

Guidelines For Managing Your Oral History Digital Content

To make it easier for the Alexander Turnbull Library to collect and preserve digital material for future generations, there are a few conventions that you can follow when creating digital records or preparing them for transfer to the library. This document offers some suggestions for you to consider.

If in doubt – please ask!

We are always happy to offer advice and guidance on the creation of your digital content. These guidelines are generic and, while representing our preferred options, we are able to deal with a wide variety of formats and styles. Also, we can process older, perhaps even obsolete media. If you have any questions about digital material you would like to donate, please let us know. If possible, get in touch with us at the beginning of your project.

Oral History Centre

Email alexander.turnbull-library@dia.govt.nz

Phone 04 462 3977

Organising Your Material

- Being consistent in the way you arrange your material is the key
- File together related information in well-named folders to give an indication of the subject, e.g. by subject, project or activity
- Where files are related, number them to indicate this relationship, e.g.
 - smith_jane_abstractpart01.doc
 - smith_jane_abstractpart02.doc
 - smith_jane_abstractpart03.doc
- When preparing material to send to the Alexander Turnbull Library, separate out audio files from non-audio documentation. These are processed by different sections of the library and arranging your material in this way makes processing easier and more efficient
- Keep all material relating to your oral history projects separate from other unrelated personal material, to make it easier to identify the material that we need to collect and preserve in the archive. Ideally, use a dedicated device for transferring your oral history digital files to us, e.g. an external hard drive, flash card, etc.
- There are several choices for organising your digital files and you may already have a system. If not, a possible folder structure is shown on the next page:



File Naming

NB. When carrying out *any* actions on your files, such as re-naming, there is always a possibility of data corruption. Therefore, it is best to work with copies of your files to keep your original data completely safe.

- Be concise - avoid long and complex file paths
- Select meaningful names to facilitate organising, searching and browsing
- Develop standard naming conventions for the file names of record types you create or save on a regular basis
- Avoid using capitals or double spaces which can cause problems when moving files between different computing environments. Try using underscores in filenames instead of spaces
- If including a date in a filename, use the format `yyyymmdd`, e.g.
10 June 2012 = 20120610
- Note in the filename whether the file is a draft or final version of a document

File Formats

- Technology changes rapidly and makes it difficult to know which file format is best to use. In some cases you may have no choice over which format is available to you. However, there are some common steps to take which will help us to identify and preserve your files regardless of format
- Ensure your filename always includes a file extension to help us identify the file type more easily. Be aware that these can sometimes be inadvertently wiped when copying or moving files. Examples of file extensions are:
 - Microsoft Word documents should end in **.doc**
smith_jane_abstract.doc
 - JPEG image files should end in **.jpg** or **.jpeg**
smith_jane.jpg
smith_jane.jpeg
- If sending image files, please use the highest quality image possible to give the best chance of good, long-term preservation of the image. Ideally, we prefer to receive TIFF files, but JPEG files are acceptable. We can accept other formats too, so please get in touch with us to discuss the options
 - TIFF 6.0 (uncompressed)
 - At least 5,000 pixels on longest side
- There are preferred file formats that will give us the best chance of high-quality, long-term preservation of your documents. The following list is not exhaustive and we can accept other formats. Don't be put off if you cannot provide these formats - get in touch with us to discuss further

File Type	Preferred format	File extension
Audio file	Waveform Audio File format	.wav
	Broadcast Wave format	.wav
	<i>NB. <u>Do not</u> convert other audio file formats into Wave files. Please get in touch with us to discuss further</i>	
Image file	Tagged Image File format	.tiff
	Joint Photographic Experts Group format	.jpg / .jpeg
Text file	Portable Document format	.pdf
	Text format	.txt
	Rich Text format	.rtf
	Microsoft Word document	.doc

- Embedding images within textual documents provides useful context, but can make documents difficult to preserve, particularly in Microsoft Word. If you wish to embed images in textual documents, please save the document as a PDF file prior to sending it to us
 - You can create PDF files using Adobe Acrobat software
 - Alternatively, there is free software available that converts Microsoft Word documents to PDF format, e.g. at the pdfforge site <http://en.pdfforge.org/pdfcreator>
 - If you have embedded images in any of your documents, please also provide the images as separate TIFF or JPEG files. This enables wider use of the images over time, e.g.
 - You send a biographical document in PDF format that includes some contextual images. Separately, you send the original images used in the document as TIFF or JPEG files
 - So, we receive:
 - smith_jane_abstract.pdf (incl. 4 images)
 - image01.tiff
 - image02.tiff
 - image03.tiff
 - image04.tiff

Scanning Guidance for Images

- We prefer to receive original documents rather than scanned or digitised copies, e.g. of photographs. Challenges we face when offered scans are the difficulty of establishing ownership and copyright, and the quality of the scans themselves. However, when sending original documents is not possible, it is easier for us to preserve scanned documents and provide long-term access to them if they are scanned to the highest level of quality possible, and contextual information about the scan is provided
- Vital information to provide about scanned material:
 - Name and contact details of the donor of the material
 - Assurance that the donor owns the original item and has the authority to donate a scanned version
 - Name of the photographer, if known
 - Name of family collection that a photograph has been copied from
 - Date image or material was produced
 - Information on any restrictions to be imposed on the use of the scan

- The following table gives the specifications used when we scan material in-house to a standard suitable for long-term preservation of high-quality versions of documents. These guidelines are the ideal, but do not be put off if you cannot achieve them. Get in contact with us, as we are happy to discuss your project and give you further advice on what can be achieved

Material Type	Parameter	Ideal setting
Pictorial materials e.g. photographic prints and negatives, paintings	File format	TIFF 6.0 (uncompressed)
	Capture resolution	5,000 pixels on longest side
	Bit-depth	16-bit colour (48-bit RGB)
	Colour space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gray Gamma 2.2 (greyscale) • Adobe 1998 (colour)
Printed text e.g. newspapers, books	File format	TIFF 6.0 (uncompressed)
	Capture resolution	400ppi
	Bit-depth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8-bit greyscale • 16-bit colour (48-bit RGB)
	Colour space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gray Gamma 2.2 (greyscale) • Adobe 1998 (colour)
Manuscripts e.g. letters, diaries, journals, notebooks	File format	TIFF 6.0 (uncompressed)
	Capture resolution	300ppi
	Bit-depth	16-bit colour (48-bit RGB)
	Colour space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gray Gamma 2.2 (greyscale) • Adobe 1998 (colour)

Further Advice and Guidance

If you are in any doubt as to what you should do, we are always happy to offer advice on the creation and management of your digital content. If you have any questions about digital material you would like to donate, please get in touch with us.