DPC Managing Indigenous Cultural Material (MICM) Community of Practice (CoP): Terms of Reference

V0.3

Version	Date	Name	Change Details
0.1	17/4/2025	Robin Wright	Initial draft for comment
0.2	30/5/25	Robin Wright	Plan to establish a Task Force. Including input from AIATSIS.
0.3	8/9/26	Robin Wright	Amendment to change name from Task Force to CoP and associated amendments

Purpose

The **MICM CoP** brings together DPC Members to discuss the challenges that face collecting institutions aiming to preserve Indigenous material held in digital form including culturally sensitive material. The group aims to share experiences around developing organisational and technical mechanisms to ensure the appropriate management of Indigenous material in conjunction with traditional owners/custodians and communities and in line with agreed protocols. First and foremost, this group is intended as a forum for identifying the challenges faced in this area and aiming to identify or develop solutions or mechanisms to facilitate the appropriate management of Indigenous Cultural Material in a digital preservation context. It provides a regular forum for making contacts, building relationships, learning from peers and sharing successes and challenges.

This group was born from discussions held amongst members of the digital preservation community in 2024 on the topic of managing culturally sensitive Indigenous digital content when using digital preservation software systems. As part of this discussion, it was noted that there was the need for a space to continue the conversation and explore appropriate solutions.

The DPC has therefore established this group to provide a space for the dialogue to continue. Whilst the DPC will carry out basic administration to enable meetings to take place, the agenda will be led by the group, reflecting current topics and concerns for group members.

Due to the geographical membership, this CoP will predominantly focus on the appropriate preservation management of digital Indigenous Cultural Material in **Australasia and Asia-Pacific**.

The CoP aims to share information and to identify gaps between existing protocols for dealing with analogue Indigenous material and the digital environment.

Membership

Membership of this CoP will be DPC Members who are interested in this topic. Non-members, including DPC Supporters (who provide digital preservation services or software to the community), cannot join the group. DPC Members can join the group at any time. A mailing list has been set up to enable discussion outside of the meeting and to help facilitate the organization of meetings. The group will also include Indigenous representatives from DPC Member organizations.

There may be instances where the group consults external experts including Indigenous owners/custodians, community representatives or archiving practitioners to contribute to the discussion and/or participate in a particular meeting.

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

Values

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

The group will apply the CARE principles for Indigenous Date Governance in all discussions and in the development and dissemination of any good practice processes or protocols aimed at addressing these challenges. The CARE Principles for Indigenous Data Governance are people and purpose-oriented, reflecting the crucial role of data in advancing Indigenous innovation and self-determination. These principles complement the existing FAIR principles encouraging open and other data movements to consider both people and purpose in their advocacy and pursuits.

The 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 ask 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:

- Sharing challenges encountered by members engaged with the preservation of digital Indigenous material including culturally sensitive material
- Appropriate engagement with traditional owners/custodians and communities in the development of solutions to address these challenges

- Consulting and listening to Indigenous owners and communities about the issues and proposed solutions
- Identifying potential technical solutions to challenges and how these could be incorporated into existing or proposed digital preservation systems/software
- Incorporating the CARE principles as part of any proposed processes or protocols
- Identifying, sharing, and discussing examples of good practice
- Sharing case studies of using specific digital preservation software and/or hardware when managing Indigenous material including culturally sensitive material held in digital form
- General queries about working with Indigenous cultural material or data.
- Identifying opportunities for collaboration.

Out of scope:

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

Frequency and timing

The Task Force will meet approximately bi-monthly from June to December 2026.

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

Outputs

Meetings will not generally be recorded. Attendees will be encouraged to take notes in a shared Google Document which can be reviewed or amended by other CoPmembers.

Recordings of meetings may be taken (with the agreement of participants). These recordings will only be made available to CoP members who were not able to attend or be used to help create accurate meeting notes.

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
- Presentation from group members (if possible) on their current engagement with MICM
- Discussion of gaps between existing protocols for dealing with analogue Indigenous material and the digital environment
- Agenda items (to be added by group members)
- Proposed topics for next meeting

Evaluation

The operation of the CoP will be evaluated at the end of 2026. Group members will be asked to provide feedback on whether it meets their needs. Action will be taken based on feedback received.

References

Maiam nayri Wingara Indigenous Data Sovereignty Principles
https://www.maiamnayriwingara.org/mnw-principles

CARE principles for Indigenous Date Governance https://www.gida-global.org/care

ATSILIRN protocols https://atsilirn.aiatsis.gov.au/docs/ProtocolBrochure2012.pdf

Te Mana Raraunga – Māori Data Sovereignty Network Charter
https://www.temanararaunga.maori.nz/tutohinga