



The National Archives

Academic Strategy for The National Archives

Goal

To promote The National Archives' unique resources and services in order to engage new and existing academic audiences and support and enhance their experience online and on-site; and to broaden the scope and depth of academic research that The National Archives can facilitate.

Scope

In setting out a formal framework for the Academic Strategy for The National Archives, the academic audience we will target will comprise postgraduate students, post-doctoral researchers, and university teaching staff. However its outcomes will also support and engage undergraduates, further education students and the interested wider community.

Aims

- To identify and promote the sources of information of potential research value to academics from a wide range of disciplines that come within the remit of The National Archives
- To nurture and build on existing relationships with the academic sector in a proactive and responsive way both in order to enhance our own knowledge and expertise and to offer relevant and timely services
- To reinforce academic knowledge and expertise within The National Archives to strengthen our capacity and ability to secure external funding in support of this strategy and better to develop its role as an Independent Research Organisation

Objectives

- To create a new and mutually beneficial dialogue with representatives of a broad range of academic disciplines in the arts, humanities and sciences so as to facilitate The National Archives' response to their needs and their enhancement of our resources
- To develop a managed programme for matching academic audiences with resources of value to their specific discipline, taking into account their many disparate interests and research requirements, in line with The National Archives' Vision and business plans
- To set up a robust network for communication and consultation that can support both the programme and dialogue described above using such user-generated methods of communication as the *Your Archives* wiki; hosting and attending events and user forums; project and funding collaboration; e-newsletters; and other web based initiatives

- To make best use of, and proactively develop, the extensive knowledge and expertise that resides in staff of The National Archives in pursuit of these objectives, and allied strategies and workstreams

Activities that develop these aims and objectives will be centred around The National Archives three Vision strands

<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/about/operate/plans.htm>

Lead and transform information management

- To explore with academics across disciplines techniques in data creation, storage, collection and selection, to enhance their understanding of the effect of these on research practice by establishing collaborative working relationships and gaining feedback on research requirements
- To engage academics in discussions about the issues surrounding access to digitised and born digital material so that they may contribute to decisions about the way it is presented and thus make best use of it for their research. Through knowledge transfer and comparable schemes deliver improved access and services
- To explore research methodologies in relation to the re-use of public sector information, ensuring good access to information and the potential to manipulate and extrapolate data from multiple sources resulting in value-added research
- To assist academic communities in using government data in situ so that this research area is more fully understood, and thus to allow findings to inform policies for information management, appraisal, preservation of and access to such data through pilot schemes and collaborative ventures

Guarantee the survival of today's information for tomorrow

- To work with academics across disciplines (historians, social scientists, and medical historians initially) with the aim of ensuring that the digital record is appraised, selected, preserved, and made accessible; working closely with The National Archives' collections strategy programme
- To ensure the contribution of the research community in selection and preservation policies in the non-digital arena, through consultation, and to publish the results and share findings
- To consider the impact of the digital record on research methodologies, and possible future research uses of preserved data, in order to ensure that these methodologies inform The National Archives' policies for preservation and provision of access

Bring history to life for everyone

- To consult with current and potential academic user groups in order to ascertain how services may be maintained and improved in line with The National Archives' Vision and available resources, and to publish findings and consequent actions
- To promote use among academics who do not exploit The National Archives' sources for their research; and to develop services and programmes accordingly by implementing the delivery of planned events

- To assist academics in the pursuit of external grant funding to enhance the use of The National Archives' resources by entering into a range of collaborative arrangements in support of identified projects
- To assess, in consultation with academics, the impact of digital technology on resource enhancement and knowledge transfer, and develop services and programmes that are responsive to findings