

Strategies for Advancing Hidden Collections Webinar 5

Overcoming project hurdles: Approaches to identifying and managing collection red flags

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See also: [Scenarios](#)

Notes and Chat History, Community Archives Project

Notes

Scenario:

Your institution is taking part in a community archiving project in collaboration with a community that has been historically under- and mis-represented in archives. Your institution hopes to build a lasting relationship with the community and engage it in preservation and use of the archives.

While the community understands the long-term value of their materials and wants to them to be preserved and accessible, they are also suspicious and wary of the institution. For example, some members of the community may want to scan and digitize their materials but do not necessarily want to deposit them with the institution, allow access, or provide detailed identifying metadata.

What ethical questions need to be addressed in relation to this community-based project?

- Ethically the institution is bound with the agreement with the community's decision (whether or not they want to digitize), and respect their decision, even if the institution wants to digitize and make the materials available on the Internet.
- Community may be dealing with own ethical issues, e.g. immigration concerns, therefore high empathy needed.

What strategies can be employed to proceed with this project in an ethical way?

- Work with the leaders of the community to establish open, honest communication and to determine a set of shared goals for the project.
- Gain as much trust as early as possible
- Get everything in writing and document all decisions

Chat History

Yvonne Ng: What ethical questions need to be addressed in relation to this community-based project? What strategies can be employed to proceed with this project in an ethical way?

Amanda Strobel Wise | Rock County Historical Society: Work with the leaders of the community to establish open, honest communication and to determine a set of shared goals for the project.

Allison Young: Well, without metadata, you can't really recall what something is, so what's the point of scanning it?

Dee Gallo: Gain as much trust as early as possible.

Katharine Rapkin: Strategy - encourage community members to contribute to project by volunteering as appropriate

Ricki Moskowitz: It's really important to listen to the community and not tell them what's best for their materials and history

Rhodes College: Maybe work with them to create their own repository that they can manage as they see most appropriate?

Robin Grunwald: Incremental steps - ease into the access

Sachiko Iwabuchi: Ethically the institution is bound with the agreement with the community's decision (whether or not they want to digitize), and respect their decision, even if the institution wants to digitize and make the materials available on the Internet.

Naomi Steinberger: work out a legal document outlining the rights of the community towards the materials

Melissa Anderson: clear documentation on what will be done and what level of access will be provided to said materials

University of Minnesota: Community may be dealing with own ethical issues, e.g. immigration concerns, therefore high empathy needed.

Ricki Moskowitz: If possible, hire folks from the community to work with your archives

Rhodes College: Make sure members of the community are instructed and informed about access so that they actually use it