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UNESCO/PERSIST Guidelines for the Selection of Digital Heritage for Long-Term Preservation.

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Samenvatting

Heritage institutions – libraries, archives, and museums – traditionally bear the responsibility of preserving the intellectual and cultural resources produced by all of society. This important mission is now in jeopardy around the world due to the sheer volume of information which is created and shared every day in digital form. Digital technology, in dramatically easing the creation and distribution of content, has generated exponential growth in the production of digital information. The digital universe is doubling in size every two years and will grow tenfold between 2013 and 2020.¹ Preserving this vast output is difficult, not just for its extent, but because much of it is ephemeral. Digital information does not have the same longevity as physical objects, documents, and books, which often will survive for centuries. Digital file formats, storage media, and systems are ever evolving, jeopardizing the future readability and integrity of digital heritage over much shorter timeframes than does the deterioration of paper and physical objects, and its availability for capture is fleeting. The survival of digital heritage is much less assured than its traditional counterparts in our collections. Identification of significant digital heritage and early intervention are essential to ensuring its long-term preservation.

The aim of the Guidelines is to provide an overarching starting point for libraries, archives, museums and other heritage institutions when drafting their own policies on the selection of digital heritage for long-term sustainable digital preservation. Existing institutional policies may be assessed against the Guidelines and revised if required. The Guidelines address a diverse audience. As digital heritage may differ widely between communities, regions and countries, its preservation requires engagement and cooperation of both the public and the private sectors, as well as content creators. While public institutions may have the primary legal responsibility for managing heritage collections, the private sector must also face the challenge of preserving and ensuring access to its digital information. It may be for regulatory requirements and responsibilities to shareholders, but there is also a corporate social responsibility to support the sustainable growth and development of their communities, regions, and the world by retaining valuable digital heritage and making it accessible for future generations. The Guidelines acknowledge that libraries, archives, museums and other related organizations are different in mandates, operation and methods used in collecting and managing their holdings. However, with the development of information technology and the growing user demand and expectation of fast and integrated access across library, archives and museum collections, all heritage institutions and information providers face similar challenges in the selection and preservation of digital materials. The Guidelines thus target institutions, professionals and administrators on every level and in every region of the world in order to review existing material for selection, highlight important issues, and offer guidance when drafting institutional policies. The Content Task Force also acknowledges that there is an ethical dimension to the issue of selecting heritage for preservation but will not explore this in detail at this stage.

(Introduction, blz. 3-4)

Aantekeningen



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



UNESCO/PERSIST Content Task Force

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<http://www.ifla.org/files/assets/hq/topics/cultural-heritage/documents/persist-content-guidelines.pdf>
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