

Digital Scholarship and Open Strategies Unit 2024-25

Overview

The Digital Scholarship and Open Strategies unit enriches learning opportunities and advances research, scholarly and creative activity related to digital scholarship, open education, open publishing, web development, and asynchronous and online learning. Serving as the home for programs such as the Center for Digital Inquiry and Learning, the Open Access Publishing Fund, and the Think Open fellowship program, the unit fosters the infrastructure and expertise necessary to support and sustain the library's efforts in digital projects, services, and project management.

- DSOS Meeting notes, [DSOS Meetings 2024-25.docx](#)
- CDIL Lab Check In notes, [CDIL Lab Checkin Notes 2024-25.docx](#)
- CDIL Faculty Meeting notes, [CDIL faculty meetings fall 2024.docx](#)

Library KPIs:

- Digital Collections
- Research Information Management
- Web Properties
- Fellowships (Primary)
- Student Savings

Objectives:

Facilitate access to and preservation of unique collections and scholarly outputs (CDIL, digitization).

- Why:
 - The library has an important responsibility to steward and promote University of Idaho's unique collections and scholarship. Since these resources may not be formally published and are unavailable anywhere else, the Library serves as a hub to preserve and provide lasting access to users.
- How:
 - Improve digital archive storage to meet NDSA standards for Level 3 digital preservation.
 - Ensure the public and campus are made aware of new scholarly productions and digital collections when released.

- Ensure scholarly outputs and digital collections are easily discoverable, useable, and accessible.
- Success looks like:
 - Key faculty and staff are conversant with digital preservation standards and have documented practices to use digital preservation storage.
 - Regular updates promoting new digital collections and scholarly outputs are sent out via a variety of communication channels, leading to increased traffic to new content.
 - Web navigation and discovery of digital collection and digital scholarship is user friendly and meets accessibility guidelines.
- **Fall Updates:**
 - Unit members have worked with Spec and Digital Collection Team to facilitate digital preservation processes. We contributed to discussions on implementing Archive-It service for web archiving and developing policies for other born digital workflows. Access to the digital archive drive was updated and better documented. A step by step review based on NSDA standards has not yet been completed.
 - Some digital collection update and launch workflows were disrupted due to the departure of key staff over the summer (Klytie and Sarah). Significant effort went into rewriting all [Digital Collections documentation](#) to include step by step checklists for all processes to help coordinate activities while onboarding new members (over 50 commits to the documentation in this period). This has helped clarify work based in CDIL/DSOS vs Spec and establishes steps to better record data about activities in the unit. Going forward, our [launch checklist](#) is being followed to help improve communication of new collections and recorded in our tracking spreadsheet (2 collections completed the checklist this period). Andrew developed a new digital screen slideshow display for the Library living room area to highlight new and featured digital collections.
 - This period saw a complete overhaul of the Digital Collection templates and home page which brought more consistent branding, updated colors, and useability and accessibility improvements. Complete redeploying of all collections was necessary to prep the data used for our Search index.
 - We soft-launched our new Search app and deployed search to 111 of 115 eligible digital collections. This represented a huge investment of time for DSOS with application development, metadata fixes, collection template updates/fixes, and redeployment. Metadata for about 100 collections and 60,000 records were updated to ensure better consistency in our aggregated

fields. We also improved data about the collections for better reporting. The work helped grow confidence and skills of CDIL staff which is essential for ongoing digital collection and website maintenance.

- DSOS members have been evaluating the impact of new accessibility requirements and reviewing our existing web properties. In working towards accessibility goals, we continued a major project to create and deploy transcripts for all audio/video items in our collections, adding more than 230 new transcripts (only one collection still has any items needing a transcript, LCOH—transcripts are created but not yet deployed). We have contributed accessibility updates to Digital Collections, Inside Idaho, LibGuides, and Pressbooks (particularly fixing color contrasts and improving alt text).
- CDIL lab (Kevin) contributed important work on custom digitization requests that support research on campus and beyond. These often involved obsolete formats (VHS, reel-to-reel), consulting on process, and quick turn arounds. 7 request projects were recorded for this period.
- DSOS members have been involved in exploring possibilities for IR, OA/OER, and data reporting in VERSO. They have helped develop policies and transferred data for Ag Extension publications and ETD.

- **Spring updates:**

- DSOS supported the creation of 6 new digital collections, moving 4 through the collection launch process (to ensure communication to the public and internal audiences). Completed maintenance for regularly updated archive projects such as McClure Center Archive and Friday Letter, and outreach projects such as Digital Library of Idaho. Restarted [IWDL](#) in collaboration with IWRRI with major redesign and new data.
- Significant work was done on refining metadata and fixing consistency issues (which were easier to detect due to the work done on prepping data for the Search app). Location fields were normalized across dozens of collections to improve discoverability and usefulness of the data.
- CDIL lab has worked with students to integrate AI summarization with human review to speed up metadata creation for large PDF collections.
- DSOS members and students have worked to enhance existing oral history transcripts with better copyediting and work on Spanish language materials.
- DSOS members worked on policy and workflow for creating DOIs for published digital scholarship and Pressbooks projects.
- Continued development of Search app, refined workflow for ingest, and started establishing new self-managed hosting servers.

- Consulted and helped with web migration and archiving for people impacted by main University web hosting changes. This has led to some new collection content such as [Michigan Nitrogen Gradient Study](#).
- Migrated Library files and content off old webpages server to new locations (due to IT hosting changes).

Provide collaborative opportunities for learning and project development (e.g. fellowships programs and collaborative digital scholarship projects) that impact campus research and teaching.

- Why:
 - The Library's unique resources and expertise can directly impact scholarship on campus by opening new research and learning opportunities. This includes developing OER to impact costs and empower instructors, and developing digital methods that enable unique research and communication.
- How:
 - Facilitate Think Open Fellowships.
 - Facilitate CDIL Digital Scholarship student and faculty fellowships.
 - Maintain, develop, and improve digital scholarship on campus through CDIL.
 - Organize campus events for fellows to publicly share projects and outcomes.
- What success looks like:
 - Fellowship programs receive competitive applications.
 - Fellows publish their projects, present to audiences at the library, and are promoted online.
 - Publication of 2-3 significant digital scholarship projects.
- **Fall updates:**
 - CDIL fellowships were prepped for applications in Spring. Data about fellowships was gathered to prepare for a more centralized representation of the work and outputs.
 - DSOS/CDIL hosted the [Library Fellowship Showcase](#) in October with three fellows presenting. DSOS members have taken an active role in facilitating the MRIC presentations move into the Library (including weekly work from Kevin to assemble and deploy an A/V setup).
 - DSOS has collaborated on a wide variety of digital scholarship projects with faculty and students. We provided ongoing support to Spec, CDIL, and Think

Open fellows' projects (more than 5 during this period). Outputs published in Fall 2024 include:

- [School of Cello Playing](#), Mirada Wilson (Music, faculty) - translation project with Evan Williamson, published on Pressbooks.
- [Basic Financial Education Curriculum for Students](#), Upal Kundu and Udit Sipani (ASUI, undergraduates) - literacy project with Leesa Love, published on Pressbooks.
- [Aural Skills](#), Miranda Wilson (Music, faculty) - open textbook converted to Pressbooks project for potential reuse.
- [The Cook Undergraduate Research Journal \(CURJ\)](#), with Markie McBrayer and Florian Justwan (Political Science, faculty) - undergraduate research journal project.
- [Donald E. Crabtree Lithic Technology Collection](#), final publishing of long grant funded scholarship project, with significant custom features.
- DSOS members also did significant consultations with researchers across campus, reporting over 12 meetings during the fall semester. We taught over 10 public workshops / class sessions related to our area.
- **Spring updates:**
 - Continued extensive collaboration and consultation around digital scholarship projects, including:
 - [Context Podcast Digital Collection](#), collaborating with Idaho Humanities Council, an archive of podcasts.
 - [Taylor Wilderness Research Station Archive](#), a variety of collaborators from Taylor, Confluence Lab, and CDIL to complete a complex archive of documents, research, artifacts, and oral histories.
 - [Martin Journal](#), collaborating with Martin Institute, migrating from main university website to library hosting, and establishing new journal home page.
 - [Moscow High School Archaeology](#), Massey Jordan and Kat Eichner (Anthropology), public outreach project highlighting work done at MHS and the stories artifacts can tell.
 - [Tender Spaces](#), Alicia Gladman (English), completed CDIL fellowship project featuring oral history braided narrative.
 - Travelers in Egypt, Matthew Strupp and Sarah Ketchley (UofW MLIS), consulted on collection with objects hosted by Internet Archive.
 - [Chinese American Heritage in Idaho](#), Matt Fuerst (Anthropology), resources for Chinese American Heritage in Idaho Teaching Trunk.

- Selected CDIL fellows for 2025. We had 12 complete graduate applications, 4 complete undergrad applications, and 1 faculty development application coming from 9 different programs across campus. Both groups were highly competitive with several truly excellent applications. Applications were reviewed by a committee, and we selected a grad, undergrad, and faculty development fellow who have started work for summer 2025.
- Hosted [CDIL Digital Scholarship Camp](#) for fellows and librarians to collaboratively learn about the web, digital exhibits, and digital scholarship.

Facilitate social and technical infrastructure for open publishing both on campus and worldwide (OAPF, web development, Pressbooks).

- Why:
 - The Library invests in the future of publishing beyond traditional subscription models, supporting and developing alternative open publishing opportunities to increase access to knowledge.
- How:
 - Pressbooks platform and service is promoted, documented, and maintained for campus users.
 - Open Access Publishing Fund is managed to directly support open publishing for U of I researchers.
 - CollectionBuilder and related approaches are developed and promoted for sustainable web projects.
 - Meetings and events are hosted that promote Digital Scholarship and Open scholarship collaboration on campus.
- What success looks like:
 - Use of Pressbooks to create OER and other projects increases.
 - Metrics for OAPF continue to show impact supporting open publishing.
 - CollectionBuilder continues to get engagement beyond campus.
- **Fall updates:**
 - The Pressbooks home was revised to improve presentation and catalog consistency. Leesa has worked on documenting best practices for Pressbook service and growing our capacity to support projects. She has developed Pressbooks templates, covers, draft policies, project management document template, and better data for tracking projects. 2 new Pressbooks projects were published (listed above section), and 2

additional projects created. Additionally, 5 Pressbooks were added to the Library's main catalog and VERSO, and 4 were promoted.

- OAPF continued as normal, closing in period #1 early with high demand. Leesa took over leadership of the program and everything went smoothly.
- CollectionBuilder opened applications for the second round of the LIS Student Program and received over 70 applications from 25 different schools. The CB blog and Slack have seen increased engagement. CB team has collaborated on a number of projects beyond campus, including:
 - Lauren McCormick (grad, Princeton University), Judean Pillar Figurine Exhibit, "Let There Be Light: Recoloring Ancient Artifacts", <https://laurmcco.github.io/judeanpillarfigurineexhibit/>
- **Spring updates:**
 - OAPF period #2 closed as normal, successfully spending out FY25 funding.
 - Several new projects have started in Pressbooks and new contacts expressing interest.
 - CollectionBuilder IMLS grant was terminated, ending funding. However, LIS Student program continued with 12 students (several dropped out after funding cut disruption). CB Digital Librarian Cohort program received 35 quality applications from 34 institutions. After funding was cut, 6 librarians decided to join the cohort without funding. CB team members presented at a conference and taught a week long course at DHSI. Major updates were added to the templates, including a new About page layout and advanced search features on Browse—these features are driven by our digital scholarship projects on campus and are refined for reuse to enhance the public templates. Consulted on a variety of external projects, including Michael Aronson's Historic Theaters project.
 - Established a new Open Journals System instance for hosting journals at domain "journals.lib.uidaho.edu". Initially set up for the [Fire Lookout Journal](#), but will be available for other future projects.

Unit/Team Metrics:

- # of staff/faculty conversant with NDSA standards
 - Fall: 2.
 - Spring: 2.
- Levels of digital preservation report
 - Fall: no.

- Spring: no.
- # of scholarly outputs and digital collections produced, # of Pressbooks projects
 - Fall: 2 Pressbooks published. 2 new Pressbooks projects.
 - Spring:
- Web traffic to publications
- # of communications announcing new digital collections, projects, scholarly outputs, and fellowship opportunities
 - Fall: 6 recorded.
 - Spring:
- # of templates and scholarly outputs reviewed using Lighthouse or other accessibility auditing tools
- # of fellowships and applications
 - Fall: n/a, supported finishing Spec fellow projects.
 - Spring: 12 complete graduate applications, 4 complete undergrad applications, and 1 faculty development application coming from 9 different programs across campus. 3 new fellowships (1 undergrad, 1 grad, 1 faculty development).
- # of public events
 - Fall: 1 showcase, 10 workshops/classes.
 - Spring:

Final Outcomes 2024-25

After significant personnel changes in the previous year, 2024-25 saw DSOS add a new faculty member (Leesa Love filling the newly designed Open Publishing Librarian position) and new staff member (Maryelizabeth Koepele, filling Digital Projects Manager position). Personnel activity was also impacted by the unavoidable extended absence of one of our faculty members. The previous year saw huge change in our digital infrastructure, which also impacted our activities in 2024-25, with new national requirements (accessibility rules update), IT mandated changes (webpages hosting changes and main university web redesign), and Library initiatives (Digital Collections Search app and metadata aggregation). DSOS has flexibly adapted to continue making progress on our objectives while growing internal skills to sustain our projects.

Reflection on 2024-25 objectives:

- *Facilitate access to and preservation of unique collections and scholarly outputs* – the unit made key improvements to better communicate about our collections and make them more discoverable.
 - Improved workflow for launching new collections and recording data about the processes.
 - Rebranding and improved navigation of Digital Collections area of the Library website, clarifying the purpose and scope of the collections.
 - Launch of new Digital Collections Search that centralizes full text search of all digital collection content, and continued development and refinement of the application. Work also included significant enhancement of digital collection metadata to improve the consistency and value of the aggregated data.
 - Accessibility improvements, including text transcripts for all audio and video collection items, to enhance useability for all people.
 - Direct collaboration with others across campus to help develop alternative hosting of unique content impacted by IT mandated changes to hosting on their main website and old webpages server.
 - Although work was done on our digital archive drive (improving documentation, discussion of NDSA standards, exploration of new more extensible hardware to meet growing storage needs), we did not complete a formal assessment following NDSA and will carry that goal forward to next year.
- *Provide collaborative opportunities for learning and project development (e.g. fellowships programs and collaborative digital scholarship projects) that impact campus research and teaching* – the unit did significant collaboration with faculty and students across campus to create and publish unique scholarship and build skills.
 - CDIL published above the targeted number of unique projects with fellows and others on campus, building strong collaborations which led to unique scholarship that is openly shared. The Think Open Fellowship was closed, although work continued on several projects.
 - New publishing opportunities have opened up with Pressbooks and student “journals” hosted with the library.
 - CDIL hosted one successful public presentation event, contributed to workshops, MRIC, and a fellows training event.
- *Facilitate social and technical infrastructure for open publishing both on campus and worldwide* – the unit continues to develop support for open publishing and digital scholarship that impact campus and beyond.

- OAPF continues to see demand and successfully spent out the funding.
- Pressbooks service was improved and has started to gain traction on campus. An OJS instance was started to support potential journal publishing.
- CollectionBuilder continues to have worldwide engagement, while enabling our local digital scholarship projects. The termination of grant funding will limit future travel and outreach opportunities, but will not hamper continuing development.

Challenges and Opportunities for Next Year

The current objectives seem to still embody meaningful goals for DSOS going into 2025-26, with slight tweaks to the specifics listed in “how” sections. Here are some challenges and opportunities that will impact our work next year:

- *Updates to Title II ADA requirements for web accessibility:* new rules which come into effect in 2026 have led to a lot of confusion and challenges in digital libraries. We have already done significant work evaluating and improving digital collections and other resources to meet the requirements. However, further challenges may remain as details of the ruling become clearer. We will need to devote time to evaluating potential issues, reprocessing PDF files, and remediating older areas of our web content.
- *Rethinking Think Open:* with the Open area at full strength, some changes in statewide mandates, and growing capacity with publishing, we have an opportunity to reshape the Think Open Fellowship program and area. We anticipate CDIL making support for open publishing and OER more explicitly part of our “digital scholarship” activities. We hope to build more capacity for open digital publishing in the library with DOIs, communication, and discoverability that can support scholarly communication on campus.
- *Lack of grant funding for CollectionBuilder:* with IMLS and NEH grants being terminated and new funding unlikely to arise, we will have less money to support travel and outreach for CollectionBuilder, and less salary funds paid to the library from contributions to other external grant projects. This will reduce our flexibility and require careful thought about how to allocate limited resources. Faculty may need to explore new alternative funding and networking opportunities.

Membership:

- Evan Peter Williamson (head)
- Kevin Dobbins
- Maryelizabeth Koepele
- Leesa Love
- Marco Seiferle-Valencia
- Andrew Weymouth

Reporting to:

- Associate Dean, Research & Instruction