STACKTRACE // News from Software Preservation Network

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June 2019 - July 2019
Volume 2, Issue 4

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

As I take a moment in this summer heat to slow down and reflect on SPN's last few months of work, I have to appreciate how dedicated our members are to growing the SPN community.

The SPN Steering Committee is starting work on their budgeting process, and turning to big strategic decisions in August through December that will shape the future of SPN. We'll keep you updated as they work through ideas and plans for how to make our unique community sustainable while holding true to our vision of preserving software through collective action.

The SPN Policies & Procedures committee took more of a summer school approach to the past few months. They drafted, incorporated committee and member feedback, and held a Steering vote on the first two SPN-wide policies! After voting on a third, they'll take a month to get some of their own procedures documented before continuing another policy sprint in the Fall.

Our Advisory Committee is diligently working on a landscape analysis that will help ensure that SPN is made up of a diverse group of people representing a broad range of domains, institutional types & missions, geography, and cultural backgrounds.

Summer in the northern hemisphere is a time for conferences, vacations, and making sure we soak up enough sun to get us through the winter months, so I'm extra proud that we've been able to do all of that AND keep SPN on track to achieve our seed-funded goals!

Yours, in software preservation,
Jess Farrell

QUARTERLY COMMUNITY FORUM

Software Preservation
Community Forum

Subscribe to the Software Preservation Network listserv to receive call-in information:
http://bit.ly/spn-listserv

Software
Preservation
Network

On June 11, 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 Summer 2019 Forum included progress reports from parallel efforts, including:

- [Morane Gruenpeter](), software engineer and metadata specialist for the [Software Heritage]() team at the Inria research center

- [Henry Zhu](), creator and maintainer of open source [JavaScript compiler Babel](), podcaster, community organizer

- Reports from Affiliated Project Teams and Cohorts, including:

  - [FCoP (CalPoly University)](): Guggenheim Museum, University of Illinois, Living Computers: Museum + Labs, Georgia Tech, University of Virginia, University of Arizona

  - [EaaSI (Yale University)](): Notre Dame University, University of California - San Diego, Stanford University, University of Virginia, Carnegie Mellon University

  - [Code of Best Practices for Fair Use in Software Preservation]() (Association of Research Libraries): Association of Research Libraries, American University, University of Virginia

SAVE THE DATE: The Fall Software Preservation Quarterly Community Forum is scheduled for September 10, 2019 at 8 am PT/10 am CT/11 am ET/3 pm GMT.

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

On Friday, August 2nd, SPN-affiliated projects, EaaSI and FCoP, combined forces to facilitate an all-day workshop entitled "Multithreading Software Preservation." The workshop was hosted at the beautiful Central branch of the Austin Public Library in downtown Austin, Texas. Thanks to the EaaSI program of work: workshop registration was free, meals & snacks were catered, facilitators received travel support AND we were able to provide four travel scholarships!

We were lucky to welcome 60 participants to the workshop representing a wide range of professions including museum curators, university archivists, digital preservation managers, government records managers, graduate information studies students, and games conservators!

Over the next couple of weeks, we will synthesize and summarize the results of the workshop, but for now, feel free to review the shared notes document and check out tweets from the event using the #spnatx hashtag.

Special thanks to Josh Wilkinson, Events Coordinator for Austin Public Library. Warm appreciation to our workshop facilitators: Seth Anderson, Cynde Moya, Ethan Gates, Lauren Work, Michael Olson, Tracy Popp, Brandon Butler, and Jessica Meyerson

PUBLICATIONS

After months of hard work and involvement from the entire community, we are pleased to announce the release of SPN's strategic goals! These goals will guide our work and set us up to efficiently measure our own success over the next 17 months.

Check out the full list of strategic goals on the SPN website!

WORKING GROUPS

Keep current on initiatives underway in our Working Groups.

Research-in-Practice

Coordinator: Seth Erickson (Penn State University)

Members: Jessica Benner (Carnegie Mellon University), Wendy Hagenmaier (Georgia Tech), Monique Lassere (University of Arizona), Christa Williford (Council for Library and Information Resources), and Lauren Work (University of Virginia)

Charge: In support of SPN's mission to preserve software through community engagement, infrastructure support, and knowledge generation, the Research-in-Practice Working Group facilitates research projects that bring individuals and organizations with diverse perspectives and interests together to document and analyze the landscape of software preservation and access.

Upcoming Initiatives: The Research-in-Practice Working Group is currently analyzing a mountain of data that was gathered through the Service Provider Survey and via a series of follow-up interviews. The survey and the interviews are intended to document how cultural heritage organizations are approaching software preservation services, and to help us better understand existing capacity in order to inform local policies and workflows. The Working Group plans to write up and publish the results of the survey and interviews in late 2019/early 2020!
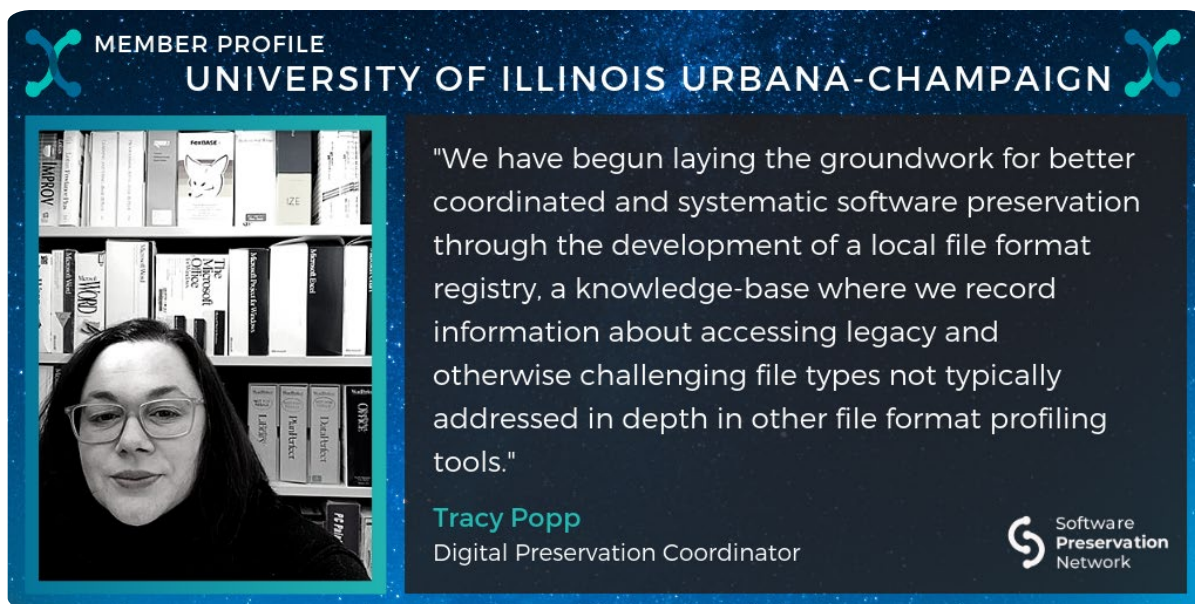
MEMBER PROFILES

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.

University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

MEMBER PROFILE
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

"We have begun laying the groundwork for better coordinated and systematic software preservation through the development of a local file format registry, a knowledge-base where we record information about accessing legacy and otherwise challenging file types not typically addressed in depth in other file format profiling tools."

Tracy Popp
Digital Preservation Coordinator

Software Preservation Network

Tell us a bit about the software preservation program at your institution?

"We have begun laying the groundwork for better coordinated and systematic software preservation through the development of a local file format registry, a knowledge-base where we record information about accessing legacy and otherwise challenging file types not typically addressed in depth in other file format profiling tools. In the file format registry we document what software can be used to render a file, related dependencies, and we have the capability to document access pathways such as migration or emulation strategies used to render a file.

Additionally, through our involvement in the Fostering a Community of Practice (FCoP) and Software Preservation Network, we hope to gain more tools for advocating and supporting coordinated software preservation and access efforts."

Read UIUC's full member profile on the SPN blog!

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New York University

MEMBER PROFILE: NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

"We recently launched the code of an emulation-based web archiving tool, built as an extension to ReproZip, that is currently in testing and development. The tool was built to specifically capture dynamic data journalism websites. We announced the launch at the annual conference for the National Institute for Computer-Assisted Reporting (NICAR), and received a lot of initial positive feedback from that community, which has been energizing."

Vicky Steeves
Librarian for Research Data Management and Reproducibility

Software Preservation Network

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

"We recently launched the code of an emulation-based web archiving tool, built as an extension to ReproZip, that is currently in testing and development. This represents the completion of our 2018-2019 IMLS planning grant. The tool was built to specifically capture dynamic data journalism websites. We announced the launch at the annual conference for the National Institute for Computer-Assisted Reporting (NICAR), and received a lot of initial positive feedback from that community, which has been energizing.

We have just received an award to explore the means by which academic publishers can better preserve new forms of scholarship. We will be working with NYU Press, the University of Minnesota Press, Michigan Publishing, CLOCKSS, Portico, and several other publishing, preservation, and emulation services. Over the next 16 months, we plan to test different formats and develop guidelines so that publishers can advise authors at the beginning of a project about the long-term 'preservability' of different approaches."

Read NYU'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

Heading into the summer months, we all hoped the pace of work might slow down as the temperatures rise and some of us take off for vacation, but the EaaSI project continues to speed along and we're busier than ever. The last two months included incredible work by our developers to reach not one but two(!) milestones in our project plan, including release of the EaaSI Open Source Software Sandbox, plus exciting breakthroughs in our work to overhaul the EaaSI UI.

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 transitions into the 3rd and final year of its grant-funded period, the project cohort is increasingly engaging in outreach and knowledge dissemination

based on the experiences gained in their individual projects. From workshops to podcasts to conference presentations, the cohort is sharing their work far and wide!

Read the complete update here!

Timeline: January 2017 - June 2020
Funder(s): Alfred P. Sloan Foundation
Awardee: Association of Research Libraries

Code Grant Period Ends, Survey Helps Plot the Way Forward, Legal Issues at Emulation in the Archives

As the Code team nears the end of the term of its grant from the Sloan Foundation (August 31!), we are planning for the future of the Code of Best Practices in Fair Use for Software Preservation in the SPN Community. To that end, 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!

Brandon Butler, SPN Law and Policy Advisor, was a featured speaker at Emulation in the Archives at UVA on July 18. Brandon presented an overview of legal issues facing those who would use software emulation as part of a preservation and access strategy, including the Code and the DMCA exemption (and Preservationist's Guide) as key tools for overcoming uncertainty. A robust Q&A period showed the community's strong interest in overcoming perceived legal challenges and taking advantage of new legal rights.

JOIN SPN

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>.

Twitter: @softpresnetwork
Web: www.softwarepreservationnetwork.org
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