

Section C: Digital Sustainability Plans

Module C3: File Formats & Metadata

Overview

The areas addressed by this module focus on creating work in stable, sustainable formats and also making sure that these formats, as well as the rest of your project, are well-documented. The file formats section makes recommendations for creating files in formats that will support long-term access. The metadata section prompts you to think even more broadly about documenting your project, including its socio-technical components and associated workflows.



30-45 min

Activity

As a group (if appropriate), read through the sustainability levels offered by this module and then determine:

- How high a priority this area is for your project;
- Your current level of sustainability practices;
- Your desired level of sustainability practices (as a goal to be achieved within the next *three years*);
- The resources and actions that will be required to meet your desired level.

Your current level may be a “Level 0” for these areas, and that is absolutely fine. It may even be the case that your *desired* level for a given area is “Level 0.” Keep in mind that very few projects need to be at Level 4, and that this is not necessarily the central goal. Depending upon the specific traits, objectives, and resources of your project, it is likely that you will have different desired levels of effort across many of the sustainability areas presented by the Socio-Technical Sustainability Roadmap. Please focus on choosing your levels of sustainability mindfully and in harmony with your project’s resources and desired longevity.

Project Name:

Date:

Module C3: File Formats & Metadata

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
File Formats	When possible, create files using a limited set of known open file formats	Maintain an inventory of all file formats used in your project	Routinely monitor your file formats for obsolescence issues	Perform format migrations, emulations, and other updating activities as needed

What is your desired level? Why?

0 1 2 3 4

How high a priority is reaching your desired level in this area? Why?

Low Medium High

What is your current level? Why?

0 1 2 3 4

What resources and actions are required to reach your desired level?

Project Name:

Date:

Module C3: File Formats & Metadata

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Metadata	Document your reliable sites of project documentation including a description of their contents Create and store descriptive metadata, such as title, abstract, keywords, or other information that is useful for discovery	Maintain an inventory of all file formats used in your project Maintain an inventory of file sizes for static files	Store administrative metadata, such as when files were created and with what technologies	Store transformative metadata, such as a log of how files have been altered over time Store standard preservation metadata

What is your desired level? Why?

0 1 2 3 4

How high a priority is reaching your desired level in this area? Why?

Low Medium High

What is your current level? Why?

0 1 2 3 4

What resources and actions are required to reach your desired level?