



TAPER
TUFTS ACCESSIONING PROGRAM FOR ELECTRONIC RECORDS
National Historical Publications and Records Administration
Electronic Records Project: Program Expansion Project

Digital Collections and Archives
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Application: Project Summary May 31, 2007

Project Purpose and Goals

The Digital Collections and Archives (DCA) of Tufts University is applying for a three-year NHPRC electronic records Program Expansion Project grant to support the Tufts Accessioning Program for Electronic Records (TAPER). The TAPER Project will make key contributions to systematizing and semi-automating the DCA's process for accessioning electronic records, and will play a crucial role in the DCA's effort to further develop its program of preserving and making accessible electronic archival records. Although the DCA has implemented a Fedora-based repository for managing and preserving electronic records along with teaching and research digital objects, its current process for accessioning electronic records needs improvement and systemization to meet the growing demand for preserving electronic records that document the activities of Tufts and other institutions served by the DCA. In order to continue its development of a sustainable electronic records preservation program, the DCA needs to have a semi-automated and scaleable transfer process that richly documents the records and their terms of transfer.

The need to systematize the DCA's ingest process has become increasingly pressing for the DCA because Tufts' senior leadership recently approved the University Records Policy and Guidelines for Managing University Records. The Policy and Guidelines should increase faculty and staff's awareness about properly managing electronic records and transferring records with enduring value to the DCA. The DCA anticipates a significant increase in the number of electronic records people will want to transfer to the DCA. An accessioning process that can meet this increased demand is critical to the success of the DCA's electronic records program.



The TAPER Project will focus on developing and implementing Submission Agreements that would richly and systematically document accessioned records and the terms of their transfer. The Submission Agreements would be based on the work the DCA undertook with Yale University on an NHPRC electronic records research grant, “Fedora and the Preservation of University Records” (2004-083). One of the main deliverables of the project was the Ingest Guide, which describes the steps and tools needed to have a scalable and trustworthy process for ingesting records into a preservation system. The Submission Agreement is a core component of this trustworthy ingest process, documenting the scope and terms of transfer and providing the framework for semi-automating an archives’ electronic records processing work.

The TAPER Project would enable the DCA to achieve two main goals:

1. Facilitate the regular and systematic transfer of archival electronic records from records creators to the DCA by making it easier for creators to transfer records and easier for the DCA to manage incoming records.
2. Provide a structure for capturing the necessary documentation for archival electronic records. This documentation will help the DCA regularize and semi-automate its preservation decisions and processing of electronic records.

Project’s Significance to the NHPRC’s Programs and Goals

The TAPER Project would support the NHPRC’s goal of supporting institutions in meeting the challenges of preserving and managing electronic documentation. The TAPER Project would support the DCA’s efforts to systematically and comprehensively accession, preserve, and make appropriately available the electronic records of enduring value that document the activities of Tufts University and other organizations, mostly in the fields of environmental stewardship, international development, and active citizenship, that the DCA serves. The TAPER Project would also serve as a model for other archives managing electronic records.

Plan of Work

Task One: *Months 1-6*

Write Submission Agreement elements set and use cases. Implement human-readable Submission Agreements.



Task Two: *Months 7-18*

Develop and implement Submission Agreement XML Schema for machine-readable Submission Agreements.

Task Three: *Months 16-24*

Develop and implement Submission Agreement Builder tool. The tool allows records creators and the DCA to add data to a Submission Agreement in stages starting shortly after initial contact, throughout the appraisal process, and finishing just ahead of the actual transfer.

Task Four: *Months 19-30*

Develop and implement a Submission Agreement content model. The content model would facilitate the DCA’s management of its electronic Submission Agreements in its preservation repository.

Task Five: *Months 4-36*

Throughout the project, DCA staff will implement the deliverables created in Tasks One through Four. The DCA will integrate instructions for using Submission Agreements into the training program the DCA is currently developing.

Project Deliverables

The DCA will produce the following project deliverables and disseminate them on a project website and describe them and the project at conferences and in publications:

1. Submission Agreement XML schema
2. Submission Agreement Builder tool
3. Submission Agreement content model
4. Accessioning procedures that incorporate the Submission Agreement
5. Training materials on managing records (including electronic) that include information on transferring records to the DCA using Submission Agreements.

Project Personnel

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Position to be Filled

Project Developer
Tufts University

Performance Objectives

- The DCA will document all of its records accessions with Submission Agreements.
- The DCA will preserve its Submission Agreements in its preservation repository.
- The DCA will double its current average annual accession of records to 80 accessions per year. Half of those accessions (40 accessions per year) will include electronic records.
- The DCA will produce a Submission Agreement XML schema, a tool for generating Submission Agreements, and a Submission Agreement content model.