

FCoP Scenarios for Software (Re)Use and Access - Virginia

Jan - Feb 2019

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Timeline:

- (January 7 - January 11) Brainstorm Scenarios for Use & Access
- (January 14 - January 25) Gather User Data
- (January 28 - February 1) Data Analysis and Preliminary Observations
- (February 4) Cohort Monthly Call - Scenarios for Use & Access Reports

Purpose:

The purposes of this exercise are to:

- Articulate potential software (re)use and access scenarios
- Inform/Verify your assumptions regarding (re)use and access scenarios by surveying a designated user

Instructions:

1. Complete 1-5 scenarios for use and access using the prompt below.
2. Identify 1-3 users whose use cases you believe may correspond with the scenarios for use and access that you articulated.
3. Ask participants to share 15-20 minutes of their time to reflect on their different needs related to software curation and preservation by completing the questionnaire.
4. Participants complete questionnaire

- Analyze participant responses to determine the distance between your participant reflections and the scenarios for use and access driving your interest in software curation, preservation and emulation. Reflect on your findings.

Detailing your scenarios for use and access:

Actors	Goals	Resources	Challenges	Anecdotes for this use case
Type of stakeholder or user involved in the use case.	What does the actor want to do with software or software-dependent data?	What resources are available to this actor or these actors to achieve their goals - what resources do they need?	What challenges could your users face in attempting to accomplish their software reuse goals?	Any real world scenarios that you have witnessed or been involved in that informed your articulation of this use case.
Scenario 1				
Scenario 2				
Scenario 3				

Questionnaire Template:

Scenarios for Use and Access Creator/Researcher Questionnaire

1. For what purpose(s) do you create/use/reuse software for? Check all that apply.

- To validate or test existing claims
- To generate a new research outcome
- To document or assist in the research process
- As an historical artifact
- To provide or recreate an experience
- Other _____

2. What function(s) do you create/use/reuse software for? Check all that apply.

- Replication/reproducibility/validation
- Research outcome
- Aggregation
- Computation
- Migration
- Artifact
- Other _____

3. What documentation should be collected related to how you create/use/reuse software?

- User manuals
- Technical specs/requirements
- Bugs/Testing Protocols
- Correspondence
- Promotional material
- Publications
- Other _____

4. For software you have created/used/reused, what components do you consider as essential to retain?

- Hardware / peripherals
- Libraries
- Dependencies
- Programming languages
- Algorithms
- Environments
- Documentation

5. What was the storage location for the software you created/used/reused?

- Removable media (diskettes; CDs; USB drives)
- Computer hard drive
- Hosted on website (github; research group homepage; cloud storage)

6. Which institutional stakeholders are involved in how you create/use/reuse researcher software? Please check that all apply

- Software developer
- Librarian
- Copyright officer
- Archivist
- Curator
- Research data manager
- Steward
- Publisher
- Deployer
- Other _____

7. On a scale of 1-5, please rate your level of agreement with the following statements:

1 - Strongly disagree 2 - Disagree 3 - Neither agree or disagree 4 - Agree 5 - Strongly agree

- ___ It is important to me that the provenance of this software has been fully documented.
- ___ It is important to me that I will be able to access this software in the future.
- ___ It is important to me that others can easily discover this software in the future.
- ___ It is important to me that I can replicate my previous experiences with this software in the future.
- ___ It is important to me that others can use this software in the future.
- ___ This software offers a unique experience.
- ___ I want research libraries to steward this software.
- ___ I am comfortable with the idea that this software may be updated or enhanced in the future.

Data Analysis and Discussion Questions:

Internal Scenarios for Use and Access

1. **As you were developing out more verbose scenarios for use and access, what types of internal questions arose?**

Internal questions that came up included the need for knowledge to fill gaps about workflows and needs for parts of the library and researcher environments that the team was less aware of; this includes needs of our architectural school and cultural heritage data folks.

2. **Was it difficult to choose which user scenarios to articulate, or was it relatively simple? If difficult, what might make that process easier?**
3. **Did you have some existing source of user data to inform these scenarios, and if so, what are the sources of this data?**
This same survey via UVa's involvement in the EaaS project, but also thinking through research scenarios for the service provider survey via the Research Working Group
4. **What was your thinking/criteria/basis for prioritization if you had numerous scenarios for use and access?**

Now that we're several months into the FCOP project, prioritization was a bit easier. There is functional need on the end of archivists, curators, and public services librarians to ensure it is understood how these materials are important to the mission and function of the archives, followed by understanding by liaisons and architectural cultural heritage folks and many others for use and referral of researchers in future.

Researcher/Creator Questionnaire

5. **Were you surprised by any of the questionnaire responses from your users?**

Yes and no.

In the "no" camp, I asked for and **received great feedback *about* the survey itself** from Mike Durbin, lead of a small team of software engineers at UVa, and a member of the FCOP team. Having done this survey once before for EaaS, and knowing some of the difficulty surrounding language and concepts, particularly for specialists, I wanted to dig into this a bit more.

His comments lightly edited and in italics below:

The group of software engineers (of which I am one) is pretty bad with generic or ambiguous questions, and of that group, I personally am extraordinarily bad at responding to questions I perceive as imprecise, so please forgive my comments.

The first question is baffling to me: "For what purposes(s) do you create/use/reuse software for?"

If the question was " what purposes might motivate you to find and use software that had been deposited in libraries or archives?", I might have something to go on. The answer to "for what purposes do you create/use/reuse software?" is "almost everything". Without a substantially narrower context, the question seems so broad as to be meaningless.

If there could be a description at the beginning that made it unnecessary to use the "created/used/reused" phrase throughout, I think that would be the biggest help.

Asking someone why they created software is so different than asking why people use it, the multiple choice answers wouldn't seem to be the same.

In the "yes" camp for surprise (and/or delight), I was very happy to see the archivist list the software was crucial for appraisal, and her example of her experience working with data dependent on software. This is key, and I would love to follow up with her about this.

6. Did you find any patterns across user responses?

It was interesting (in a good way) to see some items repeated in patterns from the EaaS round (which involved almost a completely different set of respondents, save 1). For example, the across-the-board desire to see user manuals included

7. What new questions did these responses raise for your team? What additional information do you want or need to know from your users in order to inform internal policies, requirements and workflows for software preservation and emulation?

See appraisal comment above. In addition to archivists and researchers, also think we will have an additional researcher constituency within the community of our data and cultural heritage folks.