



United Kingdom

David Dawson  
Resource

**Policy 189**  
Policy scenario for digitisation 189  
Terms of reference and National policy profile 190

**Co-operation activities 190**  
Co-ordination of national networks 190  
Relationships and co-ordination with other national initiatives in connection with eEurope, e-government, e-learning 190  
European and international co-operation 191

**Benchmarking 191**  
Inventories and resource discovery 191  
Available inventories 191

**Good practice and skills 192**  
Good practice exemplars and guidelines 192  
Competence centres 192  
Main digitisation training initiatives for cultural heritage institutions 194

**European added value and content framework 194**  
Quality and accessibility for Web sites 194  
Long-term sustainability 194

**Research activities on digitisation 194**

Policy

Policy scenario for digitisation

In the UK, the overall policy directions of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) promote access, learning, social inclusion and creativity. As a result of this over-arching view, a number of related developments have taken place, principally in the establishment of funding programmes for ICT initiatives to digitisation programmes to promote access and long-term preservation. Examples include the Heritage Lottery Fund and the New Opportunities Fund Digitisation of Learning Materials Programme  
<http://www.hlf.org.uk>  
<http://www.nof-digitise.org>

The most significant policy development in 2002 has been the establishment of Culture Online by the DCMS, and the announcement of 20 m of funding for the initiative. A Creative Director has been appointed, and discussions are proceeding on the development of technical and management frameworks for the initiative.  
<http://www.cultureonline.gov.uk>

Whilst DCMS leads in the Cultural sector, it works closely with the Department for Education and Skills. Here the Higher Education and Schools sectors are particularly interested in content from the Cultural sector, particularly in the National Grid for Learning. The JISC (Joint Information Systems Committee) has been for many years funding digital library projects, and is now funding a wide variety of projects in the cultural heritage sector.  
<http://www.ngfl.gov.uk>  
<http://www.jisc.ac.uk>

The most significant policy development within DfES has been the creation of Curriculum Online. This is a programme to allocate 80m to schools for the purchase of electronic content, and the development of a portal to enable teachers to find content from both the public and private sectors that meets the needs of the national curriculum.  
<http://www.curriculumonline.gov.uk>

Although both in their initial stages, the DCMS Culture Online and the DfES Curriculum Online initiatives are actively collaborating. The importance of the cultural sector content industry in encouraging the development of Broadband services has been recognised by the Office of the e-Envoy and the Department of Trade and Industry. A jointly-run Broadband Stakeholder Group has the task of promoting the adoption of broadband, and a report published in June 2002 identified a number of possible policy development options. The results of this review are expected in late November 2002.  
<http://www.broadband.gov.uk/>

The Office of the e-Envoy leads on policy for e-Government, and significant developments include the development of Website Design Guidelines for Local Authorities and a Website Quality Framework.  
[http://www.e-envoy.gov.uk/oeo/oeo.nsf/sections/webguidelines-top/\\$file/webguidelines.htm](http://www.e-envoy.gov.uk/oeo/oeo.nsf/sections/webguidelines-top/$file/webguidelines.htm)  
In the Museum sector, Resource published a report called *Renaissance in the Regions* which identified the structural weakness in local museums in England. Following this report, the DCMS announced funding of 100m, some element of which will be for ICT-related initiatives.





<http://www.resource.gov.uk/action/regional/00renai ss.asp>

In the Libraries sector, work is being completed on a draft strategic review of public libraries, which is due to be published during 2003.

In the Archives sector, Resource has been asked by DCMS to begin work on an Archives Task Force, to focus on ways of making archives more accessible to potential users and map out ways to turn them more fully to advantage as a rich learning resource available to all. [http://www.resource.gov.uk/news/press\\_article.asp?articleid=431](http://www.resource.gov.uk/news/press_article.asp?articleid=431)

Terms of reference  
and National policy profile

The Terms of Reference have been agreed by DCMS and the UK national profile was published in October 2001, and can be found at <http://www.peoplesnetwork.gov.uk/>. The national profile is now out-of-date and will be revised in the early part of 2003, during a development phase of the People's Network Website. The contact person for the profile is David Dawson ([david.dawson@resource.gov.uk](mailto:david.dawson@resource.gov.uk)) +44 207 373 1415, mobile +44 780 727259.

### Co-operation activities

Co-ordination of national networks

In the UK, Resource and JISC, with the support of DCMS and DfES, run a Forum for Network Co-ordination. This



meets on a six-monthly basis, and is open to all interested parties from across the UK. The meetings focus on sharing experience and policy developments, and the last two meetings have covered topics including Minerva, cultural content and Broadband. Resource also is a lead partner in a cross-sectoral group developing ideas about a Common Information Environment. JISC, the British Library, National Health Service, Resource and the e-Science programme are exploring ways of creating interoperable services. It has been agreed that work will focus on two key areas – Health (building on existing e-Health projects, NHS Direct, digitisation projects and local health initiatives) and Sense of Place (building on digitisation projects, and also involving English Heritage and other key organisations).

Relationships and co-ordination with other national initiatives in connection with eEurope, e-government, e-learning

Resource works with all other key initiatives, including the Office of the e-Envoy, the Department for Education and Skills, Department for Trade & Industry, Department of Health, as well as with DCMS and its agencies. On a UK-wide level, Resource co-ordinates a meeting of all the Home Country agencies, and the Home Country administrations take part in the Forum for Network Co-ordination.

European and international co-operation

Resource represents the UK in many international activities, and the recently launched International Strategy identifies this as a key activity for the future. <http://www.resource.gov.uk/information/publications/00pubs.asp>

In addition, Resource, CIMI and UKOLN have helped to create the Cultural Content Forum, in order to take forward the Lund principles, and information-sharing on an international level. The last meeting was held in Washington in March 2002, hosted by the Institute of Museum & Library Services, and the next meeting will be held in Florence in March 2003, with the assistance of the Italian Ministry of Culture. <http://www.culturalcontentforum.org>

### Benchmarking

The UK participated actively in the development of the initial Benchmarking model, and the Benchmark was completed by an initial set of programmes. This effort proved to be invaluable, opening up a new dialogue with at least one major funder and programme manager, and encouraging the recognition that more work needed to be done on the development of technical standards and guidelines. While the liaison is still in its early days, there is a real willingness to spread the experience that has been developed so far in policy and programme management. Once concrete results have been obtained, then the UK will be able to encourage more institutions to take part in benchmarking, and therefore to help identify and share good practice.

### Inventories and resource discovery

Available inventories

In the UK there are a number of inventories, but they have tended to be managed as simple HTML lists of projects that have been funded, and there has often

been little attempt to bring these together. However, there are exceptions, and a great interest in trying to ensure that resources are made more widely available. At a standards level, the RSLP Collections Description Schema (<http://www.ukoln.ac.uk/cd-focus/>) has met with widespread support, and was used by many projects in the University sector funded by the Research Support Library Programme. The Research Support Libraries Programme has funded 23m of collections descriptions either on the basis of themes or subjects, such as Theatre collections (<http://www.backstage.ac.uk>) or on a geographic basis, such as collections in Northern Ireland (<http://www.rascal.ac.uk>). A list of projects is available at <http://www.rslp.ac.uk>. In Archives, the ARCHON project (<http://www.rchm.gov.uk/archon>), managed by the Historic Manuscripts Commission, lists all archival collections in the UK. At a more detailed level, this links to work being undertaken by the Archives Hub for archive collections held by Universities and by the Public Record Office, where the A2A project is enabling access to archival finding aids from across the country. In Museums, the Cornucopia project (<http://www.cornucopia.org.uk>) is recording collections-level descriptions, whilst details of the museums themselves, along with exhibitions and news, are available through the 24Hour Museum (<http://www.24hourmuseum.org.uk>). In Libraries, projects have been brought together at a regional level (<http://www.ai m25.ac.uk>) or at a home country level (<http://cain.slib.gla.ac.uk/>), and work is now starting to identify how special collections in public libraries can be made available through projects such as Cornucopia. Currently in development is a portal to





<http://www.peoplesnetwork.gov.uk/content/ictguidelines.asp>

The NOF-digitise programme is backed by a set of mandatory guidelines, embodied in the NOF-digitise Technical Standards

<http://www.peoplesnetwork.gov.uk/content/technical.asp>

In addition, this Programme is supported by an extensive Programme Manual, detailing a vast range of supporting materials that distils the experience of running and managing digital projects.  
[www.ukoln.ac.uk/nof/support](http://www.ukoln.ac.uk/nof/support)

#### Competence centres

There are no formal criteria for evaluating competence centres and therefore no criteria on which to nominate such centres. However, a number of advisory centres have been established, and these include:

- UKOLN: [www.ukoln.ac.uk](http://www.ukoln.ac.uk)
- Higher Education Digitisation Service:  
<http://heds.herts.ac.uk>
- Technical Advisory Service for Images:  
<http://www.tasi.ac.uk>
- Arts & Humanities Data Service:  
<http://ahds.ac.uk>
- Archaeology Data Service:  
<http://ads.ahds.ac.uk>

In addition, there are a number of Competence centres that are in the process of formation, exemplified by the range of skills and expertise developed in Scotland by the National Museums of Scotland:



projects funded through the NOF-digitise programme. This will adopt an open standards approach, and will be launched in the spring of 2003. This could be a platform for continued development. This development is being undertaken in parallel with developments in Minerva. It is likely that a collections description service will be developed by the JISC, and Resource will be keen to collaborate with the JISC in this development. JISC, Resource, RSLP and the British Library are key funders of the Collection Description Focus at UKOLN which is undertaking the standards-based activity. In IPR, Resource is trying to encourage the development of a cross-sectoral focus for IPR expertise and advice. Currently the picture is extremely fragmented, with overlap and duplication amongst the different groups, but the key membership of the different groups are the same experts. Once this process is complete, a clear focus for IPR expertise in the sectors should emerge. Resource has been liaising with EMII (the European Museum Information Institute – <http://www.emii.org>) on IPR issues.

#### Good practice and skills

##### Good practice exemplars and guidelines

There are many UK projects that demonstrate good practice. An initial list of these appear at:  
<http://www.peoplesnetwork.gov.uk/content/best.asp>

This includes the IT Challenge Fund, where an extensive set of evaluation reports have led to the production of a set of guidelines for the development of ICT projects in museums.





(<http://www.nms.ac.uk>), SCRAM (<http://www.scran.ac.uk>) and The Multimedia Team (xxxx).

Main digitisation training initiatives for cultural heritage institutions

ICT / digitisation training courses are run by a number of largely University-based organisations. These include:

- Netskills: <http://www.netskills.ac.uk>
- Higher Education Digitisation Service: <http://heds.herts.ac.uk>
- Technical Advisory Service for Images: <http://www.tasi.ac.uk>
- Arts & Humanities Data Service: <http://ahds.ac.uk>
- Humanities Advanced Technology and Information Institute: <http://www.hatii.arts.gla.ac.uk/>

In addition, a number of professional cultural sector organisation and commercial companies offer relevant training courses.

European added value and content framework

Quality and accessibility for Web sites

The Office of the e-Envoy has mandated the Website Design Guidelines across the whole of the wider public sector, and the Website Quality Framework is likely to apply across government agencies. As a result, there is strong policy direction in this area.

[http://www.e-envoy.gov.uk/oeo/oeo.nsf/sections/webguidelines-top/\\$file/webguidelines.htm](http://www.e-envoy.gov.uk/oeo/oeo.nsf/sections/webguidelines-top/$file/webguidelines.htm)

However, many institutions are not aware of this, or have yet to consider how to change their Websites to meet basic accessibility criteria to ensure that all citizens can use the Website. Whilst it has been possible to build these requirements into some funding programmes (such as the NOF-digitise programme), there are others where there are no technical standards or quality frameworks in place. There is a need to establish a Quality Framework that can be recognised as relevant by the cultural sector, and that can be adopted widely to encourage the redevelopment and upgrading of Websites throughout the cultural sector.

Long-term sustainability

The issue of digital preservation has long been recognised as being of key importance. In 2002, the Digital Preservation Coalition (<http://www.dpconline.org>) was established, with funding from a number of partners including Resource, JISC and the Public Record Office. This is a focus for research and implementation issues in the UK, and the Public Record Office has been advising Government Departments on Electronic Records Management.

Research activities on digitisation

The main research activities are undertaken by UKOLN ([www.ukoln.ac.uk](http://www.ukoln.ac.uk)), and the wider academic sector, where research is largely funded by the JISC. The key areas of work undertaken include:



- metadata standards, particularly on metadata for collections description;
- interoperability – including OAI and SRW and the iMESH Toolkit;
- terminology and the deployment of the semantic Web;
- gateways to resources and subject portals (the EU-funded RENARDUS project);
- Web preservation (with the Digital Preservation Coalition).

Research is also undertaken by a wide range of other institutions, including:

- Higher Education Digitisation Service – a partner in MetaE researching the integration of METS into digitisation workflow;
- University of Strathclyde – feasibility study in High Level Terminologies.

