

# Databases Special Interest Group: Terms of Reference

V0.1

Version	Date	Name	Change Details
0.1	09/07/2024	Michael Popham	Initial draft for comment

## Purpose

The Database Special Interest Group (Database SIG) brings together DPC Members who are interested in discussing and sharing experiences, workflows, and tools for the preservation of databases. First and foremost, this group is intended as a supportive network for those working in this area. It provides a regular forum for making contacts, building relationships, learning from peers as well as sharing successes and challenges.

This group was born from a short meeting organized by the DPC on 19<sup>th</sup> June 2025, prompted by Members in the Australasian/Asia-Pacific time zones who have a shared interest in preserving databases. Discussion was wide-ranging and free-flowing, and this opportunity attracted several members from outside the target region. At the end of this first meeting there was a call from several attendees to continue the discussion, and the DPC subsequently received a number of comments from other Members in different time zones who also wished to participate. Database preservation was also identified as a topic of interest at the European Members Forum, which took place in the Hague 4-5<sup>th</sup> June, and is often cited by Members as a topic about which they would like to know more.

The DPC has therefore established a new Special Interest Group to provide a space for the dialogue to continue, and for Members to share and learn from one another. Whilst the DPC will carry out basic administration to enable the meetings to take place, the agenda will be led by the group, reflecting current questions and concerns for group members.

## Membership

Membership of the Database SIG is specifically aimed at DPC Members who are interested in this topic. Non-members, including DPC Supporters (who provide digital preservation services or software to the community), are not able to join this group. DPC Members will be able to join the group at any time. A mailing list will be set up to enable discussion outside of the meeting and to help facilitate the organization of meetings.

The DPC will be responsible for setting up meetings and managing the mailing list, and a member of DPC staff will also act as Chair for each meeting. A Google Document will be provided for recording running meeting notes and agenda items. Meeting attendees will be encouraged to bring items and topics for discussion and take collaborative notes within the Google Document.

## Values

The working group is established under the auspices of the DPC Executive Board. As such it will adopt the constitution, norms and values of the DPC. Consequently, within the terms of reference it will:

- care for our members, resources, people and environment.
- maintain neutrality in respect to solutions, approaches, sectors, suppliers and vendors.
- be open, transparent and accountable to members.
- amplify the needs and successes of our members.

- be open to all stakeholders with a presumption of positive intent.
- respond to the needs of members in the delivery of services.
- be authoritative, current and concise in all our publications and communications.
- be respectful, welcoming, inclusive and transparent in all our dealings.
- be evidence-led, making effective use of data in decision making.

The working group will act on its values and be transparent with respect to how they are implemented.

The working group meets under the DPC's Inclusion and Diversity policy. DPC is committed to being accessible to everyone who wishes to engage with the topic of digital preservation. Communities that fully embrace these values are shown to be more effective, innovative, and united. Therefore, we expect participants to be positive, accepting, and sensitive to the needs and feelings of others. Harassment of any member of the DPC Community will not be tolerated and appropriate steps will be taken to deal with any such issues. For more information, see the [DPC Inclusion and Diversity Policy](#).

### Conflicts of interest and confidentiality

Any conflicts of interest will be declared at the start of each meeting, particularly if a potential conflict relates to the provision of for-profit tools or services. Participants are encouraged to raise any concerns about conflicts of interest with the chair.

Members will be made aware that discussions relating to particular people, organizations or products should be treated confidentially.

### Scope

Proposed topics in scope include:

- Challenges and solutions to preserving databases.
- Seeking help and advice from others.
- Discussing what does (and does not) work when preserving databases.
- Identifying, sharing, and discussing examples of good practice.
- How to manage preserved databases.
- How to work with database owner/creators to get the best preservation outcomes.
- Sharing sources of advice and guidance re. database preservation.

Out of scope:

- DPC endorsement of particular standards, tools, approaches or techniques.

### Frequency and timing

The Group will meet every month for an initial period of 12 months from August 2025 to July 2026.

Meetings will be scheduled to facilitate as best as possible, participation of DPC Members from around the world. Meetings will use the Zoom platform and will last one hour.

The provisional schedule of meetings is as follows:

<b>Month – provisional date and time</b>	<b>Scheduled to suit time zone(s)*</b>
August 2025 – Wed. 13 <sup>th</sup> @ 15:00 UTC	Americas
September 2025 – Thu. 11 <sup>th</sup> @ 06:00 UTC	Australasia / Asia-Pacific
October 2025 – Tue. 14 <sup>th</sup> @ 10:00 UTC	Europe/Africa and Middle East
November 2025 – Thu. 13 <sup>th</sup> @ 19:00 UTC	Americas
December 2025 – Tue. 9 <sup>th</sup> @ 23:00 UTC	Australasia / Asia-Pacific
January 2026 – Wed. 14 <sup>th</sup> @ 14:00 UTC	Europe/Africa and Middle East
February 2026 – Tue. 10 <sup>th</sup> @ 16:00 UTC	Americas
March 2026 – Tue. 10 <sup>th</sup> @ 23:00	Australasia / Asia-Pacific
April 2026 – Thu. 16 <sup>th</sup> @ 13:00 UTC	Europe/Africa and Middle East
May 2026 – Wed. 13 <sup>th</sup> @ 14:00 UTC	Americas
June 2026 – Wed. 10 <sup>th</sup> @ 06:00 UTC	Australasia / Asia-Pacific
July 2026 – Wed. 15 <sup>th</sup> @ 15:00 UTC	Europe/Africa and Middle East
<b><i>*Please note that all meetings are open to any Member who wishes to attend, regardless of time zone.</i></b>	
<i>Further dates may be added following 12-month review</i>	

## Outputs

Meetings will not be recorded. Attendees will be encouraged to take notes in a shared Google Document.

The group may optionally choose to publish occasional blog posts on the DPC blog discussing key learnings and takeaways from their discussions.

## Agenda

Each meeting will be advertised in advance and group members will be encouraged to submit items for the agenda. A typical agenda will be as follows:

- Welcome and introductions (as necessary)  
Assign notetaker
- Round table updates from group members (this provides a regular opportunity for group members to update each other on their own progress with database preservation)
- Agenda items (to be added by group members)
- Proposed topics for next meeting

## Evaluation

The Special Interest group will be evaluated after the initial period of twelve months. Group members will be asked to provide feedback on whether it meets their needs. Action will be taken based on feedback received.