



The InterPARES Project

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InterPARES

- **Original Title: Long-Term Preservation of Authentic Electronic Records**
- **Among Peers**
- **InterPARES: INTERnational Research on Permanent Authentic Records in Electronic Systems**



InterPARES Research Goal

To develop the theoretical and methodological knowledge essential to the permanent preservation of authentic records generated and/or maintained electronically, and, on the basis of this knowledge, to formulate model policies, strategies and standards capable of ensuring that preservation.



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Project Director

InterPARES 1: 1999-2001

- Major Funding from SSHRC, NHPRC, UBC, NARA, NAC
- 13 countries in 4 continents, 60 researchers
- Public and private sector
- Professionals and academics (ratio 80% to 20%)
- Archival science, diplomatics and records management, plus computer science and engineering, jurisprudence, research methods



Subject of Investigation

- Textual records born digital in the course of administrative and legal activities
- Databases and document management systems
- Records in inactive or non-current status
- Characteristics of e-records and concept of authenticity
- Activities of appraisal and preservation from the preserver point of view



Specific Issues Addressed

- Hybrid record environment
- Fragility and volatility of the media
- Incompatibility and obsolescence of technology
- Absence of originals
- Repurposing
- Authenticity and Authentication



Research Goal

Ensure that the portion of society's recorded memory that is digitally produced in interactive, dynamic and experiential systems in the course, and as a byproduct of, artistic, scientific and electronic government activities can be created in accurate and reliable form, and maintained and preserved in authentic form, both in the short and the long term, for the use of those who created it and of society at large, regardless of digital technology obsolescence and media fragility



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InterPARES 2: 2002-2006

- Major funding from SSHRC, NHPRC, NSF, UBC
- 25 countries in 5 continents, 100 researchers
- Public and private sectors
- Academics and professionals (80% to 20%)
- Archival science, diplomatics and records management; music theory, composition, performance; film theory, production, description; dance and theatre theory; a variety of hard and social sciences; jurisprudence; computer science and engineering



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Subject of Investigation

- Any entity born digital in the course of artistic, scientific and e-government activities and existing in experiential, interactive and dynamic state
- Material in active, semi active and inactive status
- Activities of creation, maintenance, appraisal and preservation from the creator and the preserver perspectives



Specific Issues Addressed

- Same issues but from creation to preservation
- Unstable form and content



Research Objectives

- To develop an understanding of interactive, dynamic and experiential systems and of the records produced and maintained in them, of their process of creation, and of their present and potential use in the artistic, scientific and government sectors;
- to formulate methods for ensuring that these records are generated and maintained by the creator in such a way that they can be trusted as to their content (that is, are accurate and reliable) and as records (that is, are authentic);



Research Objectives (cont.)

- to formulate methods for selecting among them those that have to be kept after they are no longer needed by the creator in the ordinary course of activity because of their legal, administrative, social or cultural value;
- to develop methods and strategies for keeping the records selected for continuing preservation in authentic form over the long term;



Research Objectives (cont.)

- to develop processes for analyzing and criteria for evaluating advanced technologies for the implementation of the methods listed above in ways that respect cultural diversity and pluralism; and
- to identify and/or develop specifications for policy, metadata, and automated tools necessary for the creation of an electronic infrastructure capable of supporting the creation of accurate and reliable, and the preservation of authentic digital records



Team Structure

	FOCUS 1 Artistic activities	FOCUS 2 Scientific activities	FOCUS 3 Governmental activities
DOMAIN 1 Records creation & maintenance	Working Group 1.1	Working Group 1.2	Working Group 1.3
DOMAIN 2 Authenticity, accuracy & reliability	Working Group 2.1	Working Group 2.2	Working Group 2.3
DOMAIN 3 Methods of appraisal & preservation	Working Group 3.1	Working Group 3.2	Working Group 3.3

Terminology
Policy
Description
Modeling

Matrix depicting Task Forces, Working Groups and Cross-domain Research Teams



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Methodological Principles

- Interdisciplinarity
- Transferability
- Open Inquiry
- Layered Knowledge Environment
- Multi-method design: surveys, case studies, modeling, prototyping, diplomatic and archival analysis, and text analysis, etc. to address domain and cross-domain research questions



Research Challenges: examples

- In the arts, authenticity is the ability of the digital object to reflect the artist's original intentions in regard to both content and form upon every subsequent presentation of the work
- In the sciences, creators are more typically concerned with ensuring the accuracy of data entered and maintained into the systems than with the form of their aggregations
- In e-government, there is confusion over the difference between authentication and authenticity



Work Accomplished by Focuses

- 11 of the 21 case studies have been completed and represented in activity and entity models, and half of these have been analysed according to diplomatic principles
- surveys of government websites, of digital photographers, composers and film makers, of the practice of preservation of interactive music, of file formats and encoding languages used for non-textual materials, and the analysis of a prototype for a persistent archives based on data grids
- annotated bibliographies and literature reviews, conceptual analyses, and bibliographic databases for the management of references



Work Accomplished by Cross-Domains

- Terminology: a terminology database including 4 lexicographic instruments, a Register, a Dictionary, a Glossary and a Thesaurus
- Modeling: Manage the Chain of Preservation model depicting all the activities involved in the management of electronic records throughout their lifecycle, from creation to permanent preservation



Work Accomplished by Cross-Domains (cont.)

- Description: Metadata Schema Registry, which is a centralized repository of schemas that will aid to identify metadata sets, or the combinations of elements from several sets which are appropriate to serve various recordkeeping needs; collaborations with modeling and policy cross-domains
- Policy: a conceptual framework for the development of policies; the identification of barriers to preservation which currently exist in laws, regulations, policies and standards on copyright and intellectual rights, privacy and freedom of information, authenticity and authentication, open standards and open source, and records and archival management



Domains' Work

Concentrate on

- the development of conceptual responses to the original research questions and
- the production of:
 - guidelines for records creators and preservers;
 - appraisal and preservation systems;
 - frameworks and models for the development of policies, strategies and legislation; and
 - descriptive schemas for digital entities



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Personal Lessons Learned Issues

- Cultural
- Terminological
- Financial
- Collaborative
- Logistic
- Production related



Cultural Issues

Differences linked to nationality, discipline, profession, and sector, addressed through

- face to face week-long research workshops
- mixed composition of research units
- dissemination of work in each other's environment



Terminological issues

Differences in national, disciplinary, organizational, professional, sectorial languages, and within each, addressed through

- Intellectual Framework including basic concepts
- annotated bibliographies in each area
- translation of research questions, methodologies, and any other key document in lay terms
- terminology database



Financial Issues

Differences in funding and related demands on the project among participating teams and individual co-investigators, addressed through

- assignment of responsibilities based on reasons for the received funding, ability to fulfill them within the financial constraints, and complementarities with other research carried out in each given environment
- use of part of the funding for the direction of the project to support the travel/work/technological needs of foreign individual researchers
- establishment of a technological infrastructure that supports team work through the internet



Collaboration issues

Differences in agenda between the private and the public sector, academics and professionals, seasoned and younger researchers, ... addressed through

- choice of research units chairs
- Organizational Policy



Organizational Policy (20 pages)

Categories of membership, responsibilities of members, admission of new members

Research units structure and responsibilities

Management units and their responsibilities

Workshops purpose, schedule, attendance, voting procedures, sponsorship

Publication, authorship, collaborative research, intellectual property guidelines, dissemination

Website policy, maintenance of data and research material, human subject and data protection



Logistic issues

Organization of research workshops in different cities and countries, assignment of research assistants to individuals and groups, maintenance of an effective web site accessible only to the researchers and of a public one, building and maintenance of a technological infrastructure usable by people in places with different technological capability, creating and distributing publicity, etc., addressed through

- The InterPARES central office staff
- The national Teams staff
- The good will of individual researchers



Production Issues

Overcoming differences in motivation, commitment, interest, financial and organizational support, availability of time and resources

Coordinating the many portions of a research that might turn out unwieldy towards the specific objectives of the project producing timely and consistent results

addressed through



Production Issues (cont.)

- constant communication with clear definition of timelines and assignment of both team and individual responsibilities (calendar and milestones document)
- redirection of resources
- definition of tasks tailored on the person/organization
- discussion of problems in meetings of all chairs
- Advisory Board
- diplomacy, flattery...whatever works



Critical Success Factors

- The large amount of dissemination carried out by researchers and students
- The timeliness of the results
- The substantial development of new knowledge, especially theoretical and methodological, and refinement and adaptation of traditional knowledge
- The applicability of the findings to a variety of contexts (see UNESCO's support)
- **Mostly: Each researcher feels that his/her contribution to the project is such that the results belong to him/her as much as to the group**



Impact for the discipline

- The creation of a large network of scholars in a variety of fields (from computer engineering to law) who are now focusing on the issues that are at the core of the archival discipline
- The transformation of the issues dealt with by InterPARES in a catalyst that has brought together archival professionals who did not share much before: e.g., moving image archivists and public records archivists, music archivists and scientific records archivists
- The realization that, regardless of the medium and of the challenges brought about by technological changes, archival theory and diplomatics are what will guide us to development of the right practices for the control of the new records

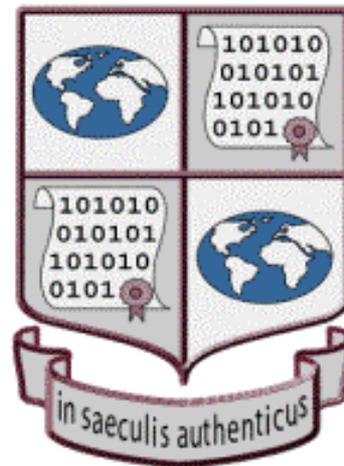


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Reference

<http://www.interpares.org>



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