Principles of Collaboration

Mission Statement

The mission of the NDSA is to establish, maintain, and advance the capacity to preserve our nation's digital resources for the benefit of present and future generations.

Action Statement

Members of the National Digital Stewardship Alliance collaborate to preserve access to our national digital heritage by:

- broadening access to our nation's expanding digital resources
- developing and coordinating sustainable infrastructures for the preservation of digital content
- advocating standards for the stewardship of digital objects
- building a community of practice around the management of distributed digital collections
- promoting innovation
- facilitating cooperation between government agencies, educational institutions, non-profit organizations, and commercial entities
- fostering the participation of diverse communities and relationships across boundaries
- raising public awareness of the enduring value of digital resources and the need for active stewardship of these national resources

Values Statement

The National Digital Stewardship Alliance and all member organizations are bound as a community by the following values.

Stewardship

Members of the NDSA are committed to managing digital content for current and long-term use. The members of the NDSA are actively ensuring sustained access to the digital content that constitutes our national legacy and empowers us as leaders in the global knowledge economy. Individually, these organizations support the management of digital resources; as an Alliance, we commit to protecting our nation's cultural, scientific, scholarly, and business heritage.

Collaboration

Collaborative work is the centering value of the Alliance; it is a value shared by all members and a priority in work with all organizations and associations. Approaching digital stewardship collaboratively allows the NDSA to coordinate effort, avoid duplicate work, build a community of practice, develop new preservation strategies, flexibly respond to a changing economic landscape, and build relationships to increase capacity to manage content beyond institutional boundaries.

Inclusiveness

The NDSA is a collaborative effort to preserve a distributed national digital collection for the benefit of current and future generations. We value the range of experience, the potential for innovation, and the fault-tolerance that heterogeneity brings. We believe the preservation of digital information is a pervasive challenge and that engaging across different communities strengthens the nation's digital preservation practices and increases the likelihood of preserving content now and into the future.

Exchange

Members of the Alliance encourage the open exchange of ideas, services, and software. This leverages the commitments of each member to increase the capacity of the entire stewardship network. Participation and engagement result in innovations and benefits that can be shared by all. The Alliance is committed to transparency and all products generated or produced by the Alliance will be circulated under open licenses.

Code of Conduct

A draft of the NDSA Community Guidelines and Code of Conduct can be found [here](#).

Membership

NDSA organizations have proven themselves in the field of digital stewardship. As NDSA members, they share expertise, tools and practices to benefit local efforts while contributing to the stewardship of a growing national collection of diverse digital content. Members collaborate on projects to benefit the digital preservation community and their organization. Learn more [about the NDSA](#).

Membership Eligibility

- Members will be organizations or consortia;
- Members will have demonstrated an active commitment to digital preservation;
- Members will share the stated values of the Alliance;
- Members will agree to maintain vendor neutrality;
- Members will agree to participate in one or more Interest Groups, NDSA surveys, dissemination activities, and related efforts, as described in the "Commitment" section below.

Benefits of Membership

Members share in the advantages of the NDSA, including:

- Shaping the [National Agenda](#) for digital preservation in the United States;
- Partnering with major organizations, including premier cultural heritage institutions and nonprofit organizations;

- Participating in efforts to develop and implement [tools and infrastructure](#), content, [services](#), [standards](#), and training;
- Taking part in national outreach build public awareness;
- Learning about digital preservation practices from a network of thought leaders.

Rights and Privileges

- Members will have one vote on organizational and governance matters affecting the Alliance, e.g., voting for coordinating committee nominees, regardless of how many participants they contribute to the NDSA.
- Individual participants will have effective decision-making power at the Working Group and Interest Group level, e.g., deciding on work plans and work products.

Application Process

Membership is open and the process by which new members can join is through:
1. Prospective members submit an application through the [online form](#) (linked from: http://ndsa.diglib.org/get-involved/)
2. DLF sends email to listed contacts in the applications (program contact, authorized signatory, working group reps) confirming receipt of application and mirroring its content to all.
3. DLF forwards application to NDSA-leadership group. Leadership reads applications in advance of next meeting.
4. New applications are reviewed on monthly leadership call for objections/concerns. Approval is by consensus.
   a. If no objections/concerns are noted, membership is approved
   b. OR any concerns are discussed, and additional info is requested or membership is not approved
5. DLF sends formal acknowledgment to all contacts from CC of outcome, including (if approved) info on creating wiki accounts. Appropriate WG chairs are cc'd so that they may welcome new members and add them to WG lists/meeting invites. DLF adds new contacts to NDSA-all and updates website list/map.

Commitment and Groups

There are no fees or dues for membership in the NDSA. (NDSA is financially supported by the [Digital Library Federation](#), which also provides communications infrastructure and staff time.) But the real longevity and value of the NDSA depends on members contributing their efforts to Interest Groups and sharing their knowledge and expertise.

In particular, NDSA members agree to:

- Serve on one or more [Interest Groups and Working Groups](#);
- Participate in the core surveys NDSA conducts of its membership;
- Review proposed NDSA reports and guidance;

- Assist with dissemination of NDSA news as requested.

Members may further contribute by:

- Collecting, providing and/or curating digital content in accordance with NDSA recommendations;
- Providing services in storage, infrastructure, tools, software or hardware, or policy development;
- Volunteering or presenting at NDSA's Digital Preservation meeting;
- Delivering presentations and posters at disciplinary conferences and workshops on behalf of the NDSA;
- Contributing to guest blog posts and reports.

Consortia and Membership Organizations

The NDSA welcomes applications from potential consortial members and membership organizations, provided that there is a clear representative identified to participate from each collective group.

Commercial Members and Vendors

Applications are welcome from all sectors. All members must share the [core values](#) of the NDSA and agree to maintain vendor neutrality.

Principles

Scope

The National Digital Stewardship Alliance is a [consortium of organizations](#) committed to the long-term preservation of digital information. The mission of the NDSA is to establish, maintain, and advance the capacity to preserve our nation's digital resources for the benefit of present and future generations.

NDSA was launched as a membership organization in July 2010 as an initiative of the [National Digital Information Infrastructure and Preservation Program](#) of the Library of Congress. For an inaugural 4-year term, NDIIPP provided secretariat and membership management support to the NDSA, contributing Interest Group leadership, expertise, and administrative support.

The NDSA's institutional home as of January 1, 2016, is the [Digital Library Federation (DLF)](#), at the [Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR)](#). Selection of DLF followed a nationwide search and evaluation of cultural heritage, membership, and technical service organizations, in consultation with NDSA Interest Groups and Working Groups, their members, and external advisors.

Governance

Leadership

The NDSA Leadership Group is comprised of the Coordinating Committee and the [Interest Group co-chairs](#), which in collaboration provide strategic leadership for the organization. Committee members and the committee chair serve staggered terms of three years.

Coordinating Committee

The Coordinating Committee is dedicated to the advancement of Alliance activities and furthering communication within the Alliance.

The Coordinating Committee works with the Interest and Working Groups to articulate a long-term, strategic vision for the Alliance. The Committee assists the Alliance Members in evaluating the effectiveness of the Interest Groups and Working Groups and eliminating unnecessary duplication of effort. Participants in the Coordinating Committee will act as liaison with one or more of the Interest Groups or Working Groups. The Coordinating Committee will recommend for the creation of new Interest Groups or Working Groups or to disband Interest Groups or Working Groups that are no longer actively serving the needs of the Alliance.

The Coordinating Committee is responsible for updating eligibility standards for membership in the Alliance as necessary.

Coordinating Committee members may be nominated by Participants in the Alliance or may self nominate. Coordinating Committee members are elected by a simple majority of all votes cast over an open voting period, typically two weeks.

The number of Coordinating Committee members shall be no more than nine (9).

Coordinating Committee members shall serve in staggered appointments of one, two or three years, or their resignation. Any member may resign at any time by notification in writing to the Alliance through the office of the Host Organization.

Vacancies on the Coordinating Committee shall be filled by special election.

The Coordinating Committee shall designate the facilitator for the next year at the last session of the year. There will be no officers.

Host Organization

The host organization shall:

- provide a membership mechanism, coordination, and support for the NDSA organization.

- provide outreach and communication services to NDSA members and the broader digital preservation community about NDSA activities, events, and products.
- represent NDSA the organization with distinct and official trademarks and web presence.
- support the work of NDSA Working Groups and provide leadership in conjunction with member co-chairs.
- support the work of the NDSA Coordinating Committee and provide one voting member of the leadership in conjunction with elected members of the CC.
- help support and coordinate the execution of an annual NDSA membership meeting.
- commits to at least one 4-year term as NDSA host organization, renewable by mutual agreement.

Interest Groups and Working Groups

NDSA members designate Participants to serve on Interest Groups and Working Groups. Each committee shall have, and may exercise, such powers as authorized by the Alliance.

Any participant may resign from an Interest Group or Working Group at any time by notification in writing to the co-chair of a particular group. Any participant may choose to continue to serve on a Working Group for the next term of membership.

Interest Group and Working Group member co-chairs volunteer for the position. If more than two individuals volunteer, the working group participants will vote to select the co-chairs.

Interest Groups and Working Groups will make transparent their draft work plans and circulate their work products to all Alliance members.

Meetings

All meetings of the Alliance, and any Interest Group or Working Group, may be held in person, or by means of telephone or video conference. The Host Organization will coordinate the planning of the annual conference, Digital Preservation.

Regular meetings of the Alliance committees and working groups may be held at such time and place as shall be determined by consensus of Interest Group and Working Group members.

Voting

The Alliance will vote to elect members of the Coordinating Committee, ratify and alter the principles of collaboration, or upon any other issue deemed necessary by the Membership. Members will be given a two-week period to vote electronically. A simple majority of the voting Member representatives shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. Votes shall be cast by the designated Program Representative of any Member organization. In the event of a tie vote, the Host Organization will cast the deciding vote.

Amendments

These bylaws may be amended by a simple majority vote provided all members have been offered a reasonable opportunity to vote.

Ratified February 8, 2018.