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# Guide to collaboration between the archive and higher education sectors



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## Contents

Foreword.....	4
1 Introduction .....	5
1.1 Purpose.....	5
1.2 Using this guidance .....	6
2 What do we mean by ‘collaboration’?.....	8
2.1 The context for collaboration .....	8
2.2 Benefits of collaboration .....	10
2.3 Types of collaboration .....	12
3 Forming a collaboration.....	15
3.1 Things to think about in advance .....	15
3.2 Making contact and first steps .....	16
3.3 Common goals and cultural differences .....	20
3.4 Understanding barriers to participation.....	23
4 Developing your collaborative working.....	27
4.1 Building on collaboration .....	27
4.2 Embedding collaboration .....	33
4.3 Opportunities for future collaboration.....	35
4.4 Sources of funding.....	43
5 Recording activities and capturing impact.....	46
5.1 Why is it important to understand the difference in the way that activities are measured and assessed? .....	46
5.2 What do archive services measure?.....	46
5.2 What do HEIs measure? .....	49
5.3 Evaluating collaborative activities: finding common ground.....	51
5.4 Using collaboration for profile-raising .....	54
6 Summary and ‘top tips’ for successful collaboration .....	57

Appendix: Key terms, concepts and resources..... 59

1 Key terms and concepts referred to in the guidance..... 59

## Foreword

The National Archives and Research Libraries UK are delighted to have worked together to publish this guide on cross-sector collaboration between the archival and academic sectors. It is vitally important that those who curate, create, and engage with cultural heritage collaborate. Finding common ground through partnerships provides real opportunities to interpret collections in innovative ways, so that we continue to connect with new audiences.

The range of events that have commemorated the First World War provide a good example of the potential for collaboration at a national level. The sharing of expertise and information, and combining of individual events, delivers rich and compelling histories from multiple perspectives, drawing on collections distributed through numerous institutions.

Collaboration between archive repositories and higher education institutions bring special advantages to both parties. Archives are at the core of many research projects while academic colleagues often bring insight and knowledge vital to the understanding of the collection themselves.

The National Archives and Research Libraries UK are committed to encouraging cross-sector collaboration and we hope that this guide with its practical insights and case studies will help bring organisations together, leading to new initiatives promoting both archive collections and academic research across the UK.

Jeff James, Chief Executive and Keeper, The National Archives

Dr. Stella Butler, Chair, Research Libraries UK

# **1 Introduction**

This guidance has been commissioned by Research Libraries UK (RLUK) and The National Archives to support the formation and development of collaboration between the archive and higher education (HE) sectors. The guidance has been produced in recognition of the extent and variety of collaborative activity that exists between the two sectors and it brings together examples of practice and experience from both sectors for wider mutual benefit. It responds to the many drivers for collaboration which include reduced budgets, a desire to share expertise more widely, and an emphasis on accountability (to students and the public) for university fees and the public money invested in research.

The guidance is the product of the many members of the archive and higher education sectors who have generously and openly shared their experience of collaboration. This willingness to share is an essential feature of successful collaboration and serves to reinforce the potential to expand the scope and nature of collaborative working that exists between the two sectors.

## **1.1 Purpose**

The purpose of this guidance is to highlight the range of opportunities that exist for collaboration between the archive and HE sectors, and to provide information on the practical issues associated with the formation, development and sustainability of collaborations.

As well as providing generic information about working in collaboration, the guidance highlights the distinctive characteristics of the higher education environment that archive services should be aware of to get the most out of collaborative working with academics and higher education institutions. Although the guidance is aimed at an archive practitioner audience, its content will also be relevant to members of the higher education community.

## 1.2 Using this guidance

The guidance is structured into five sections that provide information on how collaborations can be beneficial and then work through formation, development and evaluation of collaborations. The document can be read start-to-finish to gain an overview of collaborative working, or you can use the individual sections to address the stage of collaborative working that is most appropriate to your needs. Case studies are used throughout the document to provide practical examples of some of the issues addressed by the guidance.

The section **What do we mean by collaboration?** addresses terminology, and the drivers for, as well as benefits of, collaboration. It can be used to understand the motivations for collaboration and to guide how to frame the benefits of collaborative working so that it is attractive to the parent organisations of archives services, and appealing to academics and the higher education institutions in which they work. The section explores the variety of different types of collaboration that exist between the two sectors with the aim of providing ideas for collaborative activity regardless of the size or context of the archive service or their current experience of collaborative working.

The section **Forming a collaboration?** Can be used to help structure your thinking before embarking on a collaboration and as a checklist during early conversations with your potential partner. It outlines the issues to think about in advance of starting collaboration and suggests methods of making contact with the higher education sector. It looks at the importance of understanding common goals and cultural differences, and raises awareness of some of the barriers to participation that may be encountered.

**Developing your collaborative working** focuses on how you can build on collaboration and embed it within your organisation with examples from different organisations showing a range of collaborations; from working together on projects, to operating as a shared service. The section highlights future opportunities for collaboration that have been identified by contributors from both the archive and higher education sectors and provides information about funding opportunities available to support collaborative working.

The section on **recording activities and capturing impact** looks at the different ways in which the two sectors record and report on their respective activities. The aim of this section is to increase awareness of how success is measured and evaluated by each sector so that partners can better understand the motivations for collaboration as well as describe their collaborative work in a way that 'counts'. The insight into the different methods of recording activities and capturing impact may also prompt you to re-evaluate how you do this at your own organisation and enable you to collect richer data that will help you to promote your collections and organisation to a wider range of audiences and stakeholders.

An appendix of **key terms, concepts and resources** brings together supporting information. It explains important concepts that are highlighted throughout the guidance in ***bold***, and provides selected further tools and references to help make practical progress towards implementing the guidance.

## 2 What do we mean by ‘collaboration’?

At a simple level, collaboration can be defined as “the action of working with someone to produce or create something”, and partnership as “the state of being a partner or partners” with a partner being “a person who takes part in an understanding with another or others, especially in a business or firm with shared risks or profits”<sup>1</sup>.

Partnerships are often seen as more formal than collaborations, involving written agreements and defined outcomes and implying relationships on an equal footing, whereas collaboration is used to describe a way of working that can range from informal interactions to complex integrated functions with associated levels of effort and resource<sup>2</sup>.

This guidance uses the term ‘collaboration’ to embrace the range of ways in which the archive and higher education sectors work together.

The archive and higher education ‘sectors’ are referred to throughout the guide. This is not meant to imply that the two areas are distinct. Indeed, many archives exist within higher education institutions (HEIs) and are important instigators and facilitators of collaboration. The terms are used to group together archive practitioners on the one hand (the archive sector), and academics, researchers and students based in higher education institutions on the other hand (the higher education sector).

### 2.1 The context for collaboration

It is important to understand what motivates academics to collaborate with organisations outside of the HE sector as well as what compels them to work collaboratively. By understanding the specific operating context of the HE sector, you will be in a strong position to speak directly to the needs of academics and HEIs, and position your archive service as a natural partner which can help them to meet corporate, research and teaching goals.

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<sup>1</sup> Definitions from the Oxford English Dictionary

<sup>2</sup> Focus group discussions, 8 October 2014.

The growth in popularity of collaborative working amongst HEIs can be attributed to a number of drivers that are described below.

**2.1.1** Higher education institutions (HEIs) have been encouraged for many years to demonstrate better **public accountability for public funding**, for example through the Research Councils UK (RCUK) *Concordat for Engaging the Public with Research*<sup>3</sup> and, more recently, the new method of evaluating research, the **Research Excellence Framework (REF)**.

The REF includes a requirement to demonstrate social, economic and cultural impact alongside excellent research outputs and the results of the assessment have a direct impact on both the research rating and the amount of funding that a university will receive and are therefore extremely important to them.

Archive services have a great deal of value to add to HEIs in this area. Your experience of public engagement and outreach, your strong community links and physical location within the community are all attractive to HEIs looking for ways to engage with new audiences and increase the breadth of impact of their research.

**2.1.2** The growing support by research funders for interdisciplinary research has resulted in HEIs taking a proactive approach to seeking out new research partners and exploring new areas for research. Archive services have rich sources of primary research material and also have collections that could benefit from new research techniques and methods of analysis. Promoting both the collections within your archive service as a research resource, and the potential for future research that would come from greater ease of discoverability of collections, remote access and the application of technology to collections may all be attractive to academics looking for new research partners.

**2.1.3** Universities are also increasingly accountable to their students. Charges for tuition fees have resulted in a stronger focus on student outcomes. The growth of **student satisfaction surveys**<sup>4</sup> (which, for example, assess the number of contact

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<sup>3</sup> RCUK Concordat for Engaging the Public with Research, available at: [www.rcuk.ac.uk/pe/Concordat/](http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/pe/Concordat/). Accessed 10.12.14.

<sup>4</sup> An example is the National Student Survey (NSS), available at: [www.thestudentsurvey.com](http://www.thestudentsurvey.com). Accessed 10.12.14

hours and employability) is taken very seriously by organisations seeking to attract the best and brightest students and are reflected in their corporate priorities.

Your archive service could provide opportunities for increasing 'contact hours' (the time that students spend being taught) through tours of the archive, support or teaching on the use of primary source material. It could also provide topics for masters dissertations or research theses, or address the other big 'measure of success' for universities by providing work experience opportunities linked to a student's subject or career interest and help them to enhance their employability.

A thorough understanding of the type of HEI you want to work with will help you to position your archive service to best effect. Ask yourself 'What type of institution am I dealing with?', 'What is important to this institution' (look at their institutional mission and strategic priorities), and 'Where is their emphasis?' (look at what they celebrate as strengths of the organisation in their publicity material and annual reports.

## **2.2 Benefits of collaboration**

Collaboration is usually driven by common goals and the prospect of achieving more by working together than could be achieved by working separately and collaboration between the archive and higher education sectors is frequently mutually beneficial. Some of the attractions to HEIs have already been outlined but archives may also have strong reasons to seek out partners with which to collaborate.

Many archive services have seen a significant reduction in funding over recent years which has had consequences such as a reduction in staff numbers (including professional staff), and a reduction in time that can be spent on curatorial or collection activities as resources are focused on maintaining front line services and 'open doors'. In some cases such pressures have resulted in a more creative approach to a wider range of income generation and funding activities. Collaboration may offer a route to accessing other strands of funding or increasing capacity; it is viewed by many as a means of demonstrating an innovative approach to service delivery and as a means of building resilience.

Some of the benefits of collaboration that have been identified by each sector are listed below. You can use this as a generic list that can be tailored to the strengths

and activities of your archive service when thinking about the benefits to your service and the type of HEI with which you want to collaborate.

**Benefits of collaboration:**

<b>Archives</b>	<b>Higher Education</b>
<p><b>Promotion:</b></p> <p>Profile-raising through association with prestigious partners.</p> <p>Opportunities to generate publicity.</p>	<p><b>Access:</b></p> <p>To source, original or unused material to support the generation of new research outputs.</p>
<p><b>Knowledge exchange:</b></p> <p>Exchange of knowledge and ideas to address gaps in specialist expertise (e.g. IT or subject specialisms), access to research frameworks.</p>	<p><b>Knowledge exchange:</b></p> <p>Exchange of knowledge and ideas (e.g. subject specialist expertise, archival practice).</p>
<p><b>Audience development:</b></p> <p>Opportunities to expand audience (particularly academic audiences).</p>	<p><b>Public engagement:</b></p> <p>Opportunities to expand audience (particularly community and schools audiences).</p>
<p><b>Increased capacity:</b></p> <p>To deliver projects, routine activities or fill gaps in expertise.</p>	<p><b>Enhanced student experience:</b></p> <p>For example increased learning opportunities, sources for dissertations or increased potential employability through work experience placements.</p>
<p><b>Funding:</b></p> <p>Access to HE funding streams and associated programmes.</p>	<p><b>Skills development:</b></p> <p>(e.g. communication, public engagement and outreach, learning evaluation).</p>
<p><b>Motivation:</b></p> <p>Fresh approach to collections and reinvigoration of existing staff.</p>	<p><b>Innovation:</b></p> <p>Fresh approach to research and research methodologies.</p>

<b>Innovation:</b>  Demonstration of innovative approach to service delivery.	<b>Community:</b>  Strengthen position in local community.
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## 2.3 Types of collaboration

Collaboration need not be resource-intensive. The variety of ways the two sectors can work together means there is scope for collaboration between organisations of all sizes and in a range of institutional contexts. Often the most difficult part of collaboration is making the initial contact between the organisations. Once this has been achieved, the depth of the collaboration frequently increases as projects are built on previous successes and trusted relationships. It is a good idea to start off with an informal and low-resource collaboration so that you can build relationships and build your knowledge of how a specific institution works.

Examples of the areas in which archive services and higher education institutions collaborate are listed below. The activities do not have to be distinct from one another and, indeed, one may lead to another.

### Teaching

- Archive practitioners providing student inductions to collections and introductions to working with primary source material.
- Archive practitioners providing contributions to taught courses or modules, particularly at undergraduate level.
- Students using collections or subject themes within archives as a basis for dissertations.

### Student placements / work experience

- Archive services providing work experience opportunities to increase student employment prospects (and receiving a contribution towards core archive service activities e.g. cataloguing, repackaging, appraisal).

Archive services providing opportunities for pre- and post-qualification internships.

### **Exhibitions and outreach programmes**

- Academics providing input to exhibition guides, catalogues or online descriptions.
- Academics providing talks or other sessions to support exhibition and outreach programmes.
- Archive practitioners contributing skills, knowledge and contacts to support the outreach activities associated with research projects or university corporate priorities

### **Digitisation projects**

- HEIs contributing resources to support digitisation activities as part of research projects, including the hosting of digitised collections after projects have ended.
- Archives making collections available for digitisation and re-use.
- Academics enhancing metadata and online catalogues.

### **Research**

- Contribution (from both sectors) of professional expertise.
- Generation of new research outputs (conferences papers, journal papers, publications etc.).

### **Collaborative Doctoral Awards and Collaborative Doctoral Partnerships**

- Joint supervision of doctoral students who may contribute towards the core work of the archive (for example, cataloguing) as well as produce original research based on the collections (PhD thesis).

### **Shared services**

- Co-locating services and sharing resources such as buildings, storage and public programme space, conservation expertise.

## 3 Forming a collaboration

### 3.1 Things to think about in advance

Before you approach organisations with which you want to work, or as soon as you are approached by an academic or HEI wanting your input to a collaborative activity, spend some time thinking about what you want to achieve from the collaboration.

Think about:

- How the proposed activity fits with your organisation's strategic priorities.
- Whether the proposed activity will contribute towards the core objectives (work programme) of your archive service.
- Whether the proposed activity enables you to do something that you would not be able to do on your own.
- How the profile of your organisation will benefit from the collaboration.

The next step is to think about resources and what you are able to contribute to a collaboration.

- How much time can you afford to invest in the planning stages of the proposed activity?
- Does the proposed activity require additional resource or could it, with careful planning, be accommodated from within existing resources?
- Can you afford for the project to 'fail'? This might be in terms of reputational risk, credibility with your parent organisation, or lack of return on time invested.

Finally, think about what you know about the way your organisation works and the impact that might have on the ease or difficulty of collaborative working?

- Who needs to be involved in key decisions?
- Who is it important to get on your side (whose support do you need) before entering into any collaboration?
- What planning timescale does your organisation work to, and how long does it take for decisions to be made?

- What is your organisation's attitude to risk?
- What do you know about your financial processes? (e.g. timing of the financial year, budgetary requirements, ability to carry over funds between financial years, reporting requirements, the difference between revenue and capital funding.)
- Can you recruit and employ staff?
- Does your organisation require a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** or other type of agreement to support collaborations with external organisations?
- Does your organisation require contracts to pass through a legal team before signing; who has the authority to enter into contracts or sign MoUs?

Once you are comfortable with the capacity of your organisation for collaborative working, and how the process might work, it's useful to spend time thinking about your potential partner organisation in similar terms. If you are trying to interest an HEI in working with your archive service (rather than having been approached by an HEI), think about what type of organisation you most want to work with, what's important to them and how you can frame the benefits of working with your archive service to them before trying to establish initial contact.

### **3.2 Making contact and first steps**

Many collaborative projects grow from existing relationships between archive practitioners and colleagues in higher education institutions. Establishing initial contact without pre-existing relationships can be difficult but the following suggestions, made by archivists and academics should ease the process.

- Research the institutional missions and goals of local HEIs and identify subject strengths or subjects that align with your collections.
- Approach a librarian or archivist within the university and ask them whom to contact within the subject areas you have identified. You might want to make direct contact with individual academics or you might find that contacting a subject liaison librarian or a faculty engagement manager will enable you to explain how you wish to collaborate with the university to one person, who can then spread the message amongst a range of internal contacts.

- Use contacts made with researchers and students using your archive service to introduce your organisation to their HEI.
- Use university websites to identify academics within subject areas and to find out more about their research interests.
- Use social networking platforms such as **LinkedIn**, **Academia.edu**, **Piirus.com** or **ResearchGate** to find out more about individuals, as a route for making contact, or as a means of engaging in 'group' discussions about topics.
- Produce a brief summary of the collections / services that your archive service has and ask for it to be included in university bulletins to academics. Include relevant web pages and direct contact details.
- Follow and contribute to the blogs and Twitter accounts of subject areas, projects or individuals to keep up to date with activities and interests. Do not use social media to make initial direct contact with academics.
- Use academic mailing lists (for example **JiscMail** lists) to promote collections, activities or engage in online discussions.
- Network at local (heritage) events, such as exhibition openings, talks and seminars to meet local academics, find out about local initiatives and promote your organisation and its collections to peers beyond your own profession.
- Attend academic conferences in the subject areas relevant to your collections or other events that target academics and don't be afraid to ask questions and talk to speakers after sessions.
- Make initial contact with academics by email rather than telephone but don't be put off if they do not reply immediately and do not be deterred from following up with additional emails. However, do recognise that some times of year are particularly busy, for example it is best to avoid making contact at the start of the academic year and during exams (generally held in May).
- Make it easy for academics to contact you. Show how you can support research activities and provide direct contact information for named individuals on your website.

Once you have made initial contact, follow-up quickly with a face-to-face meeting. Use the meeting to explore opportunities for collaboration in more detail, for example, by providing a tour of key collections, by introducing your contact to colleagues (for example in learning or outreach), by showing the space or facilities that you have available to support teaching, research or engagement activities. Use the session to find out more about the academic, their research interest, teaching and students, and the priorities of the higher education institution at which they are based.

The following case study from the National Railway Museum archive illustrates how the librarian and archivist built links with a local university without any pre-existing relationship. In this case, a visit by a key academic to see the collections proved to be the turning point in the relationship between the two organisations.

## **Case study 1**

### **National Railway Museum archive: making and developing contact**

Search Engine is the library and archive centre at the National Railway Museum. Collections include letters, technical reports, engineering drawings, timetables and business archives amongst much more. Staff at the archive wanted to develop links with local universities to raise awareness of the collections with the long-term aim that students would use them in their research projects.

#### **What happened?**

Without any existing staff contacts at the HEI, these are the steps they took to make and develop contact:

1. Looked at the local universities and in particular the content of their history courses.
2. Spoke to a student engaged in work experience at the archive and asked them who the best person to contact at their university (York St John) would be.
3. Contacted the Head of Department at York St John and invited him to the archive for a tour.
4. As a consequence of his tour, the Head of Department spoke to two course

leaders at the University.

5. This led to an invitation to speak to c.120 history students (the new intake) at the university about the archives and special collections at the National Railway Museum.
6. The archivist and librarian gave an introduction to what archives are and took with them facsimiles of examples from the collections which they used as part of a 'source session'.
7. Anticipating that registering students to use the archive would be perceived as difficult and a potential stumbling block to using the archive, the archivist and librarian took postcards to the university session so that the students could be registered at the session and in advance of visiting the Centre.
8. Students were given the option to sign up for a tour and come and visit the Centre in person.

#### **What worked well?**

- Getting the academic on-site to see the collections was the turning point in establishing a relationship with the university.
- Having the support of senior staff in your own organisation for your plans.
- Giving the student session at the university (rather than initially as a visit to the archive) legitimised it as part of their timetabled course and ensured good attendance.
- Referring back to Archives-NRA discussion topics on what type of information to give students at introductory sessions ensured that the content was pitched at the right level.
- Registering the students as part of the session ensured that they had a familiar contact at the archive in advance of a visit.
- Simple evaluation forms, completed at the session, demonstrated that the students' understanding of special collections and how they might be of use in their studies had improved, and gave an indication of how likely students would be to use the archive's material at some point in their course.

### **What's next?**

- The first student session was run in 2013 and it is to be repeated in 2014 and annually.
- The impact of the sessions on whether students will use the collections in their research isn't fully known yet as their research is not carried out until their third year.
- Staff are now developing links with two other local universities.
- Their next goal is to expand use of the collections beyond the history department to other subjects, notably business history and engineering.

### **3.3 Common goals and cultural differences**

Whether you have made contact with an academic, or they have made contact with you it is essential to establish honest and open communication channels early on. A successful collaboration is based on clear goals, mutual professional respect and understanding, and is supported by good communication.

The cultural differences between the HE sector and the archive sector can be significant, particularly in terms of individual motivation. For example, the level of importance placed on scholarly research activities is very different between the two sectors. For individual academics there is often a strong personal motivation, with research being the primary purpose of their involvement in a project and linked to career advancement. Academic outputs such as conference papers, journal papers, and books are all highly valued by the HE sector, as is the ability to attract research funding to the organisation. For archive practitioners research projects may be seen as a desirable add-on that can bring benefit to the organisation but which are unlikely to have the same impact on either personal career progression or the profile of the organisation. Cultures can collide when the differences between team and individual motivations, and between the motivations of the two sectors, are present but not understood.

Just as you have thought about what you will get out of a collaborative activity, the resources you are able to contribute towards it, and the organisational framework in which you work, so you need to understand the same things about the organisation, or individual academic, with whom you want to collaborate. This guidance document gives generic pointers on what to address but understanding the specific context for your collaboration and the things that are important to the HEI or academic with whom you wish to work are critical and will help you to overcome cultural differences and speak to the HE sector in a way that anticipates their needs.

An activity stands a good chance of being successful if all parties have early input into its planning. Early planning sessions allow contributions to be made from the entire range of professional perspectives and knowledge to be harnessed by the collaboration; they enable pitfalls to be spotted, and ensure that expectations are well managed and commitments clearly understood. This doesn't mean that all parties to the collaboration need to be equally involved in the planning process. It is often useful for one organisation to take the lead, (for example they may be responsible for submitting a bid for funding to support the collaboration) and for the others to have identified roles and nominated representatives.

The following checklist identifies things to think about at the planning stage that will help you identify common goals and minimise the impact of cultural differences; it brings together recommendations from both the archive and HE sectors.

### **Planning checklist**

- Identify and record each organisation's strategic drivers for collaboration.
- Write a concise summary of the collaborative activity: be particularly clear about research goals and audiences.
- Identify the desired outputs and outcomes of the activity.
- Identify the benefits to all parties of the activity.
- Identify the audiences the activity seeks to engage.
- Clarify the legal status of each organisation.
- Clarify any institutional or contractual constraints (on the academic side) and any potential statutory, constitutional or legal constraints on the side of the archive.

- Think about who has the authority to make decisions in each organisation and what the decision-making hierarchies, processes and timescales are.
- Establish who will project manage the initiative, organise meetings and maintain project records.
- Identify the skills and resources available and agree additional resources needed.
- Be realistic about the costs and time involved (it may be useful to cost out the estimated staff time contributions to activities).
- Be clear about the contribution you/your organisation is able to make to the activity. Think about (and if appropriate, communicate) the impact that any new activity has on your existing activities and commitments.
- Agree the budget and how any costs and funding are apportioned.
- Establish which organisation will take responsibility for the finances, including which organisation will hold the budget and how income and expenditure will be managed and reported.
- Clarify VAT status and liabilities.
- Check the insurance implications of the project, its activities and the impact of working collaboratively on existing insurance policies.
- Establish who will employ and/or manage staff.
- Agree who will be responsible for contracting external services, including those of any consultants.
- Establish how you will measure the value of the activities carried out and the impact of the collaboration. Be mindful of the needs, reporting mechanisms and stakeholders of all organisations involved.
- Agree how the results of the collaboration will be made available and who is responsible for their long-term availability.
- Clarify copyright and licensing issues if appropriate<sup>5</sup>.
- Discuss publication strategy and what your academic partner is, and is not, allowed to report on in an academic context.

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<sup>5</sup> See the ARA guidance on *Copyright Issues for Archivists* available at: [www.archives.org.uk/ara-in-action/publications/copyright-issues-for-archivists.html](http://www.archives.org.uk/ara-in-action/publications/copyright-issues-for-archivists.html)  
And that on *Copyright and related rights* produced by The National Archives, available at: [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/information-management/copyright-related-rights.pdf](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/information-management/copyright-related-rights.pdf)

- Discuss issues relating to access to collections including reader registration requirements, timeframes for booking appointments, security and preservation issues.

It is worth investing time at this stage to avoid misunderstandings later on. Record and share this information so that you have the same list and a common understanding of what is involved. Feedback from academics and archivists alike has stressed the importance of being particularly clear about research goals and the beneficiaries of research projects.

Try to ensure that you are speaking a common language, even for seemingly basic matters, e.g. do you have a common understanding about what is a 'large' or 'small' amount of money? Does the contribution of half a day's time for a meeting have the same implications for staff from the archive and the HEI?

Different organisations and different forms of collaboration will influence the formality with which this information is recorded. Even the most informal of collaborations should be backed up by an audit trail of emails. Other options for recording how the collaboration will work include recording minutes of meetings, establishing a Memorandum of Understanding, following a formal project management approach (e.g. PRINCE2), using a funding bid as the project documentation, or establishing a **partnership agreement** (e.g. using the guidance provided by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF)). Further information about these frameworks can be found in the key terms, concepts and resources appendix.

### **3.4 Understanding barriers to participation**

Whilst enthusiasm for collaboration between archive and higher education organisations is generally high, it is also useful to think about potential barriers to participation in collaborative activities and the things that can go wrong along the way. Many of the potential barriers can be avoided by understanding the pressures on each of the organisations involved in the collaboration or can be overcome by improving communication.

## **Lack of time**

Both archive practitioners and academics cite lack of time as a major limiting factor. Available time may vary with the time of year (for example avoiding the end of financial years, the start of academic terms and exam season as particularly busy times; and understanding whether the summer research break is a good or bad time for a particular academic to think about new projects).

## **Timescales for decision-making**

Retaining the ability to be nimble about decision-making is an increasing luxury. Whilst many academics are used to dropping everything to plan and submit a funding bid for a project within six to eight weeks, many archive practitioners cannot work like this. The organisations in which they work require much longer planning horizons (commonly in excess of six months). Clearly the complexity of the project will influence how much time is needed for planning and decision-making but these cultural differences between organisations are an important consideration and should be communicated as they are not obvious.

## **Familiarity with archive services**

Do not expect all members of the higher education sector to have a good understanding of the range of collections, materials and professional expertise that can be found in your archive service. High-level descriptions of the nature of your collections, both in terms of subject matter and type of material can be a useful way of highlighting the breadth and depth of resources available to academics. Similarly, make it clear (preferably online) how academics can find out more about the collections held by your archive service.

## **Understanding the processes involved in using archival materials**

Reader registration requirements, appointment booking systems, security measures, preservation requirements and copyright restrictions can all seem like a conspiracy of measures to restrict use. This can be a particular issue when engaging less experienced researchers who have had less interaction with primary source material. Clear communication about the policies and processes you use at the outset of a

project will help to overcome frustrations. The **Archive Service Accreditation** guidance includes a useful guide to what should be included in policies on access<sup>6</sup>.

### **Uncatalogued and/or undigitised material**

Each sector can be surprised by the quantity of uncatalogued and/or undigitised material. Academics express surprise when they discover that relatively small proportions of material held by archive services' are available in online catalogues; and archivists express frustration at the assumption that large quantities of material are fully described in online catalogues or available in digital format. For some academics, uncatalogued material is a golden opportunity for research and its presence can be turned into an opportunity for collaboration. Describing collections at a high level on an archive's website is useful, together with providing a named contact for further information about the collection.

### **Discoverability**

Related to the issue of uncatalogued material is the issue of finding relevant research material across disparate collections. Portals such as **Discovery** (which holds descriptions of the holdings of TNA as well as more than 2,500 archives across the country) and the **Archives Hub** are useful resources for academics seeking to identify material from a wide range of sources as well as a means of promoting collections amongst a wide range of audiences for archive services.

### **Lack of knowledge of research trends**

Archive services identify the difficulty in finding out about current research trends as a barrier to collaboration. Knowledge of developments in relevant research fields could help archivists to raise the profile of particular collections, prioritise cataloguing, conservation or digitisation. Analysis of the research interests of local organisations by individual archive services is useful but is not readily scalable, nor is the identification and monitoring of mailing lists feasible when considering the breadth of most archive's collections. Monitoring the newsletters of major funders (such as

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<sup>6</sup> Archive Service Accreditation guidance:  
<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/archives/archive-service-accreditation-guidance-june-2014.pdf>. Accessed 24.10.14.

AHRC, the Arts & Humanities Research Council) can provide a useful insight into upcoming research topics, but not normally within a timeframe that would enable most archive services to undertake activities such as cataloguing and digitisation that would help to surface relevant collections. Just as academics would welcome a single point of access to all relevant collections, so archive practitioners are keen to identify how to make contact with geographically-dispersed academics with relevant research interests.

## **Geography**

Collaboration is often easiest between organisations that are geographically close to one another. Small distances make visits and face-to-face meetings easier and potentially increase the range of collaborative activity that is possible. Geography need not be a barrier to all forms of collaboration though. Large-scale research projects frequently involve partners from geographically distant locations which can be well-supported by technology. The key is to ensure that communication remains frequent and operates through both informal and formal channels.

## **Attitudes to risk**

Research is an inherently risky business. From the earliest stages of forming a research proposal and the risks associated with time invested in bidding for funding, through to the outcomes of the research process, one cannot guarantee (or predict) results. In some cases, for example, student-led research, the tolerance for risk-taking in the HEI might be much higher than would ever normally be considered acceptable by an archive service as 'failure' of research projects is not seen as a negative but as a valuable learning experience. Both sectors need to be clear about their appetite for risk and which organisation carries the risk (or how much risk).

## 4 Developing your collaborative working

Once the hard work has gone in to developing relationships and building trust between individuals and organisations, the opportunities for building on collaboration grow. There are two particular aspects to think about:

1. How to build on a successful collaboration.
2. How to embed collaboration within your organisation.

### 4.1 Building on collaboration

You may find that collaborative working becomes easier as your experience increases: you have trusted partners, a track record, experience of processes, and the encouragement of your parent body. But it is important to balance your enthusiasm for new projects with new risks associated with increased complexity.

Research by *OCLC research* suggests that collaboration takes place along a continuum<sup>7</sup>, with points along the continuum marking shifts in the complexity of the collaboration and the effort involved. The 'collaboration continuum' identifies five phases to collaboration, starting with contact and moving through cooperation, coordination, and collaboration to convergence, with investment, benefit and risk all increasing along the continuum.

The collaboration continuum offers a framework for thinking about the development of collaborative working. Figure 1 (below) gives examples of how each phase might be manifest as collaborative working between the archive and higher education sectors. It can be seen that each phase (from left to right across the diagram) involves greater commitment from each party to the collaboration and brings with it increased need for formalisation of working practices as well as the potential for greater benefits and greater risk. For each new venture it is worth going back to your planning checklist to consider the goals, benefits, processes and resources involved.

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<sup>7</sup> Zorich, et al. (2008) 'Beyond the Silos of the LAMs: Collaboration Among Libraries, Archives and Museums', OCLC research.

A case study from Aberdeen City & Aberdeenshire Archives and the University of Aberdeen (below) shows how a relatively small-scale 'cooperative' project developed along the collaboration continuum to a more complex 'coordinated' activity. In the 'cooperation' phase, activities and working relationships were piloted, the success of which led to the development of larger projects which attracted more significant funding and delivered a greater range of research outputs and public benefit.

Moving to the far right of the collaboration continuum, a number of archive and HE organisations have established shared services, transforming their approach to service delivery and the way that they work together. The case study from Hull History Centre describes the origination and operation of one such service.

<b>Phase</b>	<b>Contact</b>	<b>Cooperation</b>	<b>Coordination</b>	<b>Collaboration</b>	<b>Convergence</b>
Activity	Open up dialogue to explore commonalities and need	Agree to work informally on an activity or effort that offers a small yet tangible benefit	Activities no longer 'ad hoc' and need a framework to organise networks and ensure common understanding of responsibilities	Moves beyond agreement to a shared process of creation to create a shared understanding that none previously possessed or could have come to on their own	Collaboration around a specific function has become so extensive and engrained that it is no longer recognised by others as a collaborative understanding
Example	Identify key individuals and establish a meeting that builds a foundation of trust	Sharing information or undertaking an activity on behalf of partners such as archive practitioners contributing a session on the use of primary sources, or an academic enhancing exhibition content	Repeated contributions to student learning activities. Joint public engagement activities to expand audiences of both/all partners	Working together in a way that has required transformational change (for example reorganised workflows or shared capacity) to achieve commonly desired goals, e.g. through a funded research project or a collaborative doctoral award	Shared service provision

Figure 1: Phases of the collaboration continuum, adapted from 'Beyond the Silos of the LAMs: Collaboration Among Libraries, Archives and Museums', OCLC Research, 2008, p. 1

## **Case study 2**

### **The Hull History Centre: Convergence – operating a shared service**

The Hull History Centre provides access to material held by the City Archives & Local Studies Library, and Hull University Archives.

The idea of creating a service run jointly by the City Council and University of Hull was first mooted in 1995 when both parties found that they were running out of space for storage and engagement activities, the HLF existed as a possible funding source, both parties recognized that they'd have a greater chance of success in attracting funding if they worked together, and they were able to identify high-level and long-term synergies from operating a joint service.

#### **What happened?**

The parent organisations identified high-level strategic goals in common. Both organisations sought to contribute to improving the reputation of the city, increase social capital and educational attainment, and attract external investment. Working together was recognised as a means of achieving these goals.

The joint service is run as a partnership – the Hull History Centre is not a legal entity in its own right, staff are employed by either the City Council or University. Working structures and relationships were defined and established during the development phase.

The new joint service was defined from scratch, with processes established for its operation, using good practice from each of the three existing services, setting boundaries and clarifying overlaps.

There is a strong single-service approach to delivery so that front-of-house operates as a single team – users interact with History Centre staff and collections.

Some 'behind the scenes' aspects of operation remain separate, in particular custodianship and collection management. Depositor agreements and relationships are with either the City Council or University and the two organisations operate separate collection management systems (and have separate repository codes), merging data for a single on-line search interface.

### **What worked well?**

- The role of individuals during the project initiation phase was critical – to advocate, build and maintain momentum.
- During the design phase (which included an architectural competition) and build phase both the University Archivist and the City Archivist were clear about what was needed to provide a successful service and given sufficient autonomy to define requirements and specification for staff, collections and public areas
- The partnership is based on collaboration at strategic, management and operational levels, rather than the establishment of a separate legal entity. This means that it is affected by organisational changes within either partner organisation, but has more flexibility to respond. It also means that the role of individuals remains crucial.
- All three sites closed for either a year or six months before the formal opening of the new building – this was essential for collections work and to enable knowledge exchange and team building. Staff were coming together to work on new (neutral) territory and team leaders were explicit about the need to become familiar with each other's collections and develop mutual trust.
- The building is popular and there is a strong sense of ownership by the local community which is reflected in its use.
- More outreach and engagement activities are possible as a consequence of the new building.

## Case study 3

### **Aberdeen University, Aberdeen City & Aberdeenshire Archives and the National Records of Scotland: From cooperation to coordination - developing collaborative working**

Aberdeen City Archives holds the Aberdeen Burgh Records (volumes 1-8 of which are recognised by UNESCO as of outstanding importance to the UK). A proof-of-concept project was set up involving the City Archives, the National Records of Scotland and Aberdeen University to make these records available to a wider public. As a result of this project, the collaborative activity developed into two distinct pilot projects each of which built on different aspects of the original 'cooperation' phase.

#### **What happened?**

In what might be described as the 'cooperation' phase, the National Records of Scotland provided digital camera facilities for the imaging of the earliest 25 volumes (amounting to 16,000 TIFF images) of the Burgh Records, and facilitated free public access to the images online via the ScotlandsPlaces website.

Moving to the 'coordination' phase, the Research Institute of Irish and Scottish Studies based at Aberdeen University then approached the Archives with a proposed pilot project 'Connecting and Projecting Aberdeen's Burgh Records'<sup>8</sup> to employ (and fund) a research assistant for 6 months to transcribe and translate a sample of 100 consecutive pages of the digitised records and test the creation of an online, publicly accessible database<sup>9</sup> linking the transcriptions and translations to corresponding images.

The work, and any potential future projects were supported by an MoU (drawn up by the University) which clarifies the areas of collaboration, methods of collaboration and issues such as copyright.

Subsequent to this, a distinct but related pilot project was undertaken by the Department of Computing Science at Aberdeen University (funded by dot.rural, the RCUK Digital Economy Hub) to explore the development of a text analytic tool that could be applied to

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<sup>8</sup> Connecting and Projecting Aberdeen's Burgh Records, Accessible at: [www.abdn.ac.uk/riiss/about/pilots-138.php](http://www.abdn.ac.uk/riiss/about/pilots-138.php)

<sup>9</sup> The pilot database is accessible at: [www.abdn.ac.uk/aberdeen-burgh-records-database/](http://www.abdn.ac.uk/aberdeen-burgh-records-database/)

the 100-page transcription to make it machine-readable, and to support the development of Semantic Web and linked data applications to enhance searchability of the resources.

### **What worked well?**

- Each partner brought specific skills to the collaboration to create something which no one partner could have achieved on their own.
- The pilot projects have enabled the testing of key elements of the work and provide evidence to support future, larger grant applications.
- The involvement of the University in the collaboration gave access to a wide range of research skills, from historical to information technology.
- Pilot project meetings, academic symposia, and less formal workshops and discussion meetings, fostered regular and constructive dialogue between partners, and other collaborators.
- In relation to these collaborations, opportunities have been (and continue to be) developed to engage undergraduate and postgraduate teaching with the pilot project outputs.
- The realisation of substantive academic outputs, including a collection of essays for a prospective special section of the journal *Urban History*

## **4.2 Embedding collaboration**

Embedding collaboration within organisations can be challenging because it often requires shifting a relationship from individuals to organisations. Collaborations that rely heavily on relationships between individuals are fragile and risk ending when one of the individuals changes roles or institution. The steps identified in this guidance, such as identifying mutual benefits to the organisations at strategic and operational levels, using frameworks to clarify expectations and responsibilities, and ensuring that the reporting requirements of both organisations are met, will help to embed collaboration within organisations.

Identifying 'champions' for collaborations from within and outside of organisations can also contribute to their sustainability. Many collaborations between organisations start as a single

project, often with specific funding attached. Building a network of advocates and using them to promote the benefits of your collaborative work can help to raise the profile of activities with a wider range of stakeholders than you would be able to achieve as individual organisations. This can help to make the case for funding for further projects or ideally, to embed the collaboration into the core working practices of the organisations (as identified in the collaboration and convergence phases of the collaboration continuum).

Issues of sustainability not only apply to relationships and funding but also to the outputs of distinct collaborative projects, particularly digital resources and websites. Careful planning needs to go into the funding and management of these resources once a project has officially ended.

The case study from Coventry University and the Siobhan Davies Dance Archive shows how the ownership and on-going responsibility for the maintenance and development of a newly created dance archive have been built into the operations of both the university and the company. The example shows how experience built up during the initial phase of collaboration (the project to create the archive), for example, around copyright and licensing, has been integrated into the way that the company works with future creators of material and it shows how the academic party (the university) has been able to use its infrastructure to sustain the project resource (the website) and ensure it is widely used.

#### **Case study 4**

##### **Siobhan Davies Dance Archive and Coventry University: embedding collaborative working**

Having worked hard to set up and build the Siobhan Davies Dance Archive, Siobhan Davies RePlay, (an innovative archive that disseminates dance archive content to the public and transforms research access and the possibilities for re-use of the material to create new knowledge), Coventry University and the Siobhan Davies Dance Company have established a way of working in collaboration that ensures the continuity of the archive.

##### **How does it work?**

- A collaborative agreement (form of contract) was drawn up to clarify how the

two organisations would work together. One contract covered the period of funding and a different contract clarified how the two organisations would continue to work together.

The company and the university jointly own the archive (it sits on the university servers).

The university is happy to commit resource towards what it recognises as an innovative and successful asset for the university.

The relationship with the company continues to be strong, after completion of the original project.

The company contributes a sum for each of its productions to support the addition of new material to the archive ensuring that the archive continues to develop and be representative of the work of the company.

The company now uses a contract in its dealings with musicians, dancers, all contributing artists and broadcasters which allows material to be included in the archive (copyright clearance and licenses took up a substantial amount of time in the original project to create the archive).

#### **What worked well?**

The project coincided with the demise of the Arts & Humanities Data Service, so the academic sought the support of the university library very early on in the project, and the academic and librarian were able to work together to make the case to the university that it was within the remit of the library to sustain the archive and to commit the necessary resources towards its support.

### **4.3 Opportunities for future collaboration**

The research underpinning this guidance asked individuals to identify what they see as the future opportunities for collaboration between archive services and HEIs and these are summarised below. Some of these opportunities may already be familiar to you whilst others may encourage

you to seek out new partners or develop relationships with existing contacts to embark on new collaborative projects.

#### **4.3.1 Uncatalogued material**

Uncatalogued archive collections present unique opportunities for carrying out original research on primary source material which is attractive to many academics as they are evaluated on the originality of their research. Although archive services may be reluctant to provide access to such material for reasons of security and possibly preservation, research based on such collections can also bring considerable benefits to the archive service including the listing of the collections, specialist information about them and exposure of them to wider audiences.

#### **4.3.2 Beyond the humanities**

The use of archive collections to support historical research and other branches of the arts and humanities is relatively widespread. However, there is potential for collections to be used to engage in collaborative research in other areas, notably science, technology, engineering and medicine (STEM) subjects, business studies and management subjects, and to support art & design related subject areas such as graphic design, publishing and social media.

The case study below, from the Richard Burton Archives, Swansea University, shows how the university worked with archives throughout Wales (through the Archives & Records Council Wales) to promote the use of business archives, including to academics. The example provides ideas that might stimulate collaborations between archives and universities to promote the use of archival material by subject areas beyond the humanities.

## Case study 5

### **Richard Burton Archives, Swansea and Archives and Records Council Wales: collaboration to encourage the use of business archives**

Swansea University Archives worked in collaboration with Archives and Records Council Wales (ARCW) to promote the use of business archives. The University Archivist had identified the difficulty in promoting the use of business archives in teaching and research and recognised that there were extensive archives in Wales that would be of value to the academic community, in addition to those held by Swansea University itself.

Building on a successful cataloguing project, 'Powering the World', the Archivist talked to colleagues in Wales through ARCW and to CyMAL to explore how the initial project could be developed to exploit the potential of business archives in a way that the original cataloguing project did not. Talks resulted in a project 'Profiting from Powering the World<sup>10</sup>', funded by CyMAL, to highlight the importance of business archives and promote their use for research.

The project included:

- A touring exhibition showing how relevant and useful business archives are. The exhibition toured participating archives and other venues in Wales.
- A leaflet linked to the exhibition promoting the use of business collections and encouraging their deposit.
- Development of a new area on the ArchivesWales website devoted to business archives, their importance and use ([www.archiveswales.org.uk/projects/business-archives/](http://www.archiveswales.org.uk/projects/business-archives/))
- Digitised highlights from the collections.
- Work with academic staff at Swansea University to explore the potential of the use of collections to support teaching and research.
- A one-day workshop for researchers bringing together expert speakers to explore the value of business archives to research.

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<sup>10</sup> Profiting from Powering the World. Accessible at: [www.archiveswales.org.uk/projects/business-archives/business-archive-projects/](http://www.archiveswales.org.uk/projects/business-archives/business-archive-projects/)

- An employability project for two students to create web guides for using business collections as subject matter.

#### **What worked?**

- A trial using business archives in teaching and research showing how the collections could be used for teaching and research, using specific examples.
- A good support network in Wales, including ARCW and CyMAL. The collaboration paved the way for further work on business archives that enabled ARCW and Swansea University to contribute to delivering the National Strategy for Business Archives in Wales.
- It also identified the potential for further collaborative work on the archives of the steel industry, which is being taken forward. This links projects to increase the accessibility of steel archives with academic research on the industry, a previously under-researched area.

#### **4.3.3 Digitised content**

Opportunities for collaborative work around the use of digitised content can relate to research and learning based on archival material that has been digitised, or to the process of digitising collections.

For example, research and learning based on digitised content can take place over greater geographical distances and are not limited to local HEIs; it could also take place through groups of geographically dispersed HEIs. Similarly, geographically dispersed collections or items can be 'digitally reunited' and made available for research.

Other opportunities for collaboration could involve working with HEIs to create and enhance digitised content. For example, academics may be able to contribute their expertise to niche subject areas to enhance metadata and catalogue descriptions; or to inform future digitisation priorities by identifying collections of significant research value.

#### 4.3.4 Digital humanities

Digital humanities is the application of computer technology to enable research in the humanities that would not have been possible otherwise. Advanced technology-related methods such as text-mining, data-mining, data visualisation and information retrieval are used in arts and humanities research to analyse born-digital and digitised content. The growth of digital humanities research and teaching has been significant over the last ten years. For some academics it is seen as the natural 'next step' in the way that humanities research is carried out and for others it is a subject area in its own right albeit, by its nature, highly interdisciplinary.

For archive services, this area of research offers opportunities to explore and re-present collections in new ways. Much work is based around using technology to manipulate, process and analyse text<sup>11</sup>. Other examples include the use of imaging techniques to reveal information from damaged texts illegible to the naked eye<sup>12</sup>, or the application of 'digital forensics' to (born) digital collections to investigate evidence from the past and to support the preservation of digital content for the future<sup>13</sup>.

To attract digital humanities researchers and exploit these possibilities, archive services need to understand how to make data available so that it can be used effectively. Things to think about include the form in which information is available, for example high quality digital images, in quantity; an approach to licensing that supports easy and shared access to material across collections and institutions, and delivery through systems that allow access at scale. If some of this sounds out-of-reach at the moment, remember that collaboration with academics working in the field of digital humanities may provide a route to developing the infrastructure that will support the research as well as the creation of research outputs. Digital humanists are motivated by many of the same things as researchers in other fields: originality of research, attracting research funding, and opportunities to publish scholarly outputs. They are looking for opportunities to adapt and apply new technology to the humanities, often drawing on technologies emerging from

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<sup>11</sup> For example, refer back to the case study of Aberdeen University and Aberdeen City & Aberdeenshire Archives and the development of the text analytic tool applied to the Aberdeen Burgh Records.

<sup>12</sup> For example, Multispectral imaging of Magna Carta at the British Library  
<http://britishlibrary.typepad.co.uk/collectioncare/2014/10/800-year-old-magna-carta-manuscript-reveals-its-secrets.html>

<sup>13</sup> For example, the Digital Lives project at the British Library, UCL and University of Bristol,  
[www.webarchive.org.uk/wayback/archive/20120131152411/http://www.bl.uk/digital-lives/](http://www.webarchive.org.uk/wayback/archive/20120131152411/http://www.bl.uk/digital-lives/)

science and engineering research (and providing a useful bridge to these disciplines). It is worth spending time looking at examples of digital humanities research carried out at a range of HEIs to improve your own understanding of what digital humanities means to you as an archive professional and how it might be applied to the benefit of your archive service. Some links are provided in the 'key terms, concepts and resources' section as pointers to your exploration of this large and growing field.

#### **4.3.5 Collaborative Doctoral Awards (CDAs) and Collaborative Doctoral Partnerships (CDPs)**

Although not new initiatives, the current funding available from the Arts & Humanities Research Council (AHRC) for encouraging the development of collaborations between HEIs and non-HEI organisations and businesses provide opportunities for archive services. The aim of both schemes is to provide opportunities for doctoral students to gain additional skills and enhanced employability through carrying out their research under the joint supervision of an HEI and a non-HEI organisation.

CDA proposals are submitted by the HEI to AHRC (having identified a non-HEI partner) whereas CDPs are awarded to non-HEI organisations or consortia of non-HEI organisations that act as collaborative doctoral partners with the AHRC.

The details of the schemes are expanded on in the 'key terms, concepts and resources' section and the following case study from Staffordshire Archive and Heritage Service shows how it successfully worked with Keele University to provide support to a CDA PhD student.

Additional information and practical guidance on CDAs and CDPs is available from the AHRC website, [www.ahrc.ac.uk/Funding-Opportunities/Pages/Collaborative-Doctoral-Awards.aspx](http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/Funding-Opportunities/Pages/Collaborative-Doctoral-Awards.aspx).

#### **Case study 6**

##### **Staffordshire Archive and Heritage Service and Keele University: Staffordshire Landed Estates Collaborative Doctoral Award**

Staffordshire Archive and Heritage Service worked in collaboration with Keele University to apply to AHRC for a Collaborative Doctoral Award (CDA) to host and supervise a PhD student. The focus of the Doctoral research was a comparison between two landed

estates using the archives of those estates (the Sutherland Archive and the Bradford archive).

### **What happened?**

- The two organisations worked together on the application for the CDA and identified both mutual and individual benefits from the collaboration.
- The application process and appointment was undertaken by Keele University (as the academic partner) and the Archive Service was part of the appointment panel.
- The jointly appointed student spent the first year of their PhD cataloguing part of the collection under the supervision of an archivist.
- The student supported engagement and outreach activities by speaking at several conferences and events targeted at local communities about their research.
- The student gained practical skills, experience and insights that helped their research and will help their future career.

### **What worked well?**

- Careful consideration was given to whether the benefit to core service (cataloguing) and wider benefits to the service (research into the collections) would outweigh the burden on capacity (supervision time). This process involved key members of staff at the archive.
- A major collection was catalogued and made more accessible with the ability to search for information about it online.
- Keele University was able to demonstrate community impact by working with a service that engages regularly with the public.
- The work undertaken through the CDA was used to support another grant application which funded the remainder of the cataloguing.
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### **What's next?**

The Archive Service has partnered in a second collaborative bid with a wider range of universities which will involve students working on collections to exploit their content and help bring them to a wider range of audiences.

#### **4.3.6 Development of cross-sectoral forums to provide access to information on research trends**

Identified as a need by both archive practitioners and the higher education community, the development of a resource to bring together information about research interests and under-explored collections could itself form the subject of collaboration between the archive and HE sectors.

#### **4.3.7 Development of income-generating services**

Reduced funding presents an opportunity to think creatively about income generation. Opportunities may exist for archives to generate income or investment by providing services to HEIs in areas such as storage, conservation expertise or use of public spaces, (although service provision of this nature is not a truly collaborative endeavour).

Specific examples of this type of activity were not uncovered during the research for this guidance document but archive services may find it useful to look at the example of the Archaeology Data Service<sup>14</sup> as an organisation that manages and provides access to digital resources that are created as a product of archaeological research, and consider whether there are parallels with future services they could develop and provide in collaboration with HEIs.

Some funding streams (such as those related to Knowledge Exchange programmes) include support for enterprise activities and, it may not be too great a leap to consider collaborations between archive services, HEIs and business as a route to the development of income generating services or activities. The Department for Business, Innovation & Skills (BIS) has invested in encouraging businesses and universities to work together more closely, for example around the commercialisation of research and the piloting of geographical 'University Enterprise Zones' to increase innovation and growth. Such initiatives may provide opportunities in which archive services can collaborate alongside business and HEIs<sup>15</sup>.

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<sup>14</sup> Archaeology Data Service, available at: <http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/about/background>

<sup>15</sup> Department for Business, Innovation & Skills investment in research, development and innovation: [www.gov.uk/government/policies/investing-in-research-development-and-innovation](http://www.gov.uk/government/policies/investing-in-research-development-and-innovation)

## 4.4 Sources of funding

Some trusts, foundations and the Heritage Lottery Fund will support collaborative projects between the archive and higher education sectors. For example the Leverhulme Trust which funds the Artist in Residence grants<sup>16</sup>, and Arcadia, which provides grants to support endangered cultural heritage and enable open access to the materials<sup>17</sup>. Many archive services are well acquainted with fundraising from trusts and foundations and as these sources tend not to be specific to funding collaboration with HEIs, they are not elaborated on in this guidance document. The National Archives provides an overview of funding available to the archives sector<sup>18</sup> and is currently engaged in the 'Giving Value' project that has been put together to support the UK archives sector in improving its fundraising knowledge, skills and capacity<sup>19</sup>.

The higher education sector has access to funding streams that, whilst unavailable to archive services in terms of making direct applications to the funds, can be used to support collaborative work involving archive services. Developing your knowledge of these opportunities and the requirements of the funders will help you to understand the context in which HEIs are developing research bids and other programmes of activity. It may also alert you to specific funding calls (areas of research) to which your archive service can contribute and prompt you to make contact with an HEI with which you can collaborate.

The most significant of these streams is the funding available through the UK's seven research councils. Of the seven councils, the **AHRC (Arts and Humanities Research Council)** is the most significant funder of projects involving archive services or research on archive collections. AHRC issues periodic targeted funding calls as well as operating open calls throughout the year. Archive services cannot apply directly for funding (unless they have Independent Research Organisation status) but they can be a partner in a funded research project. Partners are usually expected to make an in-kind (or cash) contribution to the research project but the project can be designed to include funded public engagement activities, such as exhibitions or learning

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<sup>16</sup> The Leverhulme Trust: [www.leverhulme.ac.uk/funding/funding.cfm](http://www.leverhulme.ac.uk/funding/funding.cfm)

<sup>17</sup> Arcadia grant funding: [www.arcadiafund.org.uk/about-arcadia/about-arcadia.aspx](http://www.arcadiafund.org.uk/about-arcadia/about-arcadia.aspx)

<sup>18</sup> The National Archives, 'Finding Funding': [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/finding-funding.htm](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/finding-funding.htm)

<sup>19</sup> The National Archives, 'Giving Value': [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/giving-value-fundraising-capacity.htm](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/giving-value-fundraising-capacity.htm), run in partnership with the Archives and Records Association, the Welsh Government (through CyMAL), Public Record Office Northern Ireland, the Scottish Council on Archives and the Institute of Fundraising. Individuals can sign up to receive a monthly newsletter about the programme.

programmes, which may be of benefit to the archive service; or the archive service can act as a consultant to the HEI (rather than a partner in the project).

All funding applications are made through the Joint Electronic Submission System (Je-S) and detailed help is available within the system. Applicants are required to define a subject area, detail academic benefits (including communication and dissemination plans), and an impact summary (detailing who might benefit and how they might benefit), project partners, and other documentation including a case for support, justification of resources and **pathways to impact** attachment.

AHRC funding available to archives is described at: <http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/Funding-Opportunities/Research-funding/Pages/Museums-and-Galleries.aspx>

A list of all current AHRC funding opportunities can be found at:

[www.ahrc.ac.uk/Funding-Opportunities/Pages/Funding-Opportunities-List.aspx](http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/Funding-Opportunities/Pages/Funding-Opportunities-List.aspx)

The research councils frequently work in partnership with other research councils. For example **Innovate UK**, (the recently renamed Technology Strategy Board) funds innovative small and medium sized businesses, but also supports Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (generally between UK universities and businesses, but also charities) and occasionally issues competitions of direct relevance to the archive sector (for example around the use of digital technologies).

[www.gov.uk/government/organisations/innovate-uk](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/innovate-uk)

<http://ktp.innovateuk.org>

**Horizon 2020**, the EU Research and Innovation programme has nearly €80 billion of funding available over 7 years (2014-2020). The Horizon 2020 programme is made up of 18 thematic sections. 'Science with and for Society' and 'Europe in a Changing World' may provide opportunities of interest.

<http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/>

<http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/funding/index.html>

**HERA (Humanities in the European Research Area)** is a partnership between 21 Humanities Research Councils across Europe (including AHRC) and the European Science Foundation. It runs joint research programmes, part funded by the European Union. Project partners are often drawn from the heritage sector. The HERA Joint Research Programme (JRP) 'Uses of the Past' will open in January 2015.

<http://heranet.info>

**The British Academy** provides a range of grants and funding to support UK and international humanities and social sciences research. Case studies include the Beazley Archive, which was able to retain a senior researcher whose work subsequently won a Major Curatorial Grant from the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art (2007- 9).

[www.britac.ac.uk/funding/index.cfm](http://www.britac.ac.uk/funding/index.cfm)

[www.britac.ac.uk/funding/case-studies/kurtz-beazley.cfm](http://www.britac.ac.uk/funding/case-studies/kurtz-beazley.cfm)

The sources identified above give an overview of some of the major sources of funding available to support collaborations between the archive and higher education sectors. Interdisciplinary research and partnership working is popular amongst almost all funders at the moment and archive services are in a strong position to contribute their knowledge, experience and source material to collaborative projects. Many funders provide e-bulletins that you can sign up to to receive news about forthcoming calls. Even if your archive service is not able to apply directly for the funding available, it is useful to know which themes are being funded so that you can target your approach to higher education institutions that may be interested in working on projects with you.

As a first port of call for funding advice and to navigate funding opportunities, including those available to support collaborative working with HEIs, contact the Archive Sector Development Team at The National Archives, [asd@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:asd@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

## **5 Recording activities and capturing impact**

The different motivations for collaboration between the archive and HE sectors are reflected in differences in the way the two sectors measure the success of their activities. Understanding how each sector records and evaluates their activities will help partners to plan for the collection of appropriate data at the outset of collaborations and provide mutual support to one another in the way that they promote their joint work.

### **5.1 Why is it important to understand the difference in the way that activities are measured and assessed?**

When resources are limited it is particularly important to be able to report on the results of investment and to be able to make a strong, evidenced argument for future investment. This is common to both archive services and HEIs.

It is important to understand the differences in the way that activities are recorded and assessed because they reveal a great deal about what the two sectors need to demonstrate (or achieve) through their collaborative work. Perhaps the biggest single difference in approach is that archive services often choose to measure their activities as a way of benchmarking performance and demonstrating value for money. Whereas HEIs are required to have their performance assessed as part of the basis on which funding is allocated through the higher education funding councils, and are regularly surveyed as a mechanism of ensuring accountability for the public funds distributed to them. These surveys have a significant influence on the quality of staff and students attracted to an institution.

This guide looks in turn at the methods of assessment used by the archive sector and the HE sector and suggests where there is common ground between the two sectors.

### **5.2 What do archive services measure?**

Archive services have a tradition of recording outputs quantitatively and often report on key statistics such as those required for the archive service accreditation standard (see Figure 2

below), which have themselves been designed to align to the **CIPFA statistics**<sup>20</sup> completed by many archive services.

This type of data is relatively easy to collect but does rely on conscientious and regular recording of information. It is useful because it can be used to benchmark or compare activity against other similar services, it can be used to analyse trends when collected repeatedly, it can be used as an indicator of performance, it can be used to support arguments made about cost effectiveness and value for money, and it can be used for forward planning. It is often used to report at management meetings or in annual reports where short and succinct snapshots of activity are valuable.

Figure 2. Guidance for measuring the public and other use of collections (from the Archive Service Accreditation Guidance, p. 9-10)

<b>Use of resources</b>	<b>Guidance</b>
1 Total number of visitors of all kinds to site in the last year	
2 Of visitors included above, how many were using the archival resources for their own study?	Count readers only once a day; Exclude visiting groups, guided tours which belong in question 5
3 Number of items produced in the last year	Calculate according to the method usually employed by the service (unit of production whatever size); include only archival documents. Please indicate the method of calculation used.
4 Number of appearances of exhibitions in the last year	Include all sizes of displays/exhibition and all appearances new or repeat
5 Number of learning events held in- house in the last year	Include all events held on own premises and branch offices, including visiting groups and guided tours

<sup>20</sup> CIPFA (The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy)

6	Number of learning events held outside in the last year	Include events held at libraries, town centres, museums, fairs etc.
7	Total attendance of learning events in the last year	Total of attendance at events noted under 5&6
8	Enquiries received by post, email and telephone in the last year	On or related to documentary holdings, requiring an answer and originating outside the archive service's parent body
9	Estimated number of visits to the network resources (website) in the last year	A visit is defined as a session of activity/series of one or more page impressions, served to one user, to the archive website. A unique visitor is determined by the IP address or cookie. The session is deemed to end when there is a lengthy gap of usage between successive page impressions for that user. An example of a lengthy gap would be a gap of at least 30 minutes. Count one visit per visitor session. A2A/Archives Hub etc. visits should be excluded.
10	Estimated number of page impressions and user visits to office's online research resources hosted by commercial providers in the last year	This question will not apply to internal figures
11	Estimated number of page impressions and user visits to the archive service's online catalogues in the last year	

Archive services may complement this type of statistical information by taking part in the Public Services Quality Group<sup>21</sup> surveys such as the 'Survey of Visitors to UK Archives' (conducted every 18 months through CIPFA) and the 'Survey of Distance Users of Enquiry Services'. Both surveys gather information about why people visit/use archives, reveal information about visitors/users and record information about their satisfaction with services.

Further benchmarking of archives is available through the 'Taking Part' survey<sup>22</sup>, a National Statistic produced by the Department for Culture Media and Sport that provides evidence of participation in the cultural sector.

This high-level, generic statistical information is useful and beneficial in the context of the archive sector, but is very different to the measures used by HEIs and therefore of limited value when engaging academics and HEIs in an understanding of the value of an archive service's activities.

## 5.2 What do HEIs measure?

The Higher Education sector measures (or is measured against) three main areas: accountability for the way that it spends public money, the quality of its research and student satisfaction.

5.2.1 **Annual accountability returns** are required from HEIs by the higher education funding councils to demonstrate public accountability for funding and cover operational aspects of the performance of HEIs such as financial performance and governance.

5.2.2 **The Research Excellence Framework (REF)** is the system for assessing the quality of research in UK higher education institutions. It has a major impact on research rankings and funding allocations for higher education institutions and is therefore of critical importance to them. There are three elements to the REF assessment: outputs, impact and environment. A short description of the REF together with a link to further information is available in the *Key terms, concepts and resources* section.

Research outputs account for the largest component of the assessment (65%) and so this is what individual academics and HEIs are most focussed on. The REF document Assessment

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<sup>21</sup> Public Services Quality Group of the Archives and Records Association, available at: [www.archives.org.uk/ara-in-action/publications/journal-of-the-ara-sp-1111397493.html](http://www.archives.org.uk/ara-in-action/publications/journal-of-the-ara-sp-1111397493.html)

<sup>22</sup> Taking Part, available at: [www.gov.uk/government/collections/taking-part](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/taking-part)

framework and guidance on submissions describes research outputs as follows: “In addition to printed academic work, research outputs may include, but are not limited to: new materials, devices, images, artefacts, products and buildings; confidential or technical reports; intellectual property, whether in patents or other forms; performances, exhibits or events; work published in non-print media.” (p. 22 para.106). These outputs, therefore, are what HEIs are looking to produce through their research and by extension, any collaborative research project with archive services.

The inclusion of impact in the evaluation of higher education research is a step to enable HEIs to demonstrate wider accountability for the public money they receive for funding research, particularly in terms of the economic and societal benefits of research. Research Councils UK (RCUK) has produced a suite of guidance around ‘**Pathways to Impact**’ that explains how they define impact, why they consider it to be important and provides examples of case studies that demonstrate impact. One of the most useful sections for archive practitioners to read is ‘What do I need to write within my application?’ ([www.rcuk.ac.uk/ke/impacts/Guidance/](http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/ke/impacts/Guidance/)), which clearly shows how HEIs are expected to articulate impact when bidding for funding.

The guidance is useful because it shows where archive services can contribute to the impact goals of HEIs. Understanding this process and the opportunities that exist for archive services to enhance the work of HEIs in this area is essential for archives to fully benefit from research council funded archive-HE collaborations.

Archive services, even those located within HEIs can’t contribute directly to the REF, but examples of their work can be included in the impact case studies that are submitted by HEIs as part of their REF submissions.

One of the challenges for archive services is to ensure that their contribution to collaborative work is visible in the way that academic work is published and assessed so that they gain profile for the collections and the organisation. Citation is an important mechanism through which academic sources are credited. Counting the number of times an author, article (or other source) is cited is seen as a measure of the impact of the source, particularly in STEM subjects. The importance of the journal in which an article is published (the journal ranking) also carries weight. Archive services should provide clear guidance on how to reference source material and how to reference their organisation so that it is cited consistently. The research supporting this guidance

document suggests that the archive sector does not commonly use bibliometrics to analyse academic literature. Investigating some of the bibliometric tools that are available to track citations would provide a mechanism for tracking and collating academic access to archives. For example, one archive service uses the 'My Citations' service provided by Google Scholar to measure how often their organisation is referred to in academic works.

**5.2.3 The National Student Survey** gathers students' opinions on the quality of their courses. Again, the purpose is to contribute to public accountability for public funding but the survey is also used by students to help inform their choice of university, and by HEIs not only in their publicity material to attract students but also as a reflective or improvement mechanism to enhance student experience.

### **5.3 Evaluating collaborative activities: finding common ground**

When planning your approach to evaluating collaborative activities you need to be clear about what you are setting out to achieve through the collaboration (the aims and objectives), what indicators (or information) you need to collect to show that progress is being made against achieving those objectives, and how you will use the information you collect (for example, the audience to which you are reporting).

The work that archive services do to evaluate **public engagement** or learning activities is likely to resonate much more strongly with HEIs than the collection of statistical data. Indeed, you may find that your experience of evaluation of public engagement and learning is one of the strengths that you can contribute to a collaborative project that is highly attractive to an HEI.

If you are not familiar with **evaluation** techniques, a number of organisations provide useful guidance and toolkits, including: the Heritage Lottery Fund, Inspiring Learning, and Research Councils UK (see key terms, concepts and resources for links). The techniques are commonly applied to understanding areas such as learning, enjoyment and skills development.

The assessment of the **impact** of activities goes further than evaluating outcomes. The significant difference is that impact describes the broader or longer-term effects of activities and outcomes, normally on people but sometimes also on policy areas.

Key features of 'impact' is that it is:

- Long-term
- Difficult to assess
- Surprising and unpredictable

A great deal of work has been done recently on impact assessment, and there are many different types of impact assessments that can be undertaken (e.g. economic impact assessments, social impact assessments). A good summary of different methods of impact assessment is presented in Simon Tanner as part of his research into, and development of, the Balanced Value Impact Model for digital resources<sup>23</sup>.

Knowledge of both evaluation techniques and impact assessment methodologies will help you to talk to academics in a common language. If you are able to explain what the activities you are engaged in achieve and to whose benefit, and are able to understand what academics are seeking to achieve through their research activities at the outset of a project, you should be able to develop mutually beneficial methods of recording the activities and capturing impact that can be used to demonstrate the success of the collaboration to multiple stakeholders.

The following case study from Durham University provides an example of how the skills and experience of the library and heritage collections team, which came to light through a high-profile university project, have since benefitted the work of academic colleagues when demonstrating the impact of their research activities.

### **Case study 7**

#### **Durham University and Durham University Library and Heritage Collections: using 'impact' to raise the profile of heritage collections**

Durham University was the leading partner in the project to exhibit the Lindisfarne Gospels at Palace Green Library in 2013. The project was a great success, resulting in 100,000 visits to the exhibition, over 20,000 children participating in learning

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<sup>23</sup> Tanner, S. (2012) *Measuring the Impact of Digital Resources: The Balanced Value Impact Model*. King's College London, October 2012. Available at: [www.kdcs.kcl.ac.uk/innovation/impact.html](http://www.kdcs.kcl.ac.uk/innovation/impact.html)

sessions and workshops and 135,000 people reached through the wider engagement programme.

Staff in the Library and Heritage Collections team have used their experience of this project to raise the profile of their work, notably around outreach, learning and engagement and how this can support academic requirements to demonstrate 'impact' as part of the REF.

### **What happened?**

- The Lindisfarne project received HLF funding which paid for the extra staff needed for the ambitious engagement programme run during the project, and meant that the activities that formed part of the programme could be run for free. The experience gained through the project has had a lasting impact on the profile of the Library and Heritage Collections team which they are using to continue to raise the profile of their work amongst academics in the University.
- Following the Lindisfarne project a working group with academics from Arts, Humanities and Social Science subjects was set up to look at how heritage collections can be used in teaching and research.
- The working group puts the message out about the work of the Heritage Collections team (for example, running display classes, supporting REF case studies, using research in outreach and engagement work, training academics in outreach and engagement) and has produced a leaflet to go to all academics.
- Now all exhibitions are accompanied by an outreach programme. Heritage Collections staff meet with academics to establish what their research is and the key messages they want to get to their key audiences. From there they work together on a joint learning proposal which is then trialled under the supervision of the academic who gives feedback.
- Identifying the academic's key message is critical for REF so that the understanding of knowledge can be assessed before and after each learning or outreach session.

### What worked well?

- Staff in the learning team don't specialise according to type of collection so have become adept at using all types of materials. This has led to greater mixed use of collections to support engagement activities and has led to professional staff thinking more creatively about the way that collections can be used to support teaching, learning and research.
- The working group means that communication from the Heritage Collections team is carried out jointly with academics and using their experience of what their academic colleagues need and value.
- The contribution to the 2013 REF exercise has meant that the team is currently involved in four REF case studies for 2020.
- The success of the schools programme continued after the HLF-funded period. A small amount is charged for the schools programme and the increase in demand for the programme (previously around 12,000 children per year, now around 20,300) has increased the income stream and funded the additional staff needed to cover the extra demand.

## 5.4 Using collaboration for profile-raising

Raising the profile of archive collections and archive services was one of the benefits of collaboration most frequently cited by archive practitioners in the course of this research. Yet academics identify lack of access to information about archive services and their content as a stumbling block to further use.

It is therefore worth thinking about how you can raise the profile of your archive service to the higher education sector both in advance of collaborative working and as a result of successful collaborations.

This checklist has been compiled from conversations with archive practitioners and academics:

- Include information about collections in aggregated catalogues and resources such as **Discovery** and the **Archives Hub** where possible.

- Include information about the variety of material held by the archive service on your website and provide contact details for professional staff who can give greater insight to the collections and their potential for research.
- Include information about how to access collection material held by your archive service on your website, for example whether appointments are needed, reader registration requirements etc.
- Encourage your academic users to become advocates for your archive service and the collections.
- Provide guidelines on how to cite collection material in research and how to refer to your archive service (in an effort to standardise how your organisation is referred to in citation indices).
- Ask academics to let you know about publications that arise from research on the collections and if possible, to provide the archive service with a copy of any publication for the collection.
- Collect information in quantitative and qualitative form and re-use it in a variety of different contexts from management reporting to public engagement.
- Investigate the use of bibliographic data and citation tracking tools as a method of tracking the use of collection material (or references to the archive service) by academics, such as Google Scholar or **JSTOR data for research**.
- Use social media and online tools to promote your collaborative working and any opportunities that you are keen to pursue.

These specific pointers can be reinforced through your general approach to communications.

The TNA has produced two guidance notes that support the promotion and use of archive services and collections which may be of use to you:

- ***Developing access and participation***  
([www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/archives/developing-access-and-participation.pdf](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/archives/developing-access-and-participation.pdf)) and,
- ***Effective communications: raising the profile of your archive service***  
([www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/archives/effective-communications.pdf](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/archives/effective-communications.pdf))

Both these guidance notes provide information that will be useful at the outset of collaborative working (e.g. to support the development of external contacts or to gain institutional support for collaborative working) as well as to help you plan how you communicate the success of your collaborations and your future ambitions.

Many contributors to this guidance note reported a 'virtuous circle' as a result of their collaborative working, with use of the collections and new audiences growing as a result of their developing reputation for working with higher education institutions.

## 6 Summary and ‘top tips’ for successful collaboration

The intention of this guidance document is to provide a practical resource that draws together existing experience of collaboration between archive services and HEIs so that a greater number of organisations are encouraged to work collaboratively.

The information included in the guidance comes from both the archive sector and the HE sector, although the primary audience for the document is archive practitioners. The archive sector is well-accustomed to working in collaboration with a range of partners and so this document identified elements that are distinct to working with HEIs such as different motivations for research, institutional constraints and opportunities, and the way in which the value of activities is assessed.

The guidance concludes with the ten ‘top tips’ for successful collaboration as recommended by contributors.

1. Be confident about getting what you need from collaboration. Act as an equal partner and not as a service provider.
2. Establishing good personal contacts is critical at the early stages of forming a collaboration: do not be afraid to develop new contacts and take frequent opportunities to talk about your archive services, its collections and work.
3. Develop contacts with university librarians and archivists as ‘brokers’ for your professional expertise and collections.
4. Explore whether you can work in partnership with other local organisations to present a group ‘archive and special collections offer’ to local higher education institutions.
5. Make a written record of the things that you and your partner organisation agree and commit to as part of the collaboration. Make sure this is shared after each meeting or discussion so that you both have a common understanding of goals and responsibilities at all stages.
6. Identify (and put a cost against) the time that goes into collaborations, either at the outset as part of the planning process, or as part of your project monitoring so that you can articulate the

value of your contribution to the collaboration and make the case for financial support for future collaborations.

7. Do not underestimate students and the value that they can bring, particularly in terms of new approaches to research and working practices.

8. Collaborative working is demanding. Shared vision, shared commitment and strong institutional support are essential criteria for success.

9. Don't wait to be asked to report the successes of your work: seek out opportunities to communicate them widely.

10. Know your value and have a go!

## **Appendix: Key terms, concepts and resources**

### **1 Key terms and concepts referred to in the guidance**

#### **Academia.edu**

An online platform that allows academics to share research papers, monitor the impact of their research and track the research of academics they follow. It provides profiles of individual researchers, including their research interests and it facilitates communication between academics.

<https://www.academia.edu>

#### **Archive sector accreditation**

Archive Service Accreditation is the new UK wide standard scheme for archive services, replacing The National Archives' Standard for Record Repositories and its self-assessment programme for local authority archives in England and Wales. The standard defines good practice and identifies agreed standards, thereby encouraging and supporting development. The scheme offers a badge of external recognition and endorsement of their service.

[www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/accreditation.htm](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/accreditation.htm)

#### **Archives Hub**

The Archives Hub is an online gateway to the descriptions of archives held in over 220 UK repositories, such as universities, company archives and local history centres deemed to be of value to the UK education and research communities. Descriptions on the Hub vary in the level of depth provided. It generally represents the types of collections you find within higher education, local authority, business and specialist repositories, and includes the archives of people, such as writers, scientists, artists, and politicians, the archives of corporate and institutional bodies such as banks, breweries, universities, manufacturers and theatres, the archives of groups and societies such as charities, pressure groups and religious groups, and the archives of family estates.

[www.archiveshub.ac.uk](http://www.archiveshub.ac.uk)

## **CIPFA (The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) statistics**

CIPFA statistics and research provide information on a range of issues such as service usage, service costs, customer satisfaction and policy development across a range of public sector services, including public libraries and archive services.

[www.cipfastats.net/cipfastats/](http://www.cipfastats.net/cipfastats/)

## **Collaborative Doctoral Awards**

Collaborative Doctoral Awards (CDAs) are intended to encourage and develop collaboration between Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and non-HEI organisations and businesses, including museums and arts organisations. They provide access to resources and materials, knowledge and expertise that may not otherwise have been available and also provide social, cultural and economic benefits to wider society.

[www.ahrc.ac.uk/Funding-Opportunities/Pages/Collaborative-Doctoral-Awards.aspx](http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/Funding-Opportunities/Pages/Collaborative-Doctoral-Awards.aspx)

## **Collaborative Doctoral Partnerships**

The Collaborative Doctoral Partnership (CDPs) scheme is intended to give non-HEI partners or consortia the opportunity to apply for PhD studentships. Museums, galleries, libraries and archives can apply to AHRC in collaboration with a UK university or AHRC-recognised Independent Research Organisation.

[www.ahrc.ac.uk/Funding-Opportunities/Pages/Collaborative-Doctoral-Awards.aspx](http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/Funding-Opportunities/Pages/Collaborative-Doctoral-Awards.aspx)

## **Digital Humanities**

Digital Humanities is a relatively new field of research, and teaching, combining methodologies from the humanities and social sciences with tools provided by computing. Advanced technology-related methods such as text mining, data mining, data visualization and information retrieval are used in arts and humanities research to analyse born-digital and digitised content.

Links to organisations:

**Alliance of Digital Humanities Organizations** <http://adho.org>

**DH Commons** <http://dhcommons.org/about> (describes itself as an online hub focused on matching digital humanities projects seeking assistance with scholars interested in project collaboration)

**Digital Humanities at Oxford** <http://digital.humanities.ox.ac.uk> (particularly the 'support' section)

**European Association for Digital Humanities** <http://eadh.org/index.html>

**King's College London Digital Humanities Department**

[www.kcl.ac.uk/artshums/depts/ddh/index.aspx](http://www.kcl.ac.uk/artshums/depts/ddh/index.aspx)

**Professor Melissa Terras' blog** <http://melissaterras.blogspot.co.uk/2014/05/inaugural-lecture-decade-in-digital.html> (Professor of Digital Humanities, University College London)

**UCL Centre for Digital Humanities** <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/dh>

## **Discovery (TNA)**

Discovery is The National Archives' catalogue, holding more than 32 million records relating to Britain and British history held at The National Archives, around 2,500 archives and institutions across the UK, and some archives and institutions abroad. It includes data from The National Register of Archives and Access to Archives (A2A) which both closed in 2014, the ARCHON Directory and Manorial Documents Register and extensive research guidance.

<http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk>

<http://nationalarchives.gov.uk/records/atoz/>

## **Evaluation**

There are a number of tools available to help you to understand and carry out evaluations of activities. A selection is listed below:

Heritage Lottery Fund guide to measuring outputs, evaluating outcomes and assessing impact.

[www.hlf.org.uk/evaluation-guidance](http://www.hlf.org.uk/evaluation-guidance)

Inspiring Learning: an improvement framework for museums, libraries and archives.

A self-help improvement framework for museums, libraries and archives, enabling organisations to assess strengths and plan improvements, improve strategic and operational performance, and provide evidence of the impact of activities through generic learning and generic social outcomes (GLOs and GSOs). The website includes useful pointers and templates for collecting both quantitative and qualitative data but it is worth remembering that the GSOs were developed in a particular policy context so you may need to update them.

[www.inspiringlearningforall.gov.uk](http://www.inspiringlearningforall.gov.uk)

Research Councils guide for researchers seeking to evaluate public engagement activities, such as exhibitions, events, public lectures and activities for schools and teachers.

[www.rcuk.ac.uk/Publications/policy/Evaluation/](http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/Publications/policy/Evaluation/)

## **Impact**

Rather than measuring outputs or evaluating outcomes based on targets, impact evaluation assesses the societal or economic benefited (or changes) that can be attributed to a particular project, policy or activity.

Simon Tanner provides a useful overview of impact assessment for cultural heritage organisations in his paper “Measuring the impact of digital resources: The balanced value impact model” alongside the description of the model itself and how to apply it.

[www.kdcs.kcl.ac.uk/fileadmin/documents/pubs/BalancedValueImpactModel\\_SimonTanner\\_October2012.pdf](http://www.kdcs.kcl.ac.uk/fileadmin/documents/pubs/BalancedValueImpactModel_SimonTanner_October2012.pdf)

## **JiscMail**

A free service that enables groups of individuals to communicate and discuss education, research, and other professional issues using email discussion lists. It includes lists for archivists and librarians, as well as academics and students. Find a list in your field of interest at:

[www.jiscmail.ac.uk/groups/](http://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/groups/)

## **JSTOR data for research**

An example of a bibliometric tool for exploring scholarly journal literature (in this case, literature on JSTOR). The category search terms do not make specific provision for entering (or searching) under holding organisation (e.g. archive service) but the resource gives an indication of the data that such tools make available.

<http://dfr.jstor.org/>

## **LinkedIn**

A social media platform widely used by individuals from all professional spheres. In addition to providing individual profiles and enabling connections between individuals, LinkedIn provides a platform for online discussion forums, for example it has discussion groups for 'archives professionals' and for 'historians, librarians and archivists'.

<https://www.linkedin.com>

## **Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs)**

A memorandum of understanding (MoU) is an agreement between two or more parties, which commits them to working closely together to support each other's aims in general, or in relation to particular activities. It is often used in cases where parties either do not imply a legal commitment or in situations where the parties cannot create a legally enforceable agreement. Whether or not a document constitutes a binding contract depends only on the presence or absence of well-defined legal elements in the text proper of the document.

More information can be found at;

[www.artscouncil.org.uk/what-we-do/collaboration-and-partnerships/](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/what-we-do/collaboration-and-partnerships/)

and as part of the suite of guidance available from the Share Academy at:

[www.londonmusemsgroup.org/share-academy/](http://www.londonmusemsgroup.org/share-academy/) (you need to register for a free login to access the resources).

## **National Student Survey**

Commissioned by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) and run by Ipsos MORI, this annual survey collects opinions from final year undergraduates on the quality of their Higher Education experience. The survey's main purpose is to help students choose which institutions to study at. It provides data on students' satisfaction with teaching, assessment and feedback, academic support, organisation and management, learning resources, personal development and overall satisfaction.

The results are frequently widely publicised in the media and they often help to drive improvements at HEIs.

<http://www.hefce.ac.uk/whatwedo/lt/publicinfo/nss/>

<http://www.thestudentsurvey.com>

## **Partnership agreements**

Partnership agreements can provide a useful framework for clarifying how organisations will work together in collaboration.

The Heritage Lottery Fund provides guidance on partnership agreements to support one of its funding streams. The document clarifies relationships and expectations for recipients of funding but may still be a useful general reference. A template partnership agreement is provided as appendix 1 of the following guidance document:

[www.hlf.org.uk/looking-funding/our-grant-programmes/young-roots](http://www.hlf.org.uk/looking-funding/our-grant-programmes/young-roots)

Advice on developing and maintaining partnerships can be found at:

[www.hlf.org.uk/forum/developing-and-maintaining-partnerships](http://www.hlf.org.uk/forum/developing-and-maintaining-partnerships)

The Arts & Humanities Research Council (AHRC) also provides guidance on partnership agreements.

For example, the guidance to support Collaborative Doctoral Awards identifies what should go into a partnership agreement (from CDA guidance) [http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/Funding-Opportunities/Documents/CDA\\_Scheme\\_Guide\\_2015.pdf](http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/Funding-Opportunities/Documents/CDA_Scheme_Guide_2015.pdf)

And the following link provides more general guidance on partnership working:

<http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/News-and-Events/Watch-and-Listen/Pages/Partnership-Working-in-the-Arts-and-Humanities.aspx>

## Pathways to impact

Guidance and resources for completing the Research Councils' Je-S application form and understanding the pathways towards economic and societal impacts.

[www.rcuk.ac.uk/ke/impacts/](http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/ke/impacts/)

## **Piirus.com**

Piirus.com is an online platform enabling researchers to connect with other researchers. It helps researchers to make contact contacts or find collaborators; it can be searched for users with particular interests, expertise or techniques.

You need to have an academic email address to sign up.

<https://www.piirus.com>

## **Public engagement**

Public engagement describes the ways in which the activity and benefits of research can be shared with the public, by definition a two-way process. In this way it differs from outreach which can be interpreted as a one-directional activity.

The National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement (NCCPE) helps inspire and support universities to engage with the public, providing training, consultancy and a variety of resources, including the EDGE public engagement self-assessment tool.

[www.publicengagement.ac.uk](http://www.publicengagement.ac.uk)

## Research Excellence Framework (REF)

The REF is the new system for assessing the quality of research in UK Higher Education Institutions, which has replaced the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE). Through the REF, expert panels assess the academic excellence of research, as well as the impact of research beyond academia. The results are used to determine how public funding for research is allocated (from 2015-16).

The results of the first round of assessments (2014) will not be available until 2015 and so it is difficult to provide accurate guidance as to what constitutes 'good' data for REF assessments at present.

[www.ref.ac.uk](http://www.ref.ac.uk)

## ResearchGate

Popular amongst scientists, ResearchGate is an online platform that connects researchers and makes it easy for them to share and access scientific output, knowledge and expertise.

<http://www.researchgate.net>

## 2 Other useful resources

### Archon

The ARCHON Directory listed record repositories in the United Kingdom and overseas with substantial collections of manuscripts noted under the indexes to the **National Register of Archives**. Data has now been integrated into **Discovery**.

<http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-homeAIM25> (**Archives in London and the M25 area**)

Electronic access to collection level descriptions of the archives of over 100 higher education institutions, learned societies, cultural organisations and livery companies within the greater London area. It does not provide item-level descriptions.

[www.aim25.ac.uk](http://www.aim25.ac.uk)

## **Campaign for Voluntary Sector Archives**

The Campaign for Voluntary Sector Archives raises awareness of the importance of voluntary sector archives as strategic assets for governance, corporate identity, accountability and research, and as part of the sector's wider public benefit responsibility. It encourages all charities, voluntary organisations, trusts and foundations to take responsibility for their archives by providing for their management, preservation, use and promotion. It has produced two pieces of draft guidance for voluntary sector organisations that own or look after archives.

[www.voluntarysectorarchives.org.uk](http://www.voluntarysectorarchives.org.uk)

## **Gateway to Research**

A system developed by Research Councils UK (RCUK) to enable users to search and analyse information about publicly funded research. It provides information about current research projects and the outcomes of past projects.

You may find it a useful resource to identify which organisations are carrying out research in fields relevant to collections in your archive service, or to find out which organisations have carried out research based on archive collections.

<http://gtr.rcuk.ac.uk>

## **Historical Association**

The UK National Charity for History, which provides training and development resources for primary and secondary school history teachers. It works with heritage and public history bodies through the 'Campaign for History' and can provide useful communication channels and engagement opportunities for archive services and individuals seeking to make contact with academics and researchers.

[www.history.org.uk](http://www.history.org.uk)

## **Institute of Historical Research (IHR)**

The IHR offers a range of onsite and remote services that promote and facilitate excellence in historical research, teaching and scholarship in the UK, by means of its library, seminars,

conferences, fellowships, training, and consultancy. It provides a portal for the exchange of ideas and information and current developments in historical scholarship. It is a good source of information on current events and conferences of interest to the academic community of historians and it provides communication channels such as its blog.

[www.history.ac.uk](http://www.history.ac.uk)

### **MASC25: Mapping access to Special Collections in the London Region**

MASC25 is an online resource guide, which brings together collection level descriptions of printed special collections in libraries within the Greater London region. The database complements other resource mapping initiatives, such as AIM25 for archives. It does not provide item-level descriptions.

[www.masc25.ac.uk](http://www.masc25.ac.uk)

### **National Register of Archives (NRA)**

The NRA contained information on the nature and location of manuscripts and historical records that relate to British history. The service closed in 2014, and the data has now been integrated into **Discovery**.

<http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk>

### **Share Academy**

Share Academy is a partnership between University College London, University of the Arts London and the London Museums Group. Its aim is to build sustainable and mutually beneficial relationships between the higher education sector and specialist museums in London.

Its website includes a range of resources that will be of interest to archive services seeking to work with the HE sector including the following advice documents:

- Initiating cross-sector partnerships
- How to plan collaborative projects
- Arranging successful student internships
- Memorandum of understanding guidance
- Guidance on project planning and management

<http://www.londonmusemsgroup.org/share-academy/>

### **Vitae Research Development Framework**

Vitae works all over the world in partnership with researchers, higher education institutions, research organisations, research funders and other organisations with a stake in realising the potential of researchers, both championing the needs of researchers and demonstrating their impact on economies and society. It is supported by Research Councils UK (RCUK) and the UK Higher Education funding bodies. The Vitae Researcher Development Framework (RDF) is a professional development resource designed to help researchers identify the skills and experience needed to acquire and chart professional development progress.

[www.vitae.ac.uk/researchers-professional-development/about-the-vitae-researcher-development-framework](http://www.vitae.ac.uk/researchers-professional-development/about-the-vitae-researcher-development-framework)

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National Railway Museum

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Portsmouth History Centre

Richard Burton Archive, Swansea University

Share Academy

Staffordshire Record Office

The Hive

The Institute of Education

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