

CONSULTATIVE MEETING FOR A DIGITAL ARCHIVE LAB
Centre for Community Knowledge, Ambedkar University Delhi
20th May 2017

DETAILED AGENDA

Overview

The proposed Digital Archive initiative at AUD will work as an interdisciplinary archive, working across schools and divisions. There is a need to create a specialized set of skills within AUD for archiving, cataloguing, digitization and conservation. This consultative meeting is envisaged for identifying skills and staff needs, timeframe, direction, outreach and a support network. Outcomes of this consultative meeting will help to finalise the resources required for setting up an online archival platform on the AUD server.

Meeting plan and Schedule:

(10.30am - 11.00am)

Presentation on existing AUD collections, archives and digital infrastructure.

(11.00am - 12.00pm)

Part 1: Archival objectives and developing policy guidelines for AUD's digital collections.

(12.00pm - 1.00pm)

Part 2: Technical plan – Hardware and Software requirements.

LUNCH (1.00 – 2.00 pm)

(2.00pm - 3.00pm)

Part 3: Ascertaining skill sets, phases and outcomes in a time based plan.

(3.00pm - 4.00pm)

Part 4 : Access, Visibility and linking to networks of Digital Archives.

Objective of the Meeting:

To arrive at suggestions, in order to develop the AUD digital repository, in the areas of :-

- (a) Identifying resources for Digitising, Storage and Dissemination
- (b) Developing briefs for customising software including user interface
- (c) Networking, Visibility and Dissemination – Curating collections for developing audiences, research and public platform (eg. Multimedia Memories of Delhi, Maritime Communities of India, etc).
- (d) Partner networks for support and visibility so that AUD may form a part of an existing scholarly body of archival resources.
- (e) Creating implementation plan with phases and timelines.

Background and Discussion Points:

1. Collections Envisaged

The first of the archives initiated at Centre for Community Knowledge(CCK) was Institutional Memory Project, which was an attempt at keeping a record of events, life and people at AUD in multiple mediums. As a part of this project, audio-visual records and documents have been digitized and categorized.

The Delhi Citizens Memory Project has sourced, collected and digitized photographs, oral history recordings in video and audio, film and text, spanning 1880s to 1980s.

Social Science Research Archives built at CCK, includes the maritime archives of Dr. Lotika Varadarajan; private writings, field notes and rare edited magazines from writers of the Progressive Writers Movement of 1930-60's such as Amrit Lal Nagar and Sajjad Zaheer.

Other schools at the University also propose initiatives, for eg. The School of Law and Governance (SLG) plans an online collection of Legal Research on Sec 377. The Library has plans to upload faculty and student research on an internal database. Each of these collections will have variable user access rights, and therefore the repository needs to be dynamic and interactive.

2. Provisioning of Skills and Resources, Identifying user/researcher needs

For the University to go ahead with a digital archive, it is necessary to identify the staff, resources and infrastructure and the time line for the same. The consultation will help develop this keeping in mind:

a) Back-end development – Developing the objectives, creating a brief and identifying the customised software for the platform. Once hosting the archive is underway, it will be necessary to have skill sets for operation, maintenance and archive administration.

b) Developing User interface- Evaluating existing processes and methods used at CCK for digitisation, cataloguing and metadata; designing interfaces that satisfy projected user and institution needs. Identifying requirements of staff for data entry and annotation, and of dissemination through various platforms including social media.

We hope to discuss some of the staff, skills and resources requirements for a proposed *Digital Archive Lab* at CCK that will be the agency tasked with operationalising the archive. Besides sourcing collections, cataloguing and digitisation, there is need to identify the staffing requirements based on existing and anticipated use – both content and technical.

Among other users, how will the archive work in a multi language situation? While the AUD archive will begin with English metadata, we would soon like to make it searchable / accessible in a second and third language. This will allow us to activate user and researcher community in regional languages, both for sourcing / adding to collections and using them.

3. Archive visibility and access - AUD's collections as a networked research node

For a shared research database, it would be very important to position archival initiatives within existing networks of researchers and users. How do we identify these, and engage actively with them. What strategies must be employed to increase archival visibility and allow access? How can some of the research collections become a part of larger research communities on subject specific themes?

How do we sustainably connect social media platforms like YouTube, Soundcloud, Academia.edu into the archival dissemination strategy?

Some strategies up for discussion include,

- a. Workshops inviting community contributions to collections and metadata building
- b. Exhibitions and symposia on the housed collections
- c. Developing research fellowships to conduct thematic curations of the collections
- d. Conducting archiving consultations to stay updated with best practices and peer initiatives
- e. Producing publications on and catalogues of housed collections.

Participants in the Consultative Meeting:

1. Anusha Yadav (*Indian Memory Project, Mumbai*)
2. Suman Gopinath (*India Foundation for the Arts, Bangalore*)
3. TB Dinesh (*Janastu, Bangalore*)
4. Joyoti Roy (*National Museum, Delhi*)
5. Shubha Chaudhari (*Archives and Research Centre for Ethnomusicology, Delhi*)
6. Janaki Nair (*Centre for Historical Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi*)
7. Sabih Ahmed (*Asia Art Archives, Delhi*)
8. Sneha Raghavan (*Asia Art Archives, Delhi*)
9. P P Sneha (*Centre for Internet and Society, Bangalore*)
10. Yousuf Saeed (*Tasveer Ghar, Delhi*)
11. Denys Leighton (*Ambedkar University Delhi*)
12. Debal Kar (*Library, AUD*)
13. Deepak Bishla (*IT Services, AUD*)
14. Sanjay Sharma (*Director, CCK AUD*)
