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STACKTRACE // News from Software Preservation Network

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Aug 2019 - Sept 2019
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SPN-WIDE INITIATIVES

Learn about current SPN-wide efforts - activities that crosscut working groups and affiliated projects.

TWO-YEAR SEED FUNDED LAUNCH

An Update from SPN's Community Coordinator

Just like a healthy babe, SPN is learning, getting bigger, and evolving every day - and it's truly awe-inspiring to recap the big moves we've made in the past couple months.

The Steering Committee made a significant structural change by voting in a proposal to form two subcommittees that will focus on support and sustainability for the SPN community in the post-seed-funded period. This includes, among other things, determining membership tiers, services, and pricing; creating a space for project incubation and a process whereby ideas can become community proposals; and launching a membership campaign that will get us to our post-2020 funding goals!

Steering also approved a proposal by [Elena Colón-Marrero](#) and the community cultivation team that opened up working group recruitment to people outside of SPN institutional membership, to great success. We are excited to see how the organization grows and changes as we incorporate these eager folks into our work.

The last thing I'll mention - and I really could go on forever, because SPN's accomplishments never seem to end - is that Brandon Butler and the Law & Policy Working Group submitted a proposal to join an amicus brief in the Supreme Court case of [Allen v. Cooper](#). Check out the "Code of Best Practices" update below to learn more about this exciting new initiative!

As a relative newcomer to this community, I could feel SPN's energy the moment I walked into the Zoom...but I never expected to still be this energized 8 months later, with an impressive list of accomplishments already behind us. Thanks to everyone who has helped move this community forward!

Yours, in software preservation,
Jess Farrell

CONFERENCES AND EVENTS

Mark Your Calendars: Upcoming Law & Policy Chat

New Resource for SPN Members

Law & Policy Chats



An opportunity for members to chat with SPN's Law & Policy Advisor, Brandon Butler, and each other about their questions or concerns, plus learn more about how to use tools like the Best Practices and the DMCA Exemption to preserve and provide access to software.

Who: SPN Members

When: Thursday, Oct. 3 from 3:00-4:00 ET



We're delighted to announce a new benefit for SPN members: a monthly opportunity to chat with SPN's Law and Policy Advisor, Brandon Butler, about your software preservation questions and concerns.

The next session is **TODAY (Thursday, October 3) from 3:00 to 4:00 pm ET**. All members should have received call-in information via email. We look forward to seeing many of you there!

SPN's Research Working Group at iPres 2019



SPN's Research-in-Practice Working Group recently presented a poster at iPres2019 in Amsterdam. The poster, "Software Preservation Services in Cultural Heritage Organizations: Mapping the Landscape," focused on preliminary results from the [Service Provider Survey](#), a study undertaken by the Research-In-Practice Working Group to better understand the software preservation activities taking place in libraries, archives, and museums.

Want to know more? [Read the conference paper](#) and/or check out the group's [presentation video](#)!

SPN Members Meetup at Maintainers III in Washington, D.C.

If you are a member of SPN and planning to attend the [Maintainers III](#) conference in Washington, D.C., we hope you'll join us for lunch on Tuesday, October 8!

We will gather in the Kellogg Conference Hotel lobby at 12:30 pm ET and leave for [Union Market](#) at 12:40 pm. If you have any questions, email SPN's Community Coordinator, Jess Farrell, at <jess@educopia.org>.

QUARTERLY COMMUNITY FORUM

Software Preservation Community Forum

Subscribe to the Software Preservation Network
listserv to receive call-in information:

<http://bit.ly/spn-listserv>



On September 10, we were delighted to once again host the [Software Preservation Quarterly Community Forum](#)! Each quarter, we invite our colleagues across professional and disciplinary communities to participate in an hour-long discussion on topics related to software curation, preservation, and reuse.

The Fall 2019 Forum included progress reports from parallel efforts, including:

- [Vicky Steeves](#), [Sarah Nguyen](#), and [Genevieve Milken](#) on "[Investigating and Archiving the Scholarly Git Experience](#)"
- [Jack Bernard](#), Associate General Counsel, University of Michigan presenting on "Talking to your General Counsel about Software Preservation"

If you missed the Forum, or if you simply want to revisit all of the ideas and inspiration, be sure to check out the [running notes document](#)!

If you are interested in discussing a specific topic during future Community Forums, [submit your topics and questions via Google form.](#)

PUBLICATIONS

Crafting Community Goals: Reflections from the Steering Committee

In our last issue of STACKTRACE, we announced the release of SPN's strategic goals—a process that required months of hard work and involvement from our entire community. To mark this major milestone, we asked our Steering Committee if they


would be willing to write a blog post to reflect on their journey. Kindly, Dianne Dietrich and Nancy McGovern took the lead, and we think the end result is an insightful, wise, and honest look into what it takes to craft goals with the power to guide a community organization's work and allow it to efficiently measure its own success.

[Read the full post on the SPN blog!](#)

MEMBER PROFILES

An ongoing series on the SPN blog, member profiles are intended to highlight the full spectrum of software preservation work underway at member institutions, and to celebrate our community's contribution to the wider software preservation landscape.

Duke University




MEMBER PROFILE

DUKE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

"Engaging with Software Preservation Network provides us with a great opportunity to think more strategically about what a 'software preservation program' might look like at our institution and how we can contribute to network activities!"

Sophia Lafferty-Hess
Research Data Management Consultant

Pictured (L to R): Moira Downey, Sophia Lafferty-Hess, Winston Atkins, Hillary Gatlin, Jack Hill, [Matthew] Farrell
Not pictured: Shadae Gatlin



Tell us a bit about the software preservation program at Duke?

"Currently at Duke University, we preserve a variety of digital objects within our repository and preservation programs including research data, code and script files, born digital materials, records generated by our institution, etc. In some of these collections we may also receive software programs; however, as an institution, we have not formally developed a "software preservation program."


We have a Digital Preservation Working Group that has been thinking holistically

about our preservation procedures and working with our Governance group to enhance our overall preservation strategies. Engaging with Software Preservation Network provides us with a great opportunity to think more strategically about what a "software preservation program" might look like at our institution and how we can contribute to network activities!"

[Read Duke's full member profile on the SPN blog!](#)

MIT Libraries


MEMBER PROFILE:
MIT LIBRARIES



Joe Carrano
Digital Archivist

"We have many collections with software and software dependent records. Some of these collections represent well-known achievements in both the history of the Institute and software development itself.

Some of the earliest code in our collections were only recorded on paper print-outs or punch cards and this is how they were stored as permanent records."



What has your MIT Libraries accomplished recently that you're proud of -- big or small?

"We recently finalized an arrangement for access to code through data-mining—the code was encumbered by many privacy issues in parts of the data that were of little interest to researchers. Through use of legal agreements, we can now grant researcher access with precautions in place that protect privacy for non-relevant material.

This process has allowed one particular researcher to work on a project that involves creating an emulator of an early computing system, so this in itself fosters preservation and access at the same time! We're proud that we've been able to preserve and now provide access to the corpus of data within which the code snippets are saved."

[Read MIT's full member profile on the SPN blog!](#)

University of Virginia Library



"There are so many institutions working on parts of the software preservation problem. 'It takes a village' to be aware of parallel efforts and connect them so that we can learn from each other."

-Sherry Lake, Scholarly Repository Librarian



Member Profile: UVA

"We're proud of the efforts coordinated by Lauren Work on the FCoP project, and by APTrust's Christian Dahlhausen to jointly develop an EaaS node at UVA. Both are leapfrog efforts that will help us jump into more sophisticated software preservation work."

-Chip German, Senior Director for Scholarly Communication



Tell us about a challenge that UVA Libraries is facing in its software preservation work or that the field is facing as a whole?

Chip German: "Our challenges are ones that we know are shared by our colleagues around the country and the world. For example, there's a hurdle to overcome in generalizing the sense among librarians that software preservation is something that deserves professional-level attention at the local level, instead of simply biding our time to apply the results of work done elsewhere. And, we struggle to get our research faculty to focus on managing their research (including data and software) for sharing."

Sherry Lake: "From a personal perspective, I want our faculty to share all parts of their research, and then the Library can work on how to preserve it. Given that I come to SPN from a Data (Research) Management background, I don't think of software as a commercial product, but instead, as individual researchers 'code.' Of course, the code may be dependent on commercial products, so it all really ties together in a complex matrix."

[Read UVA's full member profile on the SPN blog!](#)

AFFILIATED PROJECTS

Learn about SPN affiliated project activities and milestones. SPN affiliated projects focus on specific aspects of software preservation/curation that

support the strategic goals of SPN.



Timeline: January 2018 – June 2020

Funder(s): Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and Alfred P. Sloan Foundation

Awardee: Yale University

With one year remaining in the project timeline, the EaaSI project began building on all we've achieved to date. August and September saw the team contributing back to the community through workshops and webinars, teaching others what we've learned over the first 1.5 years of the project, and applying the findings of our documentation efforts to new technology, the Universal Virtual Interactor (UVI) and updates to the metadata model.

Heading into the final stretch of the project, we look forward to the release of the new EaaSI interface, services for broader access, and continued outreach to the community that has provided so much support.

[Read the complete update here!](#)



Timeline: June 2017 – May 2020

Funder(s): Institute for Museum and Library Services #RE-95-17-0058-17

Awardee: CalPoly State University

As the FCoP project navigates its final year, the cohort continues to ramp up their outreach efforts via conference presentations and pop-up sessions. And while the team is sharing results far and wide, they also recognizes the need to look ahead to the post-grant funding landscape. As such, the team is delighted to welcome Matt Schultz to assist with a gap analysis for the project. On a more local level, FCoP representatives are exploring a range of questions at their own institutions including disk imaging workflows, metadata cataloging for hardware/software, testing disk images with EaaSI, and so much more!

[Read the complete update here!](#)



Timeline: January 2017 - June 2020

Funder(s): Alfred P. Sloan Foundation

Awardee: Association of Research Libraries

Supreme Court Brief Filed; IMLS Meeting; Last Call for Survey Responses

An important case making its way through the Supreme Court could change the way state institutions think about copyright risk in software preservation, so [SPN joined an amicus brief](#) with the Association of Research Libraries, the American Library Association, the Society of American Archivists, and others, to ensure that the Court understands the implications of this change for digital preservation. Under current law, [state institutions are immune](#) from money damages in copyright cases. Courts can still order them to take action, or refrain from acting, e.g., to take down or destroy infringing copies, but decisions in lower courts have said state institutions

don't have to worry about the [notoriously high](#) and [problematic damages](#) associated with copyright law. However, in [Allen v. Cooper](#), a documentary filmmaker is asking the Supreme Court to reverse those decisions and find that states and state institutions (including universities, archives, and museums) should be on the hook for the same big copyright fines as everyone else. Our amicus brief argues that this would have a chilling effect on state cultural memory institutions who need to preserve in-copyright works in the face of inevitable uncertainty about copyright. [Read the full brief here.](#)

On September 20, SPN Law and Policy Advisor Brandon Butler represented SPN at a meeting in Washington, D.C., of experts from around the country convened by the Institute for Museum and Library Services. The goal of the meeting was to gather information on how US libraries, museums, and archives navigate legal issues associated with cross-border initiatives.

Finally, one last reminder that the [Code team has published a survey](#) to learn the level of awareness of the Code in the community, its early effects, and the kinds of activities and resources that would be useful as the community takes increasing advantage of the Code. If you haven't, yet, please complete the [survey](#) today—it takes about 9 minutes to complete.



The Software Preservation Network (SPN) facilitates and supports software preservation efforts. SPN preserves software through community engagement, infrastructure support, and knowledge generation in five core activity areas including Law & Policy Advocacy, Metadata & Standards Development, Training & Education, Research-in-Practice, and Technological Infrastructure.

Do you appreciate the work that SPN has been doing over the last several years to broaden participation and ensure lawful preservation, sharing, and reuse of software? Would you like to SPN to continue its work of coordination, research, advocacy, and capacity building? Do you have ideas or a vision for the future of software preservation that you would like to see realized through the SPN community?

If you answered “Yes” to any of these questions, then consider supporting our work

through membership or sponsorship. To learn more about the benefits of membership and sponsorship, visit: <https://www.softwarepreservationnetwork.org/get-involved/>

To join, download, complete and submit your [SPN Participation Agreement](#) to <jess.farrell@educopia.org>.



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