

UVA_SoftwareQuestionnaire_V1.0

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About this questionnaire: This document is meant for collections that have been flagged as potentially having software and/or some types of software dependent material in need of early collection & preservation attention via workflows including [the initial donor collection inventory & checklist](#).

Goals of this document: To gather enough information from donors and others about the context/content of work using software & software itself as to make acquisition, appraisal, arrangement, description, preservation, and access judgements without being overly onerous to donors/UVA Special Collections, Archives, and Preservation staff.

Note: This particular questionnaire is in relation to collections that are archival in nature/and within a collection focus that is part of UVA's FCOP grant. Depending on the collection, (particularly for University Archives), this particular questionnaire may be related to or support - but does not necessarily replace - questions and workflow structure around the transfer, acquisition, preservation, and access to scientific data and software for research.

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Questionnaire sections:

[1. Commercial software](#)

[2. Non-Commercial software](#)

1. Commercial software (produced for purchase by an organization, not the donor)

Purpose and use

- What is this software primarily used for?
- How did you use this software?
- What operating system did you use with this software?
- Is there other software that can also open the files you produced with this particular software? **IF YES:**
 - Is this other software widely and/or freely available?
 - Would this other software, or alternatives such as screenshots, video capture, or contextual documentation be considered sufficient for the preservation and access to this collection?
 - Do you feel that the original software is needed to produce an authentic and accurate representation of your work in the collection?
 - Is it necessary (for technical or other reasons) that future users of the collection interact with this collection using the original software?

Carriers/Transfer of software

- Do you still have the installation disks/carriers for the software?
- If software or software download is cloud-based - do you have the website for downloads of the software?
- Are you using cloud-based (software you can only access through a web browser that was not installed locally on your machine) software or services to access or edit the materials? Can you provide URLs for the services or software?

Copyright, Licensing, and DRM

- Do you have the license keys, serial numbers, or other credentials required to install or run your purchased software?
 - *(Note for donors: Please only share keys associated with software stored on a physical medium that is being donated. Do not share credentials that enable access to cloud services.)*
- If so, will you transfer these license keys/serial numbers to us along with the software as part of this collection?
- To the best of your knowledge, does this software require authentication via a remote server in order to run? Is this server still operating?
- Is a physical disk or other physical peripherals (dongles, etc.) required for the software to run?
- Is the software protected by any other form of digital rights management (DRM)?
- Was there licensing language on the original packaging of the software, in the documentation, or presented as part of the installation process? If the license was printed on the packaging or in the documentation, did you retain it?

Documentation

- Do you have user manuals for the software? Are these online or physical manuals?
- Were there any user forums or websites you found particularly useful to find answers/better use this software?

Context and Boundaries

- To the best of your recollection, did you install any additional external libraries/plugins/packages to the baseline software install that some files may depend on?
- Is there other related software that is an important component or related to this software for your work?
- Have you used multiple versions of this software over time for materials in the collection?

2. Non-commercial software* (created/adapted/used by donor, could be open source or under license**)

**Software in this context can be a very fraught term, as it may mean different things to different users. We use "software" in this document to broadly cover source code, executables, applications, and other related components of networks and workflows that create context and meaning for software.*

***There may be some scenarios where software considered part of the collection may have been created by the donor in the course of their employment, or may have been/be sold commercially. Questions related to this commercial aspect will have two asterisks (**) to denote this focus.*

Purpose and use

- What is this software primarily used for?
- How did you use this software in your work?
- What operating system did you use with this software?
- Was this software developed as part of any federal/other grant activity that may have specific requirements for preservation and access?
- What programming language(s) or tools did you use to write this software/utility/tool/executable?
- Was any of the source code/software in this collection created in the course of your employment (either as a full-time employee or on a contractual or freelance basis)? Was it (or works incorporating it) sold, or otherwise used commercially? **** IF YES TO EITHER QUESTION:**
 - Did you retain any rights to this software/source code? How was this documented?
 - What was your employment agreement with the employer you worked for when this code was created? Is the company still in business?
 - If the software was created under a freelance agreement, what were the terms of that agreement? Is the entity that commissioned the software still in business?
 - Is the software still sold or used commercially? If so, by whom and under what name?
- What was your general workflow for developing the software? Did you use versioning tools like Git?
- Is there other software that can also accurately render the files/data you may have produced with this software? **IF YES:**
 - Is this other software widely and/or freely available?
 - Would this other software, or alternatives such as screenshots, video capture, or contextual documentation be considered sufficient for the preservation and access to this collection?
 - Do you feel that the original software is needed to produce an authentic and accurate representation of your work in the collection?
 - Is it necessary (for technical or other reasons) that future users of the collection interact with this collection using the original software?

Carriers/Transfer of software

- Do you have the original source code for this software?
- How did you package this software for distribution (if distributed)?
- Is this software available in any public repository? **IF YES:**
 - Is it an academic institutional repository? If so, do you have a DOI or link to this resource?
 - Is it an open (public) repository (e.g. GitHub, Gitlab)? Do you have a link to this resource?
- Do you have any non-cloud copies (on external hard drives, etc.) that you would want to transfer?

Copyright & Licensing

- If you wrote/contributed to/adapted this software, has it been released with any license or terms of use? ([Apache](#), [MIT](#), [GNU](#), etc.)
- Are there collaborators who worked with you on this software? Are they still active in the maintenance/development? Are you still in contact with them?
- If you created/adapted this software, are you able to grant a license directly to the Library or University to permit our making it available in support of research and teaching, or on broader terms?

Documentation

- Is this software you wrote or created? **IF YES:**
 - Did you write user documentation for the software? Would you say this documentation is sufficient for general understanding how the software works/runs if installed?
 - If the documentation is in the code itself, is this understandable enough for general users to run the software?
 - Do you have documentation of the discussion/development of this software (via emails/chats/forums/press releases/publications) that might help future users understand the history of its development?
 - If you are contacted by users of your software, how does this contact happen? Email? Github? How do you interact and discuss software dev / bugs with your users?
- Is this software you adapted/used? **IF YES:**
 - Where is the most current/accurate documentation for this software online/Github/etc.? Is this documentation up to date?
 - Are there users forums/spaces/papers where discussion of/publication around this software and its uses might help aid the understanding of the history/development/use of this software?

- Did you have to troubleshoot or update the software to get it to run?
 - Did you submit tickets or bug reports to a public location/repo around these issues or document them anywhere?

Context and Boundaries

Software that the donor wrote or created:

- Versioning: how often did you update your software versions? Should more than 1 version be preserved/transfer? How many versions?
- Dependencies: Do you have specific compilers / libraries / packages / etc. integrated with your software that it needs to run correctly?
- Are you aware of your software / code being integrated with other projects / code? Could you provide any links or examples?