Supporting Good Practice: Reflections on the DPC Competency Framework One Year On

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When I Started 17 Years Ago....

- Difficult to plan and make policy

- Standards and guidance were limited
  - Even fewer tools
  - No repository systems
  - Harder to find community support

- How to translate theory into practice?
  - OAIS
  - 10 Principles of Trusted Repository Design

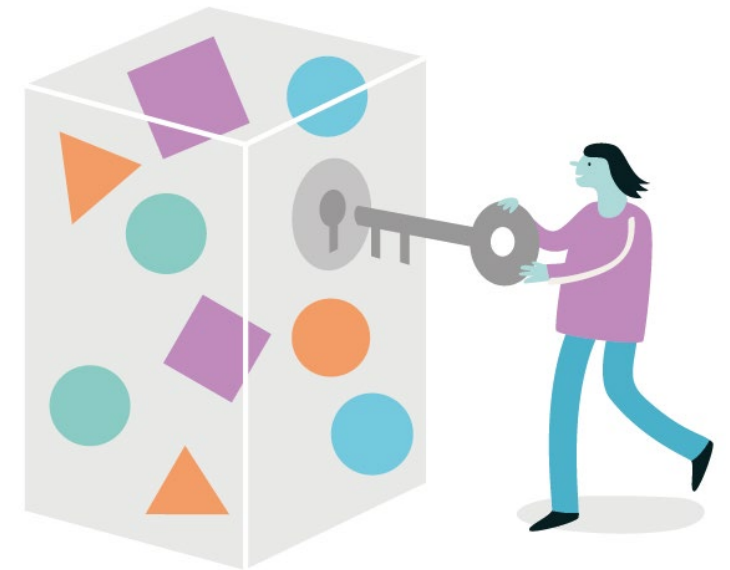# Thankfully, Things Have Changed

Now we have:

- More standards, guidance, and publications
- Training and education opportunities
- Growing marketplace of solutions and tools
- A vibrant and welcoming community

But more choices and information creates other problems and questions:

- What is right for your organization?
- How to set goals?
- How do you plan development?

# Using a Continuous Improvement Approach

- Facilitates an incremental approach to planning and development
    - Useful when tackling a multi-faceted issue like digital preservation
- Allows the setting of achievable targets
    - Particularly where resources are limited
    - Smaller wins but quicker progress/results
- "If you aren't failing, you aren't trying"

Good versus Best...

- Aiming for "best practice" can end up being self-defeating

- Thinking instead in terms of "good practice" allows more scope to consider:
    - Organizational context
    - Resources available
    - Preservation aims/requirements
    - Ultimately "what is good enough?"
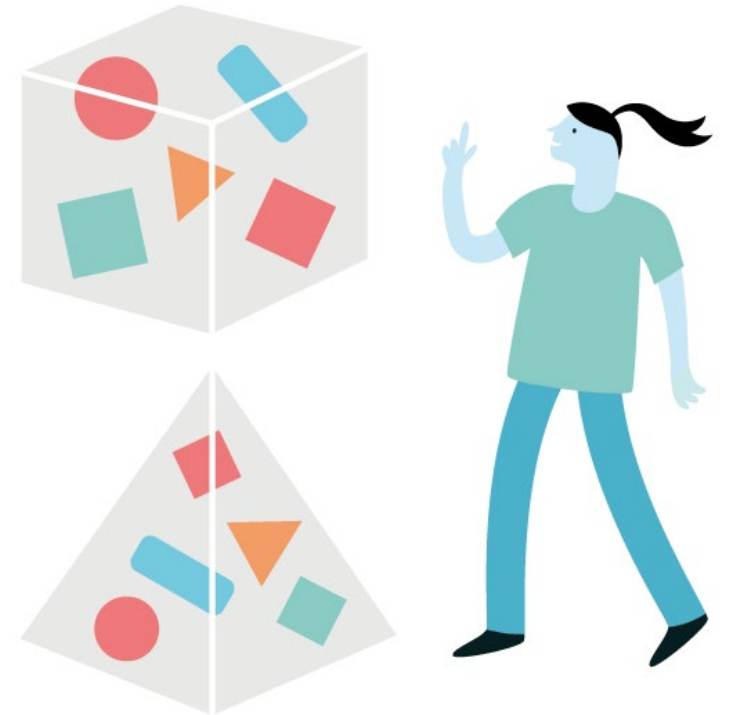
Why We Need to Think About Skills

- Skilled staff are essential to successful digital preservation!

- Organizations need the right DP skills to support the preservation of their digital content

- Skills and roles needed depend on:
  - Organizational context and structure
  - Current and planned DP capabilities

Skills and DPC RAM

Digital Preservation Coalition Rapid Assessment Model (DPC RAM)

- A maturity modelling tool
- Designed to enable a rapid benchmarking of an organization's DP capability

- Key element of "organizational viability"

- Includes: roles, responsibilities, development, skills, and expertise
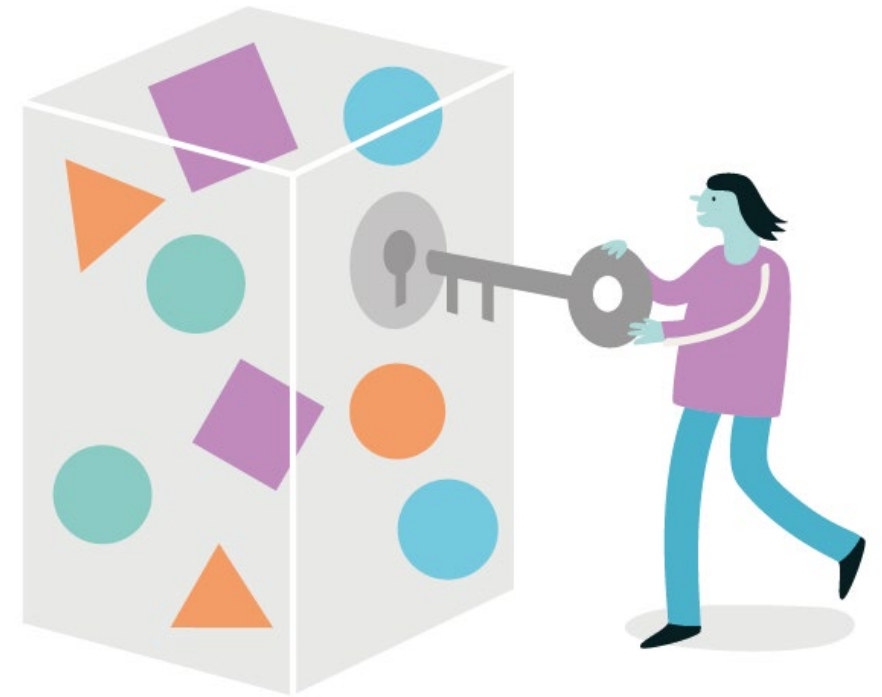
The DPC Competency Framework

Why Did We Develop the Framework?

Practitioners told us they needed help with:

- Identifying skill gaps
- Structuring professional development
- Making the case for more staff
- Developing role descriptions
- Recruitment

Some excellent previous work but:

- Focused on curricula
- Developed based on small samples of data

DPC Competency Framework

- Info on the skills & competencies required for successful digital preservation

Aims to be:

- Flexible
  - Applicable for organizations of any size & any sector
  - Able to support a range of workforce development activities
- Preservation strategy and solution agnostic
- Based on existing good practice
  - Closely linked to DPC RAM
- Simple to understand and quick to apply

A Quick Explanation of Terms

Competency

- a combination of skills, knowledge, and behaviors that, when combined, allow an individual to perform the duties of their role

Skill

- A more specific ability that can be applied to complete a particular task or reach a certain outcome

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Overview: Main Structure

Five high-level competency areas

- overview of and quick reference to broad range of competencies required to undertake digital preservation work.

Twenty-eight skill elements

- organized in groups under the competency areas
- break down the competencies into more clearly defined units

Presented in the following table…
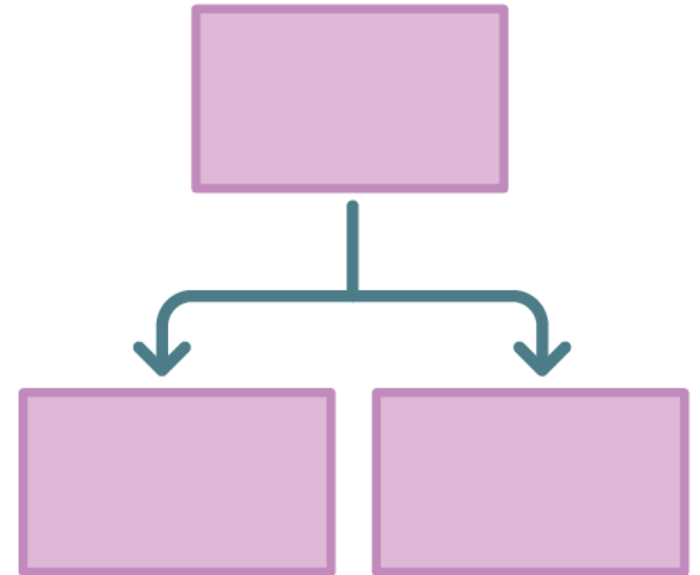
| Competency Area	Skill Element No.	Skill Element
Governance, Resourcing, and Management	1	Policy Development
	2	Risk Management
	3	Resource Management
	4	Staff Management
	5	Strategy and Planning
	6	Analysis and Decision-Making
Communications and Advocacy	7	Effective Communication
	8	Collaboration and Teamwork
	9	Stakeholder Analysis and Engagement
	10	User Analysis and Engagement
	11	Advocacy
	12	Training
	13	Producing Documentation
Information Technology	14	General IT Literacy
	15	Computer Programming
	16	System Procurement
	17	Storage Infrastructures
	18	Information Security
	19	Workflow Development and Implementation
Legal and Social Responsibilities	20	Legal and Regulatory Compliance
	21	Environmental Impact
	22	Inclusion and Diversity
	23	Ethics
Digital Preservation Domain Specific	24	Metadata Standards and Implementation
	25	Information Management Principles
	26	Approaches to Preservation
	27	DP Standards and Models
	28	Managing Access

Overview: Skill Levels

Five skill levels

- representing a progression of knowledge and skills

Examples of 'activity descriptors'

- e.g., how it might be used in a statement describing a skill element in a role description at that level
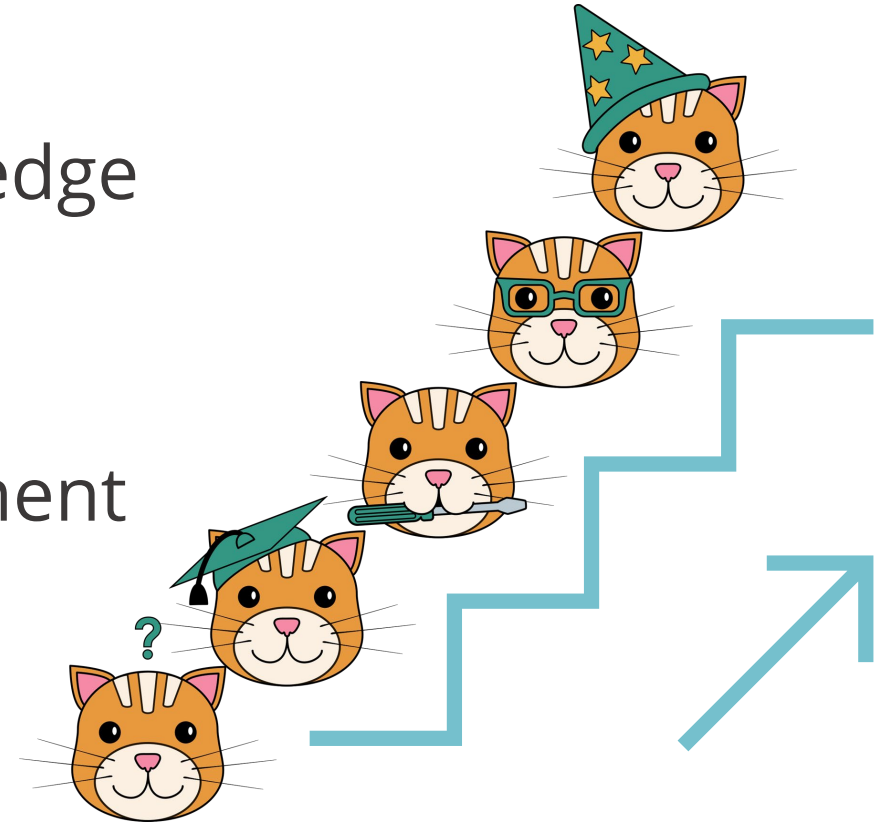
Presented in the following table...

Level No.	Skill Level	Description	Example Activity Descriptor Words
0	**Novice**	Limited awareness of the skill element.	Has heard of, recognizes, is aware of
1	**Beginner**	A basic understanding of the skill element. May have received some training, but little or no practical experience.	Understands, has studied, familiar with, uses, collaborates, communicates, supports
2	**Intermediate**	A sound understanding of the skill element and some experience of its practical application.	Has delivered, has used, applies, implements, inputs to, plans, selects, documents
3	**Advanced**	A thorough understanding of the skill element and significant experience of its practical application.	Develops, leads on, manages, analyzes, monitors
4	**Expert**	An in-depth understanding of the skill element and a leader in the development of approaches to its practical application.	Innovates, authors, designs, researches

Granularity and Detail

Additional tables provide further detail including

- Example statements to help clarify skill elements and how they might be presented in a role description

- Specific example activities to demonstrate different tasks where the skill element might be deployed in practice

A. Governance, Resourcing, and Management			
No.	**Skill Element**	**Example Statement**	**Example Activities**
1	**Policy Development**	Can develop robust policy with reference to organizational goals, values, and existing policy	Contextualizing digital preservation in relation to organizational goals, values, and existing policy frameworks
			Drafting digital preservation policy statements, either to form a standalone document or as additions to existing policies
			Progressing a new or updated digital preservation policy through internal approval
			Managing regular reviews and updates of digital preservation policy
2	**Risk Management**	Can apply risk management techniques for decision making, planning, and management	Developing a risk management plan using with reference to standards, and using common methods and approaches
			Planning to ensure preparedness for natural and man-made disaster
			Developing continuity and succession plans
3	**Resource Management**	Can effectively manage available resources	Financial planning, budgeting, and cost analysis
			Negotiating and managing contracts
			Developing business cases
4	**Staff Management**	Can recruit, manage, motivate, and support competent staff	Drafting role descriptions and staff recruitment
			Line management, team building, and supporting staff
			Professional development planning
5	**Strategy and Planning**	Can develop and implement strategy using suitable project planning and management techniques	Developing strategy to implement organizational policy, including roadmaps
			Project planning and management
			Management or participation in steering or working groups
6	**Analysis and Decision-Making**	Can think critically, analyze data, make difficult decisions, and solve complex problems	Comparing technological solutions based on identified requirements and selecting an option for implementation
			Analyzing user data to develop plans for access provision
			Making decisions that take into consideration relevant factors such as organizational policy, available resources, risks faced, and legal and social responsibilities

DPC CAT – Audit Toolkit

- Developed with the support of the UK Nuclear Decommissioning Authority
- Provides practical structured processes for assessing competencies
- Toolkit contains a guidance document and two workbooks
- Workbook One:
  - Audit of an individual's skills and professional development planning
  - Role description assessments
- Workbook Two:
  - Audit of digital preservation skills across an organization (linked to DPC RAM)
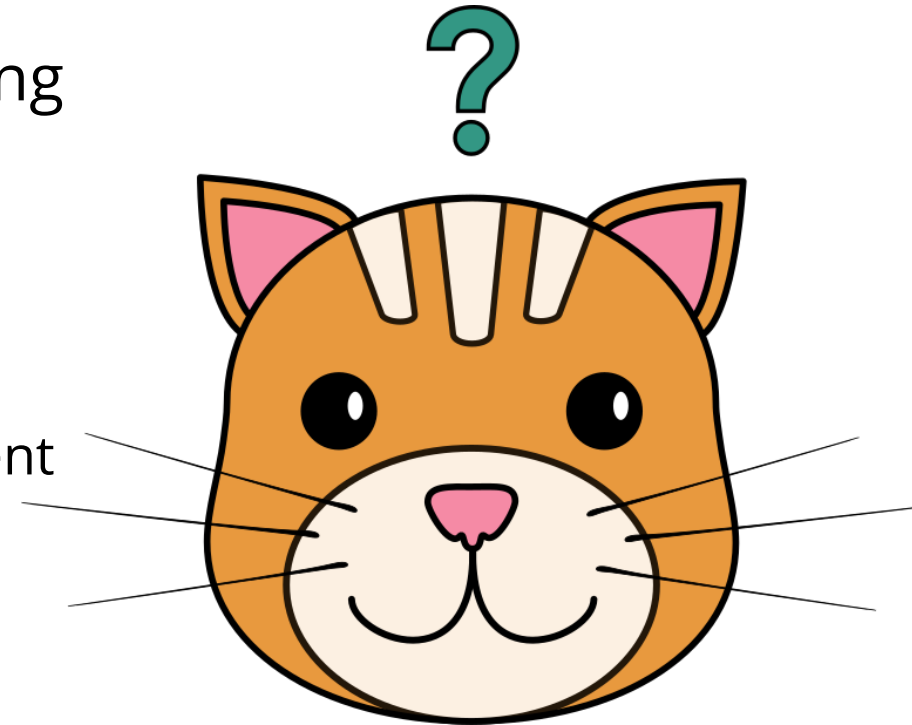
Example Role Descriptions

- Provide an indication of skills (and skill levels) required for particular role types
- Eight role descriptions:
  - Info Management Graduate
  - DP Trainee
  - DP Officer
  - DP Archivist/Librarian
  - Web Archivist
  - DP Developer
  - DP Program Manager
  - Senior Executive/Administrator

Where to Find the Resources

You can find the DPC Competency Framework and Audit Toolkit on the DPC website
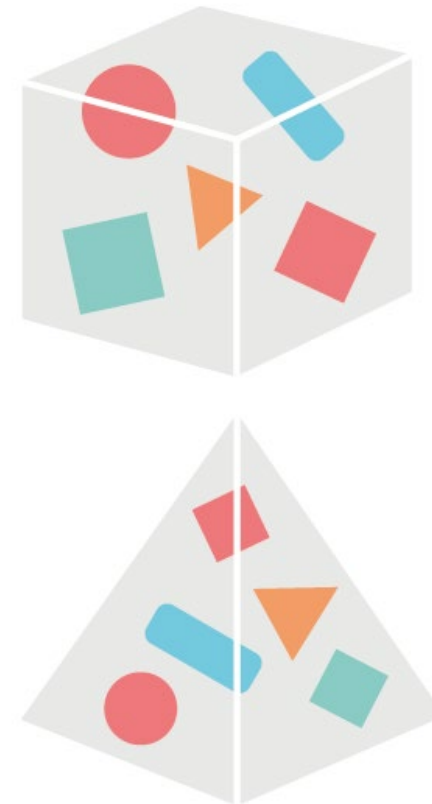
One Year On...

Take Up and Feedback Has Been Good!

The resources have been used to:

- Identify skills gaps for DP teams
- Support recruitment
- Facilitate professional development
- Help structure staff reviews
- Inform recruitment

But Still Issues to be Addressed

- Recruitment
  - Skill/experience requirements
  - Compensation
- How to level-up skills?
  - Information on resources, training, etc.
- Gaps in training provision
  - Too much theory, not enough practice
  - Limited topics covered
  - Mostly beginner-level

…and We Want to Hear From You!

- Framework and resources will be reviewed periodically based on:
  - Feedback
  - Changes to good practice
- Please let us know if you use it!
  - What for?
  - How did it go?
  - What worked? What could be improve
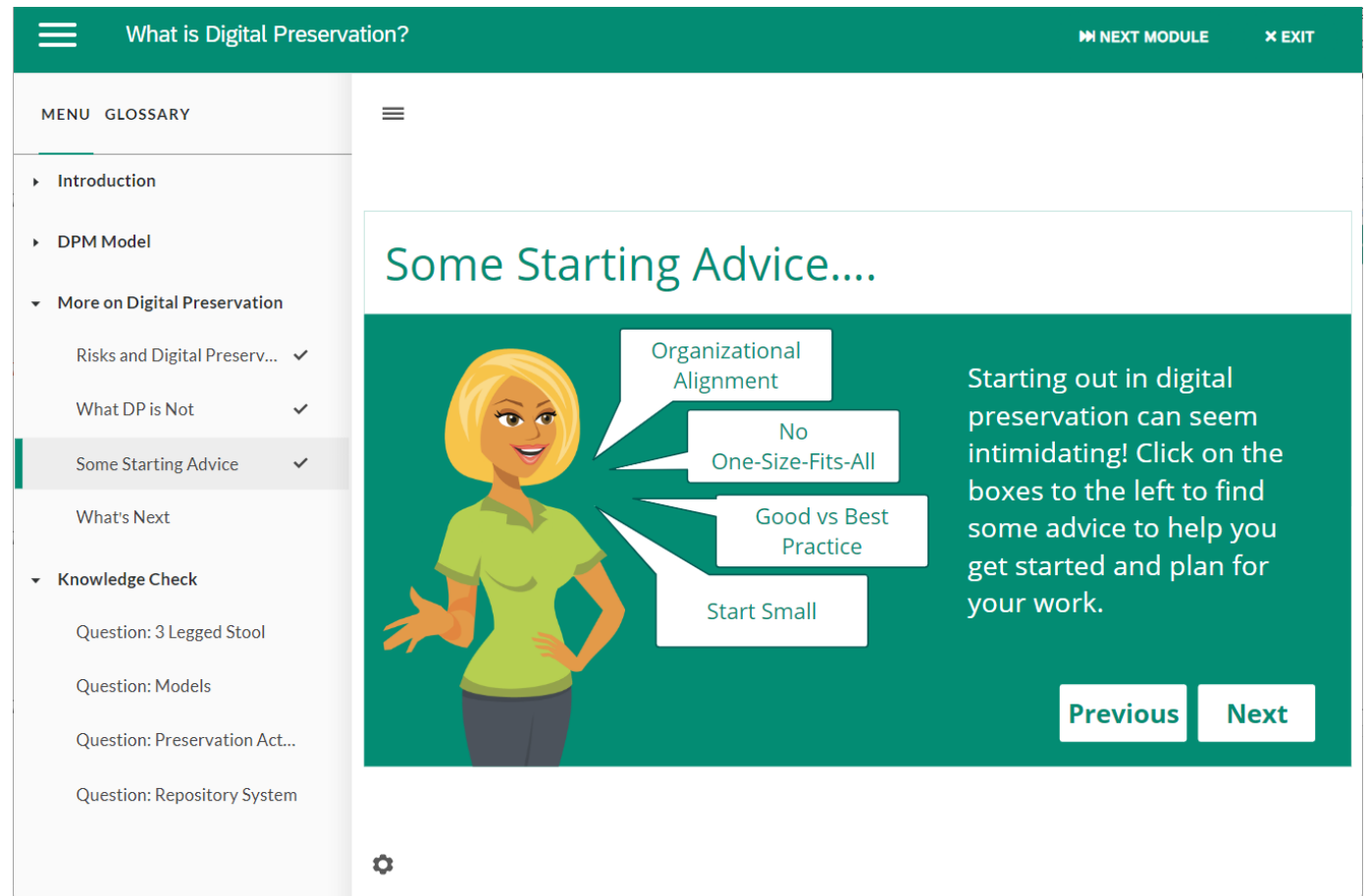 - Blog posts welcome!
  - bit.ly/CATFeedback

More Resources from the DPC

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Novice to Know-How

- Online training course
- Developed on behalf of The National Archives (UK)
- Focus on practical steps
  - Includes tool demos
- Completed by c. 3000 learners in 62 countries
- Access is free for all!
- New course on email preservation now available

Technology Watch Publications

- Reports: In depth reference guides to specific content or data types
  - Peer reviewed
  - c. 40 pages

- Guidance Notes: Bite-sized overviews of specific digital preservation challenges and solutions
  - Combine accessibility and practical guidance
  - 2-5 pages
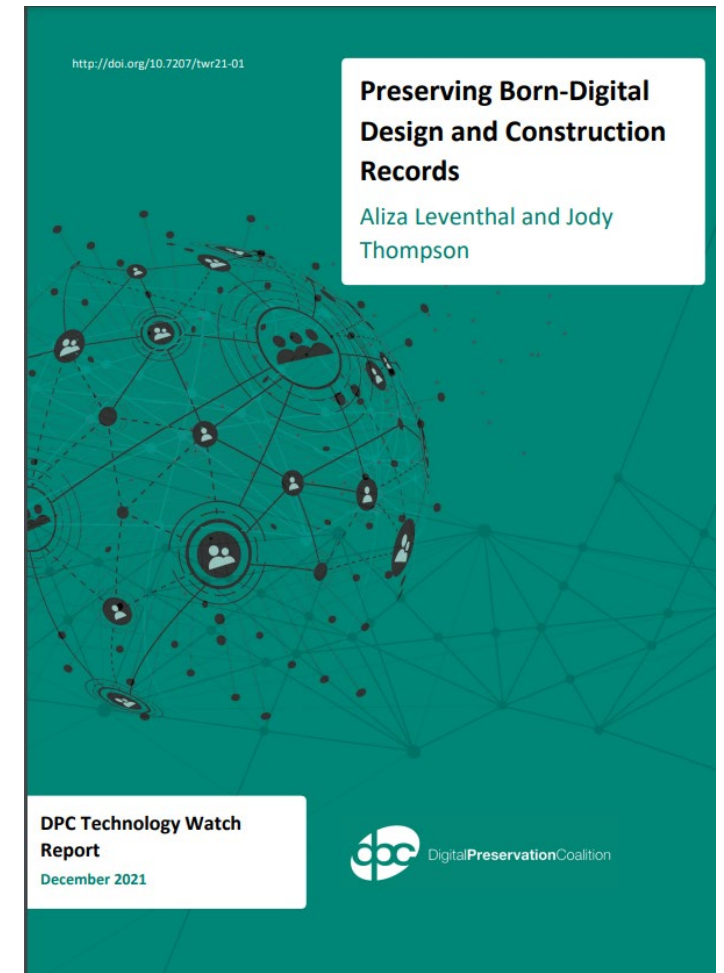
Toolkits, Guides, and More

- Digital Preservation Handbook
- Policy Toolkit
- Executive Guide on Digital Preservation
- Business Case Toolkit
- Procurement Toolkit
- EDRMS Preservation Toolkit
- Computational Access: A beginner's guide
- World Digital Preservation Day
- The Bit List
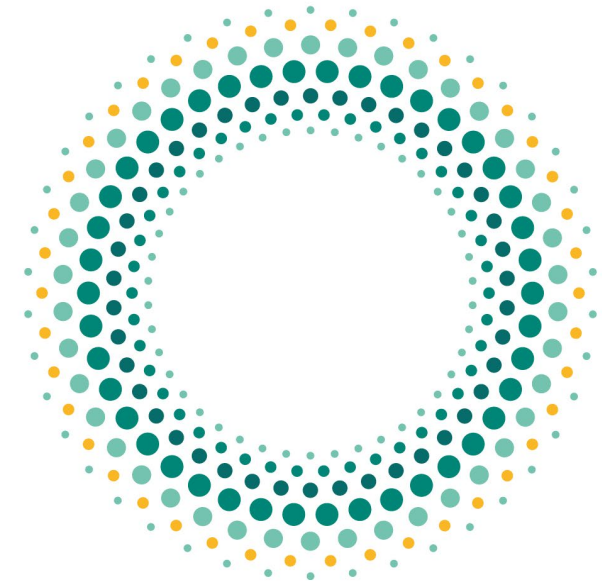
World Digital Preservation Day

2 November 2023

And Finally,
After the CATs…

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DPC Doggos!

Find everything mentioned at: www.dpconline.org

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