Digital Preservation Community Charter

The Short Version
The Digital Preservation Community aims to be respectful, welcoming, inclusive and transparent. It looks to encourage diversity in all its forms and 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 stronger. All of those who are part of this community are asked to be positive, accepting, and sensitive to the needs and feelings of others. Harassment of any member of the Digital Preservation Community will not be tolerated.

The Long Version
Introduction
As the Digital Preservation Community continues to grow and diversify, we acknowledge the need to clearly state the fundamental expectations of how that community will function to support and encourage all of its members. Digital Preservation is a collaborative activity and our success is best guaranteed by clearly stating and holding to our values. Communities that fully embrace values of inclusion and diversity are shown to be more effective, innovative and stronger. This document will describe those expectations and ask those who adopt the charter to make commitments to ensure the community is respectful, welcoming, inclusive and transparent. This document has been developed by the Digital Preservation Coalition and will be reviewed annually. The DPC encourages other Digital Preservation organisations to endorse and implement the contents of this charter.

Aspirations for the Digital Preservation Community
For the purpose of this document, the Digital Preservation Community is defined broadly to include all organisations and individuals with an interest in digital preservation. Members of the Community interact using a wide variety of locations and platforms referred to here as Community Spaces. This includes (but is not limited to) meetings, events, webinars, and social media channels.

The DP Community has always sought to be friendly, open, understanding, collaborative, innovative and supportive and should look to sustain this atmosphere as the community grows and changes. This also includes actively supporting the community's continued diversification. The DP Community should be a place where people:

- Feel comfortable both physically and emotionally
- Acknowledge and celebrate the benefits of working within a diverse community
- Can share thoughts and experiences freely
- Are encouraged to participate in productive dialogues
- Listen respectfully and are open to others’ ideas and opinions even if they differ from our own
- Can initiate and engage with pieces of work that will benefit themselves and the wider community

With this in mind, it is important to acknowledge and be sensitive to the wide range of life experiences, methods of expression, customs and traditions that individuals bring to the DP Community.

To support the growing DP Community, we will:

- Encourage diverse engagement with outputs/events and support initiatives to encourage diversity, particularly uplifting and amplifying work and participation from members of under-represented
groups. Working with and engaging with those communities to determine the best ways support their participation

- Welcome and support new members of the community
- Take a few moments at the beginning of events to state DP Community values and aspirations
- Provide spaces that encourage the community to be respectful, welcoming, inclusive and transparent and are sensitive to the wide range of life experiences, methods of expression, customs and traditions that individuals bring
- Engage in dialogues that are always friendly, open, understanding, collaborative, innovative and supportive
- Ask questions and challenge ideas, but always with positive intent
- Be sensitive to the wide range of life experiences, methods of expression, customs and traditions that individuals bring to the DP Community
- Not make assumptions about an individual’s knowledge, opinions or skills based on their profession, seniority, or any other characteristic
- Maintain confidentiality where discussions have been identified as such

**Improving Accessibility**

Accessibility is a multi-faceted issue and requires an investment in and ongoing commitment to enabling access and participation for all community members. This can include (but is not limited to) issues surrounding:

- Providing physical access for those with additional requirements
- Supporting good mental health
- Catering for dietary requirements
- Flexibility for community members who have other commitments such as childcare
- Support for community members with extra requirements, such as being accompanied by an attendant
- Providing access to resources for community members who are unable to attend in person

It is important to acknowledge that those with additional accessibility requirements are the experts on their own lives and what they need. It is therefore essential to ask before attempting to provide any assistance, to be okay if they answer ‘no’, and to refrain from asking intrusive questions.

**To help improve accessibility, we will:**

- Always prefer accessible venues and event times, dates and locations that encourage a broad range of participation
- Identify and implement additional steps that may be required for any larger, multi-day events, including: first aid (for physical and mental health), quiet spaces, guidance on good mental health at conferences, support for parents/assistants/attendants.
- Support and provide assistance to colleagues where needed but always with respect for their autonomy and personal space.
- Refrain from asking intrusive or overly personal questions.
- Providing translation services if available and needed

**Supporting Inclusion and Safety**

The DP Community is dedicated to providing a comfortable, safe and inclusive experience for everyone, taking into consideration each individual’s personal, professional and technological characteristics. Community Spaces should be positive, inclusive and harassment-free, providing all community members
with an experience where they may learn, network, and enjoy the company of colleagues in an environment of mutual human respect.

Negative behaviours can range from the subtle to the overt and the community should support each other in acknowledging and discouraging such behaviour. Awareness and empathy is essential at all times, especially when encountering subtler microaggressions as the individual may not realise their behaviour could be viewed negatively. If pointing out a microaggression it is essential to focus on the comment or action and not make the issue personal.

Any form of focused negative attention or pestering of an individual or group will not be tolerated in Community Spaces. This includes actions such as (but is not limited to) confrontational questioning in a Q&A session, aggressive selling of products, taking unwanted photos without permission, online harassment, or purposefully ignoring or insulting another community member and their contributions. If a community member feels uncomfortable in a situation or observes someone else being mistreated, or have any other concerns, it should be clear who they should contact for support, with events having well-defined Codes of Conduct. All session leaders/chairs should be trained in how to deal with such issues where possible. The rights of any individual reporting negative interactions who requests anonymity should also be respected.

Harassment is a term defined in law so that it is ‘an offence for a person to pursue a course of action which amounts to harassment of another individual, and that they know or ought to know amounts to harassment. Under this act the definition of harassment is behaviour which causes alarm or distress.’ Harassment of DP Community members should not be tolerated in any form and help should be available to victims of harassment where needed. This may include contacting hotel/venue security or local law enforcement, providing escorts, seeking medical attention and otherwise assisting those experiencing harassment to feel safe.

**To support inclusion and safety, we will:**

- Refrain from engaging in any form of harassment as defined above
- Support fellow community members by standing up to microaggressions in a polite and constructive manner
- Always work constructively with any community member who feels they have been excluded to address why this has happened and never negate their experience by explaining ‘why they haven’t been excluded’
- Make sure support for the victim of negative attention or harassment is always the priority
- Implement robust procedures for handling negative interactions and harassment as needed. These are essential at all events and conferences where a Code of Conduct should be published and implemented as standard.
- Escalate an issue to involve employers, medical care, and/or law enforcement if needed
- Train session leaders, panel chairs and/or other event volunteers on how to encourage inclusion and manage negative interactions where possible
- Ensure all issues are dealt with in an efficient, sympathetic and confidential manner

**Glossary**

**Microaggressions** - Microaggressions are the everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership. In many cases, these hidden messages may invalidate the group identity or experiential reality of target persons, demean them on a personal or group level, communicate they are lesser human beings, suggest they do not belong with the
majority group, threaten and intimidate, or relegate them to inferior status and treatment. (Definition from *Psychology Today*).

**Personal Characteristics** – any characteristics relating to an individual’s identity, physical being, personal history or beliefs, particularly those protected by law. These may include (but are not limited to): gender, gender identity and expression, age, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, ethnicity, religion (or lack thereof) and financial circumstances.

**Professional Characteristics** – any characteristics relating to an individual’s profession, career, knowledge, skills and seniority, e.g. assuming that a question from an established professional during a Q&A session will have more validity that an early-years professional/unknown member of the audience, and so should be prioritised.

**Technological Characteristics** – any characteristics relating to choice or operation of technology, e.g. believing that the use of proprietary software over open-source reflects negatively on an individual’s skills.

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This document draws from the following resources:

**Allied Media Conference Policies on ‘Accessibility, Childcare, and Safety’ and ‘How we share space at the AMC’** - [https://www.alliedmedia.org/amc/accessibility](https://www.alliedmedia.org/amc/accessibility) and [https://www.alliedmedia.org/amc/agreements](https://www.alliedmedia.org/amc/agreements)


**Codes of Conduct 101 by Ashe Dryden** - [https://www.ashedryden.com/blog/codes-of-conduct-101-faq](https://www.ashedryden.com/blog/codes-of-conduct-101-faq)


**PASIG Code of Conduct** - [https://pasigoxford.org/code-of-conduct/](https://pasigoxford.org/code-of-conduct/)


**Why Woman Talk Less** - [https://debuk.wordpress.com/2015/05/23/why-women-talk-less/](https://debuk.wordpress.com/2015/05/23/why-women-talk-less/)