

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Digital Archives Consultant

BACKGROUND

[Archives and Records Management Section \(ARMS\)](#) of the United Nations requires the services of a Consultant to assist with the transition to digital archives management.

ARMS has a large volume of digital archives which need to be appraised, processed and ingested into its digital preservation system (Preservica). ARMS needs to develop workflows and procedures to streamline these processes going forward.

ARMS has developed workflows for ingestion into Preservica, however, given the volume of legacy digital records to be processed, as well as those which will be transferred in the coming years, ARMS needs the expertise of a digital archives expert to develop sustainable procedures and processes to ensure an appropriate transition to digital archives management.

OBJECTIVES

1. Facilitate the transition within ARMS related to processing born-digital archives.
2. Establish schedules and a methodology for auditing the integrity of digital files and administering workflows necessary to ensure the persistence of digital objects and associated metadata.
3. Develop and support secure, sustainable practices for the preservation and provision of access to digital archives throughout their lifecycle. Specifically, this will be done by:
 - a. Conducting a review of ARMS digital records processing workflows, from initial capture and accessioning to preservation and ingestion into a digital preservation system and identify gaps by benchmarking against international standards and best practices.
 - b. Proposing new and/or improved processes and workflows by drafting Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) or other guidance or instructional documentation which addresses the gaps identified in ARMS ability to accession, capture, appraise, analyse, arrange and describe, preserve, and ingest digital records into the digital preservation system in a managed and programmatic way.
 - c. Completing the end-to-end processing of a variety of diverse, yet representative examples of groups of born-digital archives held by ARMS, which is necessary for their preservation and access. This processing (e.g., accessioning, scheduling, appraisal, arranging and describing, etc.) will form the basis for drafting SOPs (i.e. they will be the test cases) and result in a number of completed groups of records.

DELIVERABLES

- After the review of ARMS digital records processes (one month into the consultancy), the Consultant will produce a preliminary report of the initial findings, as well as a schedule of work and deliverables.
- New procedures for managing digital records throughout their life cycle, from receipt from United Nations offices to ingestion in the digital preservation system and management thereafter.
- In coordination with ARMS staff, conduct a pilot project using the proposed workflow with different groups of born-digital records.
- Train ARMS staff on the application of the new procedures and related processes.

TIMELINES

Funds for this project are available throughout the 2023 financial year. The proposed dates for this consultancy are from 1 March to 31 December 2023.

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE CONSULTANT

Education

Advanced Degree in Library, Archives and/or Information Science or a relevant academic discipline with demonstrated understanding of large, automated archives and a minimum of three years of relevant experience in a relevant setting or a combination of education and relevant experience.

Experience

Minimum of two years' experience with digital archives management, specifically digital preservation and the appraisal and arrangement and description of digital archives.

Knowledge, Skills, And Abilities

- Demonstrated experience cataloging, converting, migrating, and bulk uploading digital assets.
- Broad knowledge of digital repository functions, services, and requirements.
- Demonstrated experience in running quarantine checks, checksum, and format validation with expertise with digital preservation packaging schemes and versioning conventions.
- Demonstrated experience with data migration, ingestion, curation, and mapping.
- Familiarity with various digital file formats, digitization, and digital reformatting practices.

PROJECT ADMINISTRATION

The Consultant will work directly with ARMS staff and will report to the Chief of Archives on a weekly basis.

Although ARMS can be flexible about the schedule and duration of the consultancy, the vast majority of the work will need to take place on-site at ARMS premises in New York City.

ARMS Project Manager will facilitate to the necessary data and documentation.