can be published under public domain tools and open licences, like CC0 and CC BY. Wikimedia platforms enable your organisation to track public engagement and other details on reuse.

Your materials will also circulate beyond Wikimedia platforms if they are published under public domain tools and open licences.

Used by: Many institutions around the world

In the UK, the [University of Exeter Special Collections](#) uses Wikimedia Commons as their primary platform to publish CC0 materials.

Some organisations publish on Wikimedia Commons in addition to other platforms. Examples include: [Aberdeen Museums and Art Galleries \(CC0\)](#); [Natural History Museum, London \(CC BY\)](#); [British Library \(CC0 and others\)](#); and [National Library of Scotland \(CC0 and others\)](#).

Takeaways: Publishing on popular platforms will expand your project's reach and impact

While these platforms have limited functionality, meeting the public where they already are is a great way to give visibility to your collections. You can use this opportunity to redirect users to your website to learn more about your collection, project and organisation.

Idea 5. Use low-cost platforms to publish materials with rights restrictions

Strategy: Use Flickr Pro to publish in-copyright materials that you have permission to share online

If digital materials are restricted by third-party rights, low-cost services like Flickr Pro can support publication under a wider range of licences and rights statements.

Used by: Newcastle Libraries

[Newcastle Libraries](#) uses Flickr Pro to publish photographs from their collections and of events held in the libraries. This collection now includes more than 6,500 historical public domain images of Newcastle upon Tyne and the surrounding areas.

The Library regularly updates their [photostream](#) and [albums](#) with newly digitised public domain photographs, as well as openly-licensed staff photographs of the libraries, patrons or events in which rights are reserved.

Takeaways: Publishing materials with reuse restrictions is feasible and worthwhile

Making materials available online (with permission) will make your organisation and collections more visible by a wider audience even if reuse is limited.

Idea 6. Collaborate with experts on your project

Strategy: Collaborate with experts who can contribute to the digitisation project

These might include local researchers, universities or communities. Consultants can help you design your project or clear rights. A Wikipedian-In-Residence can help you prepare and upload your materials to Wikimedia platforms. Community experts also hold knowledge on the materials.

Used by: Nomad Project

[Nomad](#) collaborated with Somali communities to explore how 3D digitisation and immersive mixed reality could contextualise Somali objects with knowledge from the persons and traditions to which they belong.

Nomad hosted workshops with participants who shared oral histories and used photogrammetry to create 3D models of objects from their personal collections. The project also incorporated collections of 3D objects, photographs and audio records from the British Museum, British Library and Powell-Cotton Museum.

Takeaways: Two birds, one stone

By working with community and local experts you can reduce the costs associated with researching your materials *and* engage directly with users and stakeholders. You will need to set aside time and allocate costs to cover travel, workshops or reasonable costs to facilitate their participation.

Idea 7. Invite visitors to digitise collections on display

Strategy: Invite visitors to digitise heritage already on display

Make a scavenger list of the heritage items that you have cleared rights on and want digitised. Create a project page based on rules and guidelines used by other organisations. Advertise the event and ask visitors to bring their own digital cameras or smartphones.

Used by: Many organisations around the world

In the UK, the Victoria & Albert Museum used Wikipedia Loves Art to digitise and upload collections to Wikimedia Commons. [Wikipedia Loves Art](#) is a type of [photo scavenger hunt](#) and free content photography contest conducted in collaboration with partner museums and cultural institutions, where participants compete to take photographs aimed at best illustrating Wikipedia articles. Similar competitions include [Wiki Loves Folklore](#), [Wiki Loves Earth](#) and [Wiki Loves Monuments](#).

Using Wikipedia means you can create rules for users with [clear guidelines](#) on the do's and don'ts of photography, a list of artworks to capture, and what sorts of notes and tags to add during upload. Once uploaded to Wikimedia Commons, the images can be aggregated via [category pages](#) that help editors find [your collections](#) and use them across Wikipedia articles.

Takeaways: Visitors can be part of the solution

Visitor-engaged digitisation begins with onsite access to heritage that leads to increased online access for a wider public. It also gets local audiences in the door and engaging with the programmes, exhibitions and facilities offered onsite.

Idea 8. Coordinate a volunteer network to digitise materials

Strategy: Coordinate a network of volunteers to digitise materials

Volunteers can help with a number of tasks involved in the digitisation process such as sourcing or cataloguing materials, adding or enriching metadata, hosting events and running publicity for your project.

Used by: People's Collection Wales

[People's Collection Wales](#) is a Welsh Government initiative that draws together collections from heritage institutions and organisations. The bilingual project offers support and training for individuals interested in digitising collections and community projects linked to the culture and heritage of Wales.

Individuals can upload their own documents, images, videos, and sound recordings, in addition to commenting on, curating and developing narratives around content made available by others. The digital collection can be explored by theme, location, date, places and events.

The initiative prioritises the preservation of rich resources in local locations alongside more formal collections to enable, engage and transform communities, while facilitating greater global learning about Welsh history and culture.

Takeaways: Team work makes the dream work

Engaged volunteers can be of great help when you are working with large volumes of materials or metadata. But it will require time and good management skills to coordinate and train volunteers and make the most out of their contributions to your project.

Idea 9. Digitise on demand and for a small fee

Strategy: Publish what you have and use requests for new photography to fund digitisation

Publishing images of collections in the public domain without reuse restrictions can be an innovative way to pass digitisation costs off to consumers. Restructure your fee models to represent the actual costs of digitisation and data storage.

Used by: York Museums Trust and Indianapolis Museum of Art

Both museums publish digital collections to the public domain and charge only service fees for new image creation.

[York Museums Trust](#) divides its digitisation into primary and secondary photography. Primary photography includes more difficult work or specialist training; secondary photography is faster, undertaken by staff or volunteers, and intended for imaging purposes to expand online access. They've found that when a secondary image is created and becomes popular through reuse, this often spurs image requests that lead to additional asset creation.

Because the [Indianapolis Museum of Art](#) also charges only service fees, a greater number of previously undigitised works have been requested for new photography. This has increased the availability of public domain materials online and more creative reuse by users.

Takeaways: Share the costs

On-demand digitisation for a small fee can be useful to fund the digitisation of new content without having to apply for new funding. It can be a useful way to build on a pilot project. You need staff time to administer digitisation requests and the equipment or skills to digitise. What you digitise will also depend on user demand.

Additional digitisation resources

Accessibility

- [10 Accessibility Tips](#)
- [Accessibility Toolkit](#) by BCcampus Open Education
- [Accessible U](#) by the University of Minnesota
- [Guide for Increased Accessibility through 3D Models](#) by the Swedish National Heritage Board
- [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines](#) from the Web Accessibility Initiative

Archives

- [Archives and Access Toolkit](#) by Tate
- [Community-Driven Archives](#) at the University Libraries, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
- [Guide to Archiving Digital Records for Volunteer and Community Groups](#) by the Digital Repository of Ireland

- Resources by [Community Archives and Heritage Group](#)

Collection and data management

- The [CARE Principles for Indigenous Data Governance](#) (Collective Benefit, Authority to Control, Responsibility, Ethics)
- The [FAIR Data Principles](#) (Findability, Accessibility, Interoperability, and Reuse)
- [Guide on Digital Basic Cataloguing](#) by the Network of European Museum Organisations
- [Spectrum](#) by Collections Trust

Guides and toolkits

- [Balanced Value Impact Model](#) by Simon Tanner
- [Capture Your Collections - Small Museum Version](#) by Government of Canada
- [Digital Guides](#) by Heritage Digital Academy
- [Digitisation Guides for Science and Botanical Collections](#) by the Distributed System of Scientific Collections (DiSSCo)
- [How to Open GLAM \(Galleries, Libraries, Archives and Museums\)](#) by Anne Young
- [Making your digital collection easier to discover](#) by Jisc
- [Open a GLAM Lab](#), a collective project and resource
- [Resources](#) by Whose Knowledge?
- [What does digitising collections involve?](#) by Digital Pathways

Rights and permissions

- [Copyright Notice](#) on digital images, photographs and the internet by UK Intellectual Property Office
- [Born Digital: Guidance for Donors, Dealers, and Archival Repositories](#) by Council on Library and Information Resources

Wikimedia platforms

- [Adding images to Wikimedia Commons and Wikipedia: Do's and Don'ts](#) by Whose Knowledge?
- [GLAM Guide on Uploading Images to Wikimedia Commons](#) by Whose Knowledge?
- [How to Link to your Collections on Wikidata](#) by ETH Library
- [ALR White Paper on Wikidata](#) by Association of Research Libraries
- [GLAM Metadata Standards and Wikimedia](#)
- [GLAM Workflow for Working with Wikimedia platforms](#)
- [Persistent Identifiers and Wikidata](#) by Biodiversity Heritage Library
- [QuickStatements tool for editing Wikidata items](#) for editing Wikidata items by Magnus Manske

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