

Selection Strategy:

'The methodology detailing the project-specific selection process, agreed by all stakeholders, that will ... create the archaeological archive.'

What this means in practice:

**In lines with a specific strategy
deciding what digital objects
require preservation and what
objects should not be preserved.**

The Benefits of a Selection Strategy

- Create a useful, well-organized archive that supports future research
- Make it easier to understand what's in the archive
- Increase the archive's visibility and potential for public engagement
- Ensure fair evaluation of all materials
- Plan properly for preservation before transferring to permanent storage
- Keep projects aligned with required procedures and guidelines
- Build better teamwork between archaeologists, museums, and researchers
- Improve how materials are collected and managed during the project
- Help plan budgets and staffing needs from the start
- Save storage space, making better use of resources

Storage Space

An issue for physical and digital archives!

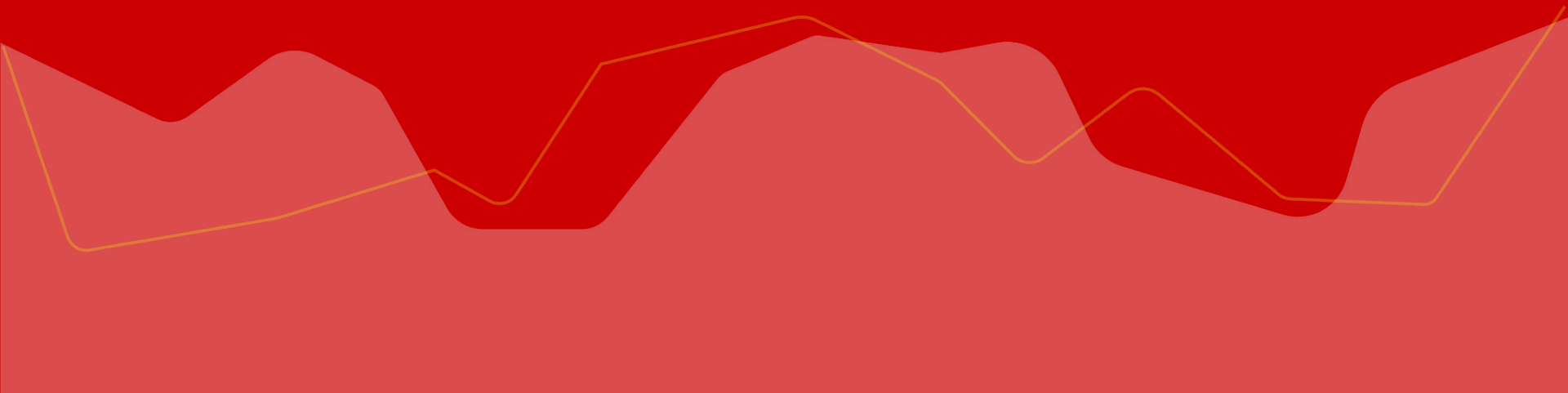
Remember that space is finite

Space costs money to rent and maintain

Are we keeping materials to avoid selection?



Considerations for Selection



How do I make decisions about what should or should not be included in my project archive?



Useful Criteria for Selection

- **Relevance:** Content aligns with current strategic priorities and legal retention requirements
- **Scientific or Historical Value:** Resource has significant scientific, social, or cultural importance for future use
- **Uniqueness:** Material is the sole or most complete information source and at risk if not preserved
- **Potential for Redistribution:** Data is reliable, usable, technically compatible, and clear of rights issues
- **Non-Replicability:** Resource cannot be feasibly or economically recreated
- **Economic Case:** Management and preservation costs are justified by potential benefits and funding is secured
- **Full Documentation:** Complete metadata exists for future discovery, access, and reuse

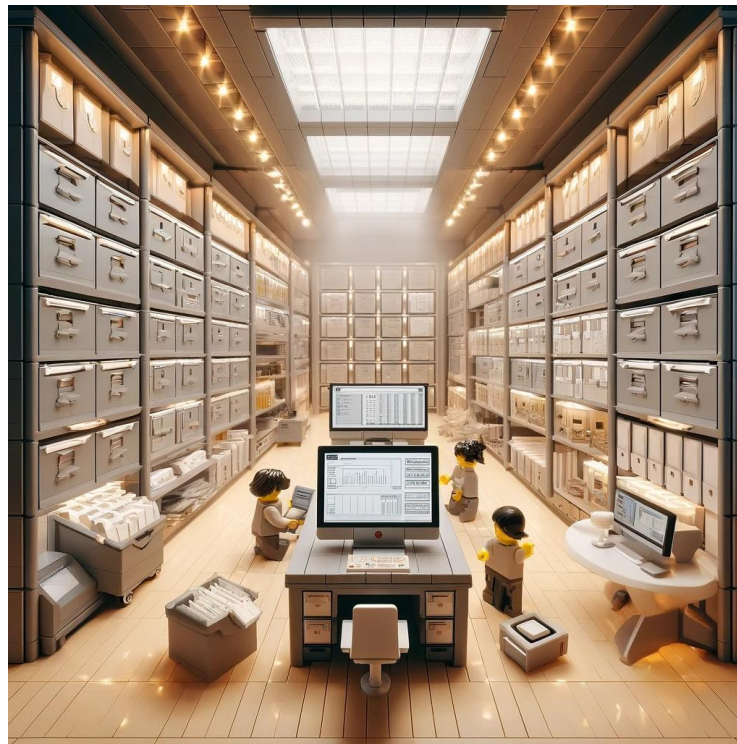


Relevance to Mission

Does the dataset reflect the aims and outcomes of our project?

Does the dataset or resource fall within the repository's scope?

Does the dataset align with the aims of the funding body?



Scientific or Historical Value

Is the data scientifically, socially, or culturally significant?

Does the dataset represent activity that is non-reproducible (e.g. archaeological excavation)

Is the dataset available in the region that reflects its value?



Uniqueness

Is the dataset the only source of its content?

Will the dataset be preserved elsewhere?

Is the dataset a reused version of another dataset and if so, does it all need to be preserved?



Potential for Redistribution

Are any Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) issues addressed?

Are human subjects issues addressed by the dataset?

Is the dataset reliable and usable by others?



Non-Replicability

Does the dataset have sufficient scope and documentation to be replicated by others?

Can the data be easily replicated, recreated or re-measured?

Would the cost of replicating the data be prohibitive?

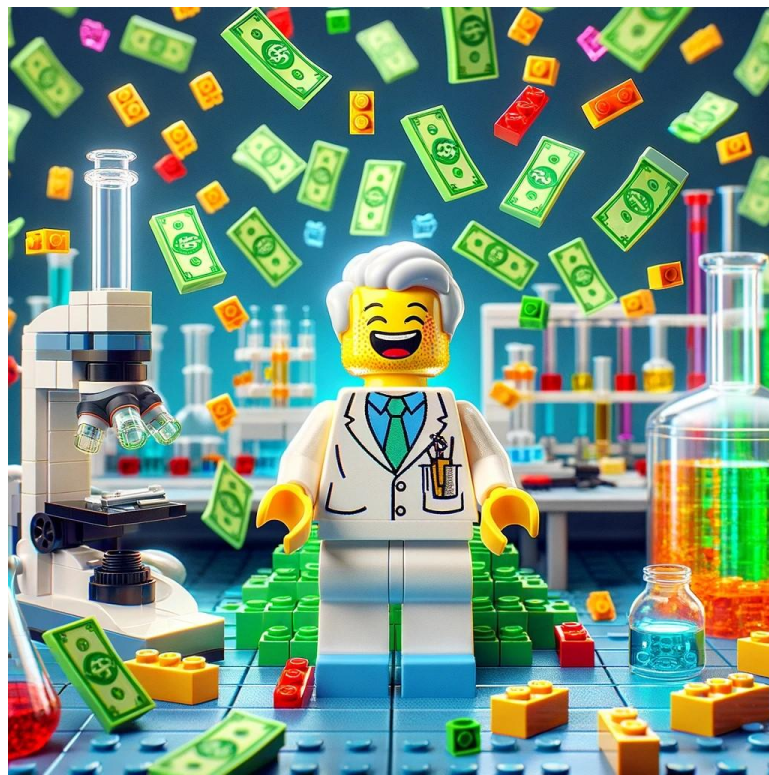


Economic Case

Has the total cost (including continued migration) of the dataset been considered?

Has a source of funds been acquired to preserve this dataset?

Is the collection of data so large that it would be very costly to preserve?



Full Documentation

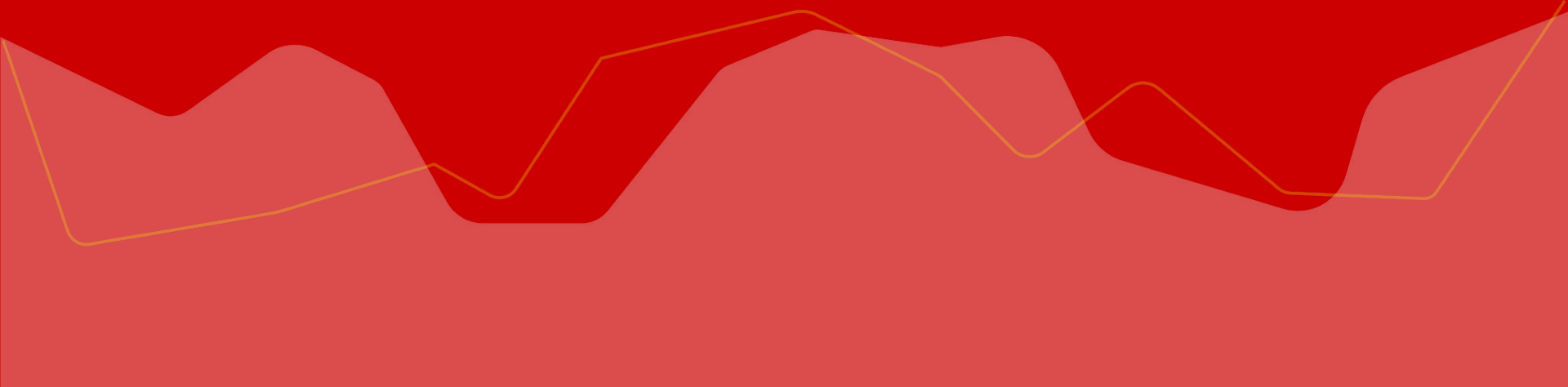
Is there sufficient documentation for this dataset to ensure sharing, access and reuse?

Is the documentation accessible for all users?

Is the documentation understandable for all users?



Selecting data from your research project



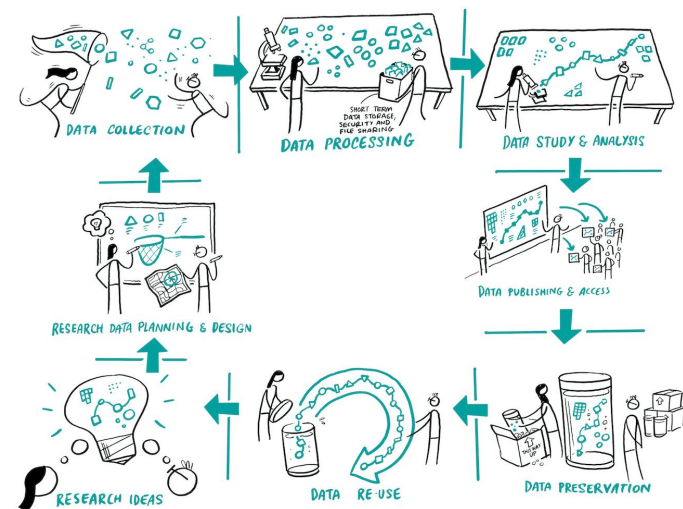
Considering selection for your project

- Every project is different!
- Review as your project progresses
- Understand your project requirements, esp for preservation
- Be transparent and accountable (use your DMP to document)



Preservation Selection Points

- Instances where data is changed significantly (capture, filter, transformation)
- *“capture of the source, the result, and the processes or methods that ensure the transformation is repeatable”*
- Selection points throughout the project life cycle to decide what materials need to be archived



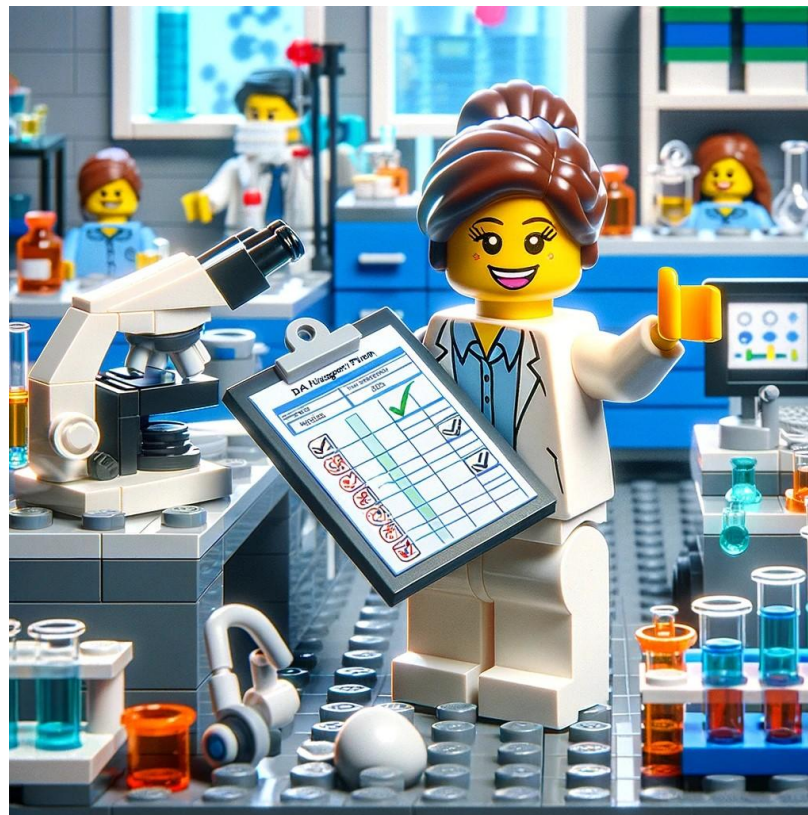
Scrivania

Roles and Responsibilities

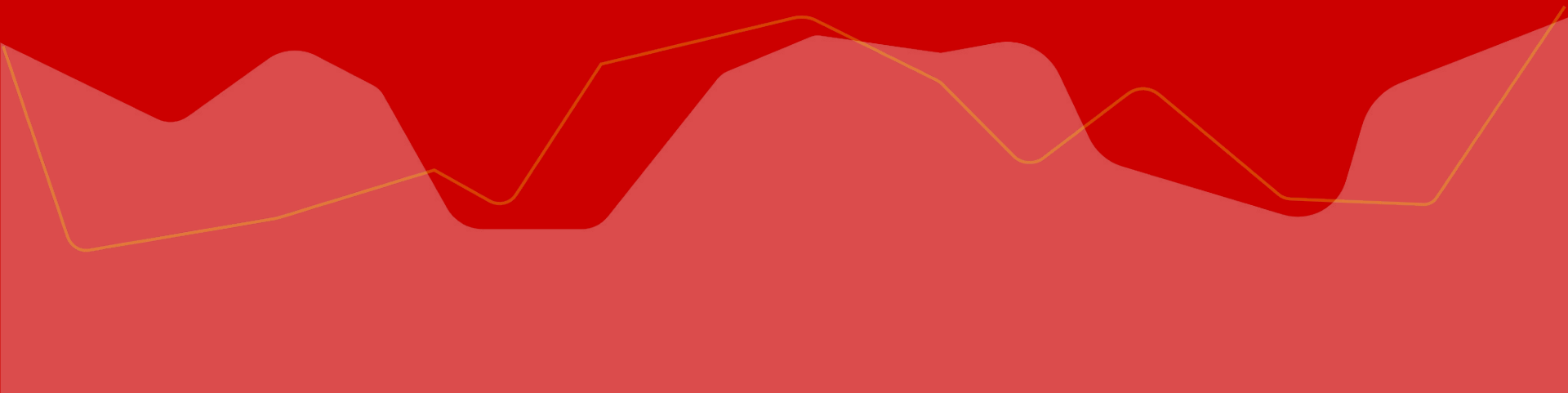
Researcher ('data creator')	Digital repository
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide enough information for others to assess the research data's scientific and scholarly quality and compliance with disciplinary or ethical norms. ■ Provide relevant information for the repository to identify who will use the data and how i.e. the 'designated community', and any specific access requirements or constraints. ■ Provide the research data in formats recommended by the data repository. ■ Provide the metadata requested by the repository. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Make explicit its mission in the area of digital archiving, and its selection policy for digital objects. ■ Ensure compliance with legal regulations and contracts. ■ Ensure the authenticity and integrity of the digital objects and the metadata. ■ Assume responsibility from the data producer for ensuring the digital objects are accessible and available to a defined 'designated community'. ■ Plan for long-term preservation of the digital assets.

Practical things to consider!

- Link into Data Management - Selection can form a section of your DMP
- Your strategy may change as project develops - update as part of your DMP
- Consult stakeholders - you may have different perspectives on what's vital and/or unimportant
- Consider what are you going to do with deselected material!



Resources



Useful Resources

- [ClfA Archive Selection Toolkit](#) (information on creating a selection strategy with templates)
- [ClfA Dig Digital](#) (support for those creating digital data in archaeology including guidance on selection)
- Whyte, A. and Wilson, A. (2010) 'How to Appraise & Select Research Data for Curation' Digital Curation Centre.
<http://www.dcc.ac.uk/resources/how-guides/appraise-select-research-data>
(general preservation practice)
- Digital Preservation Coalition. (2023). Decision Tree for Selection of Digital Materials for Long-term Retention
<https://www.dpconline.org/handbook/organisational-activities/decision-tree/interactive-assessment> (toolkit for making decisions)
- [ADAPt: The Archaeological Digital Archiving Protocol Toolkit](#) (Historic' England Toolkit including a selection strategy)

Prompt Questions

Are there third-party requirements (funding organisations, data policies, guidelines of the research institution) that make it necessary to store the data for the long term?

Do you have the necessary rights to use the data? Under what conditions do you own the data?

Are the collected data unique and not reproducible or are the costs of reproduction higher than the costs of long-term storage?

Is data collection unlikely to deliver better results as a result of technological progress?

Is there a high level of interest in re-utilising the research data?

Prompt Questions

Has the data not yet been fully scientifically analysed?

Are the data characteristic or atypical for a research area or are they unique research results?

Do the data possibly have a general or regional historical significance?

Is the data quality good in terms of technology and content?

Is descriptive metadata fully available or can it be generated?

Can the necessary preservation metadata (reference, provenance, context and retention information as well as information on access rights) be provided?

**What selection
criteria do you use for
your research?**



Q & A Session

A decorative white line graphic runs horizontally across the bottom of the slide. It consists of several connected, irregular shapes that resemble a stylized wave or a series of peaks and valleys. The line is thin and white, contrasting with the dark purple background.