Module 3:
Data governance: legal and ethical considerations

Decolonising collections

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Digital Collection Curator Training Pilot
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Decolonisation principles and practices for open collections – What? Why? How?

1. Describe an approach – objectives, resources, challenges, outcomes.
2. Materials to be included in the learning resource.
3. How the approach contributes to learning objectives of the module.
4. Recommendations on how to use the materials for teaching.

How the approach contributes to learning objectives of the module?

- Materials and related resources illustrate actions for Digital Collections Curators and their institutions, plus competences required. ..

> "Ability to *establish governance processes* to handle ethical and legal/ regulatory aspects of managing digital open collections in the GLAM sector. This requires *understanding of processes to handle intellectual property rights, deal with personal data, and ensure the responsible reuse of digital objects, including through the decolonisation of collections....*"

What approach – objectives, resources, challenges, outcomes?

Examples involving museums and indigenous communities that demonstrate what decolonisation is, why it is important, how it can be accomplished.

1) DiMuse project aims to repatriate the *Gaidinliu Collection* (UK> India)

Pitt River Museum site:

> “ Gaidinliu (1915-1993), a Zeliangrong Naga, was 16 years old when she instigated an uprising against the British between 1929 and 1932 in the present Indian regions of Assam, Nagaland, and Manipur. When she was captured, the British confiscated her notebooks, body cloths, bracelets and amulets, and other ritual objects. These objects were donated to the Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford, and they are now known as the Gaidinliu collection. ”

What approach – objectives, resources, challenges, outcomes?

Examples involving museums and indigenous communities that demonstrate what decolonisation is, why it is important, and how it can be accomplished.

2) RiddoDuottarMuseat (RDM) consortium of Sámi museums and Art Collection - Guidelines governing 3d image data of objects from museum collections.

> “RDM promotes the use of 3D models according to its mission as a Sámi institution, to safeguard and promote community well-being and culture. Therefore, RDM has developed a data management plan, approved by the RDM Board, that encourage a cautious approach to sharing 3D data of Sámi and other Indigenous cultural heritage, especially when derived from museum collections..”
>
> https://rdm.no/en/international-museum-day-2022/

Materials to be included in the learning resource?

Definitions

- “noun: **decolonisation:** the process of freeing an institution, sphere of activity, etc. from the cultural or social effects of colonization.” https://languages.oup.com/google-dictionary-en/

Guidelines

- Sami Museum Guidelines 3D Data Management and Sharing and Indigenous Cultural Heritage in Museums
- Museums Association UK: “Supporting decolonisation in museums” https://media.museumsassociation.org/app/uploads/2021/11/02155426/Supporting-decolonisation-in-museums.pdf
- ICOM working group https://icom.museum/en/news/advancing-decolonisation-in-museums/

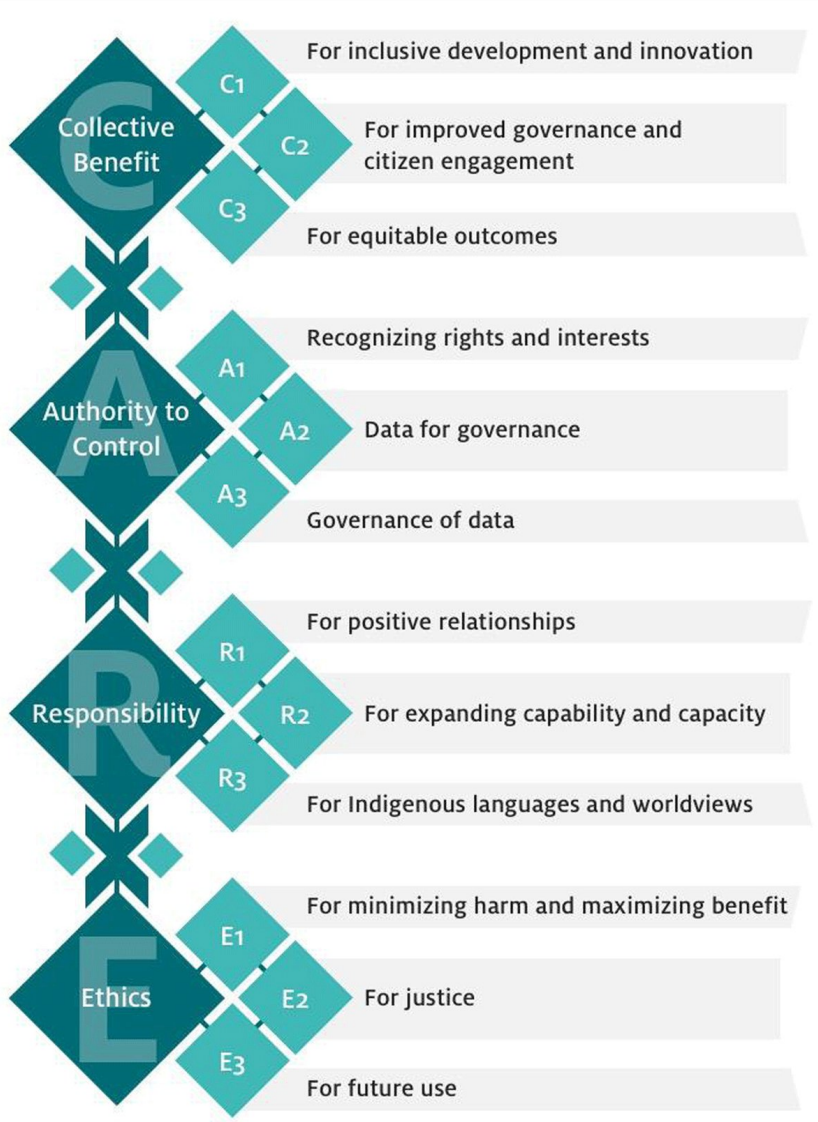
  “ICOM recognises the historical role that museums have played and are still playing in the colonising process and is actively dedicated not only to its own Strategic Plan, but to upholding the relevant International agreements, recommendations and declarations, including the UNESCO 2015 Recommendation on Museums, the UNESCO 2005 Declaration on Cultural Diversity, and the ***UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*.** Through these missions, ICOM aims to contribute to a global forum addressing the challenges and best practices of decolonising museums.”

Materials to be included in the learning resource?

CARE Principles

"...address historical inequities by creating value from Indigenous data in ways that are grounded in Indigenous worldviews and by realizing opportunities for Indigenous Peoples within the knowledge economy."

Carroll et al, 2020



Materials to be included in the learning resource?

Applying the 'CARE Principles for Indigenous Data Governance' to ecology and biodiversity research

Lydia Jennings, Talia Anderson, Andrew Martinez, Rogena Sterling, Dominique David Chavez, Ibrahim Garba, Maui Hudson, Nanibaa' A. Garrison & Stephanie Russo Carrol

"Data often lack critical metadata that record Indigenous provenance; protocols for use, reuse and sharing; and permissions. Most data are mislabelled and lack appropriate identification of Indigenous rights holders. These missing metadata render the data largely unsearchable."

Nature Ecology & Evolution (2023)

https://doi.org/10.1038/s41559-023-02161-2

Table 1 | How institutions and researchers can apply the CARE Principles

CARE Principles	Issues raised by communities	Actions for institutions and researchers
Collective benefit	Research that benefits communities	Prior to research, explain and demonstrate how your research and potential results are relevant and are of value to the interests of the community and individual members; research should support community-led initiatives and secure funding for long-term investments in community.
	Data grounded in community values, aspirations and well-being	Develop and/or use Indigenous data classification and analysis frameworks that reflect community values, needs and aspirations; include and value local community experts in the research team.
	Data for self-determined development	Collect and code using categories that identify Indigenous communities and individuals in ways that they define; disaggregate data, especially in global or large geospatial datasets, to increase relevance for Indigenous communities.
	Compensate local experts	Compensate community experts throughout the research process, including research proposal development, data collection, manuscript writing and community review of prepublication manuscripts.
Authority to control	Recognize Indigenous Peoples' rights to and interests in their knowledges and data	Establish institutional principles or protocols for research development, data management and publication (for example, scholarly works, presentations and datasets) that support Indigenous Data Sovereignty; include metadata fields available for disclosure of Indigenous rights and interests.
	Recognize the rights of Indigenous People to free, prior and informed consent	Ensure data use is consistent with individual and community consent provisions; ensure ongoing consent processes, including the ability to refuse, withdraw and reconsent.
	Data available for Indigenous governance	Ensure Indigenous communities have access to data, metadata about their people, communities and non-human relations in a usable format; return all outputs to the appropriate tribal authorities.
	Develop and enact Indigenous Data Governance protocols	Ensure community control and ownership of data and data protocols; use Indigenous frameworks and principles to inform data management protocols and processes; Indigenous community control of how, what, who and where research is conducted, and stewardship of data; publication standards require documentation of community support, participation and approval for publishing data and authorship.
Responsibility	Enable capability and capacity sharing for research design and digital infrastructure	Create and expand opportunities for community capacity through (1) participatory methodologies including planning and design, knowledge management and data workforce capacity building, and (2) initiatives to enable the design, collection, management, storage, security, governance, collective privacy and application of data.
	Respect reciprocity, trust and mutual understanding with those to whom data relate	Record the Traditional Knowledge and biocultural labels of the Local Contexts Hub in metadata; ensure review of draft publications before dissemination; identify and address sensitive data, including privacy issues for individuals and communities.
	Data-generating resources for languages, worldviews and lived experiences	Use the languages of Indigenous Peoples; affirm community worldviews; upload data with appropriate metadata labels (that is, Traditional Knowledge and biocultural labels, and provenance) in culturally accessible formats (digital storytelling, seasonal calendars, visual art forms and so on).
	Community-defined benefit sharing	Conduct research that is of mutual benefit, consent driven, inclusive and relevant to the needs of Indigenous communities and individuals.
Ethics	Align with Indigenous ethical frameworks	Assess research using Indigenous ethical frameworks; community-defined review processes and appropriate reviewers (for example, community advisory boards) for activities delineated in data management plans.
	Maximize benefits from the perspectives of Indigenous Peoples	Researchers explain benefits to Indigenous communities; identify and contribute to community-defined benefits; disclose potential financial gain and share benefits with communities from research outputs and/or economic value of data.
	Minimize harms from the perspectives of Indigenous Peoples	Use Indigenous ethical frameworks; community-defined code of conduct is accessible; data-access protocols consider the potential for community harm and remedied through sharing data; ensure ongoing consent.
	Data governance accounts for potential future use	Apply community protocols for infrastructure, metadata and secondary use; include Traditional Knowledge and biocultural labels and metadata fields for community and/or tribal affiliation; use community guidelines for the use and reuse of data; allow data removal and/or disposal requests from aggregated datasets; record and recognize provenance.

Materials to be included in the learning resource?

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Q. Are these critical issues for decolonisation not also critical issues for digital preservation?

A. Of course!

Q. So.. Building respectful relations with data producers is essential both for the digital preservation mission and decolonisation?

Back to DiMuse

- Material includes: a graphic novel setting out the rationale for the project and background story to this collection.
- Photographs from workshops with Naga communities in Assam.
- Ethnographic research on significance the objects have for the communities.
- Research into the provenance of items in the collection
- e.g. to learn more about where the patterns in the clothing come from,
- how notebooks and basket were made, how connected with cultural practices of the 1920s-30's period and local ecology.

"How do objects evolve when interpretations and priorities about them alter, and when they affect people in different ways at different times?

Furthermore, how can the project inform international debates about Indigenous traditional knowledge protection and the promotion of Indigenous intellectual property rights?"

https://efi.ed.ac.uk/how-data-is-transforming-the-sharing-of-indigenous-identities-and-histories/

Image: Communities interacting with the Gaidinliu collection, Nagaland, India. Photo credit: Tarun Bhartiya

Recommendations on how to use the materials for teaching?

Suggested activities for learners...

- Discuss the challenges to decolonising collections held by your institution, and the potential benefits to affected communities and to the institution itself.
- Review the range of activities to implement the CARE principles proposed in the Jennings et al paper, select 3 actions they could do something about, and discuss those in groups.
- Consider how a decolonisation programme or project contributes to your own institutions' digital preservation programme, or strategy.
- Consider what could be done to enhance provenance of objects in a collection by working with the communities they relate to, and identify how to involve its members in that.

Questions, comments?

Thank you!

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