UN ARMS seeks consultant to assist in revising SOPs for accessioning digital records

- Digital records management consultant
- United Nations Secretariat Archives and Records Management Section

Background and context

The Archives and Records Management Section (ARMS) of the United Nations Secretariat identifies, preserves and provides access to records that document the history of the UN. ARMS is responsible for all aspects of recordkeeping within the United Nations Secretariat, ranging from measures to ensure that UN officials create records in the course of their duties, through the management of records in UN offices, to preserving and making records of continuing value accessible as archives.

On an ad hoc basis ARMS has received digital records through a range of means and transfer instruments, and in a variety of formats and on a variety of media from Secretariat offices for over 10 years. ARMS is currently developing an enterprise guidance/governance framework for a digital continuity and preservation programme to be implemented by a range of stakeholders in the Secretariat, including content providers and ICT professionals.

However, until an enterprise approach is fully implemented, it is likely that ARMS will continue to receive ad hoc transfers of digital records. While established procedures and tools are in place for the transfer, acceptance, and accessioning of hard-copy records, they have not been fully developed for digital records and ARMS is seeking to develop Standard Operation Procedures (SOPs) for ad hoc transfers of digital records in line with accepted best practices, norms and standards.

Term of Reference

ARMS seeks an expert to assist ARMS in the development of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for accessioning digital records, in specific, by reviewing draft SOPs and related guidance and using three (3) case studies. The SOPs will be used by ARMS staff.

The consultant must have experience of, and expertise in, the acquisition and implementation of digital records that have digital continuity requirements. The consultant's advice and actions must be consistent with ARMS' target and current digital preservation standards (e.g. OAIS/ISO 14721, PAIMAS/ISO 20652, and ISO 16363) and best practices.
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The consultant will work with an ARMS Project Manager to review the accession practices for three datasets that ARMS has received. The datasets reflect the three principle ways in which, historically, digital archives have been transferred to ARMS. The datasets contain highly sensitive information. The records are of enduring value and will require preservation.

Objectives and targets

Improve processes for accessioning digital records by providing expert advice and assistance to ARMS.

Tangible outputs of the work assignments

Revised draft SOPs for the three datasets. Summary information about the datasets:

1. A dataset comprised of born-digital records in a variety of formats (Microsoft Office files, PDFs, audio files, video files, emails) and analogue. The dataset is approximately 20 GB. ARMS provided support to the creating office during the winding-down phase in 2014.

2. Digital surrogates (preservation and access copies) generated from analogue originals already accessioned and/or This collection is a combination of audio-visual records files extracted from floppy disks which were delivered on a multiple media (hard-drives and LTO tapes). The total volume of this dataset is approximately 1.5 TB. All audio was digitized as WAVE and MP3 files, and all video was digitized as ProRes 422 and H.264 files. Files from the floppies were largely backup files in text format. ARMS managed a preservation process in 2014 that produced the digital copies.

3. A dataset comprising a database with digital object storage currently stored offline on secured external hard drives or on stand-alone servers. The database 47519 records and 11818 digital objects. It is a TRIM v.6 database running on a Windows SQL server, size total to about 200G; the digital objects are in PDF format, and the volume is approximately. The server has four hard drive backup copies, and a password secured LTO tape backup copy. ARMS managed the winding down and transfer of this dataset to ARMS in 2012-2013.

Delivery of Services

The consultant will work with ARMS for three (3) business days, including two days on-site at UN HQ in New York.

The consultant must be able to provide services before 8 May 2015 and deliver revised draft SOPs within two (2) weeks of on-site work at UNHQ.
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Payment will be contingent of the completion of 3 days of service and delivery of drafts.

**Project Management**

ARMS will provide the consultant with:

- Existing relevant SOPs (including drafts), standards and guidelines
- Detailed technical information about TRIM, its configuration, metadata elements, etc.
- Known contextual and technical information about the datasets
- Information on resources, budget, ICT capability and requirements within ARMS and, as necessary, within the Secretariat.

**Proposal requirements**

- Brief statement of the objectives of the consultancy
- A list of similar materials developed by the proposer, with brief description and technical details, ideally supported by sample content
- Two references
- Fee, inclusive of all expenses, for the delivery of 3 days of services and draft SOPs

Please submit proposals to Stephen Haufek, UN ARMS: haufek@un.org

ARMS: [https://archives.un.org/](https://archives.un.org/)
10 March 2015