

Council of State Archivists

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# Archives Collaborating and Cooperating with External Strategic Stakeholders (ACCESS) Action Plan

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November 20, 2015

## Executive Summary

Archives Collaborating and Cooperating with External Strategic Stakeholders (ACCESS) is a project of the State Electronic Records Initiative (SERI) of the Council of State Archivists (CoSA). The ACCESS project analyzed and assessed outreach and engagement methods to partners, stakeholders, and other organizations with an interest in digital government records and information. This paper is an action plan for CoSA to develop and sustain collaboration with new and existing partners to increase long-term access to digital government records and information.

Strengthening and solidifying relationships is central to CoSA's efforts to help state archives manage, preserve, and provide access to digital government records and information. Effective access necessitates that archivists take an active role early in the life cycle of records creation and engage with groups not traditionally associated with the archival or records management professions.

Access to government records is fundamental to democracy and promotes government integrity and accountability. State government records ensure government transparency; protect the legal, civil, and property rights of citizens; promote historically informed public policy decisions; and preserve essential documentation of government activities, transactions, and the nation's history. With government's increasing reliance on information technology, the challenge to manage, preserve, and provide access to digital government records and information continues to grow.

For the fifty-six state and territorial archives, whose mission is to identify, acquire, manage, preserve, and provide access to public records of enduring value, two concerns are paramount: 1) managing digital government records and information created during the last fifty years and 2) developing proactive strategies, procedures, and tools for ensuring citizen access to their government's digital records and information in the future. State and territorial archives and records management programs face digital preservation challenges including:

- Adopting sound preservation planning practices
- Identifying and implementing appropriate digital preservation tools and services
- Selecting records that warrant long-term preservation
- Automating ingest workflows
- Securing technical infrastructure

- Capturing adequate descriptive and preservation metadata
- Providing consumer-friendly access to users of digital government records and information

**Our digital heritage remains at risk until these challenges are met, as every advance in the technology increases the potential for permanent loss of essential digital records and information.**

State and territorial archives are responsible for preserving digital government records and information of enduring value generated by nearly all government agencies involved in an array of services and functions. Records produced by governments are increasingly complex, interrelated, and voluminous. In a departure from traditional paper recordkeeping practices, state government agencies expect to retain custody of records within their agencies for extended periods of time. This shared custodial model presents further challenges to providing effective access to digital government records and information, requiring collaboration among state and territorial archives, information technology, records managers, records creators, and information consumers.

The Council of State Archives (CoSA) has identified relationships with current partners, allied organizations, and other groups as critical to accomplishing these goals. State and territorial archives and records management programs acknowledge that designated communities and allied organizations are vital in the management, preservation, and access to digital government records and information. Similarly, other government information professionals also recognize that cross-sector collaboration is essential to successful digital records and information management. Critical to the success of these strategies is CoSA's continuing efforts to promote appropriate resource allocation for the long-term management and access of electronic state records.

The CoSA ACCESS action plan details the goals, opportunities, strategies, and metrics for CoSA's ongoing involvement with external stakeholders. This action plan serves as a roadmap for CoSA's work with others around long-term access and preservation of state electronic records.

CoSA has identified opportunities for collaboration with stakeholders that will further its interests in long-term access to electronic records including specific opportunities around:



Awareness  
and advocacy

Thought  
leadership

Standards and  
best practices

This action plan details specific strategies that will help CoSA maximize each of these opportunity areas and help CoSA achieve the following results:

**Advocacy results:** Many communities know CoSA as an organization that provides information, education and advocacy about electronic records management and digital preservation. This becomes the key issue for CoSA as perceived by the broader community.

**Thought leadership results:** CoSA provides critical opportunities for community response to emerging or ongoing digital preservation problem areas. It is important to prioritize issues relevant to the CoSA community to avoid alienating core members.

**Standards and best practices results:** CoSA is considered a critical resource by the archives and preservation community bolstering its reputation and influence. Grant funding would speed the process and ensure early materials were published and disseminated to maximize impact and attention.

By engaging in strategies that promote these results and capitalize on the opportunities CoSA and its stakeholders have identified, CoSA will make strides in accomplishing its goals for the long-term management, preservation, and access of digital government records and information. CoSA's continued and deepening relationships with allied organizations and with cross-sector stakeholders will ensure appropriate resource allocation and attention for this vital work.

## ACCESS Action Plan

### CoSA Mission:

The mission of the Council of State Archivists is to strengthen state and territorial archives in their work to preserve America's historical records.

### CoSA ACCESS Goals:

Partner with allied national organizations and associations so that access to and preservation of electronic records becomes a collective core value of doing business.

Identify and develop a good cross-section of stakeholders. These stakeholders gain a full understanding on issues related to electronic records management and ongoing access. They use this information regularly as well as in their approach to their constituencies – CoSA isn't alone in carrying the message of the importance of long-term access to electronic records.

### CoSA Challenges:

- Limited organizational resources
- Small membership base

### CoSA Opportunities:

Opportunities for collaboration with stakeholders around ***awareness and advocacy*** include:

- Developing a base of support among stakeholders for long-term access to digital government records and information
- Developing and circulating guidelines for how to create digital government records and information that are better able to be preserved
- Aligning advocacy efforts to encourage data to be submitted to the appropriate archives and to increase resources for electronic records management and digital preservation
- Enthusiasm of committed members that can be harnessed to spread critical messages about the importance of long-term access and preservation of digital government records and information

Opportunities to engage as ***thought leaders*** through convening and facilitating a variety of organizations include:

- Use conferences or meetings as opportunities to get focused feedback on materials being prepared to promote digital preservation
- Use conferences or meetings as opportunities to work out how to collaborate on advocacy issues
- Leverage commitment of state archivists and staff to identify and develop opportunities for collaboration and cross-sector advancement of long-term access and preservation challenges

Opportunities around ***standards and best practices*** include:

- Engaging with other organizations that work on standards and best practices to develop guidelines around format types relative to their expertise
- Using convening sessions and advocacy strengths to carry the standards and best practices out to the larger CoSA stakeholder and archives community
- Develop archives staff skills to help further practices and standards around long-term access to digital government records and information

## Strategies for Advocacy and Outreach

**Goal:** Many communities know CoSA as an organization that provides information, education and advocacy about electronic records management and digital preservation. This becomes the key issue for CoSA as perceived by the broader community.

**I. Engage with state information technology professionals:** Through advocacy, outreach, and awareness building, CoSA brings stakeholders together with state government information technology professionals, especially state CIOs and their professional association, around electronic records management and digital preservation to address key common issues such as:

- Records management
  - Implementation of proper procedures around state government records and data such as orderly disposition of content
  - Guidelines for access
- Bring long-term access and records management issues forward to intersect with CIO concerns around
  - Emergency management/business continuity
  - Data governance
- Resource allocation
  - More effective allocation of funds for the management of electronic records
  - Determine solutions for how to best allocate resources for long-term access of electronic records
  - Develop agency focus on the whole life cycle of electronic records
- Participate in the systems development planning
  - Long-term access as just another business requirement to be considered in the development in new systems.
  - Participate in functional requirement development of new systems – make sure records management doesn't get missed.
- Approach NASCIO about highlighting fixity and integrity at their annual meeting

*Metrics for engagement with state information technology professionals:*

- CoSA will support direct engagement with 1-3 state information technology professionals and their agencies
- Production of a model or example of successful incorporation of records management issues in the development of systems
- Engagement with NASCIO around these issues
- Participation in NASCIO's annual conference around these issues
- Approach NASCIO about briefs and publications – co-brand publications that have interest in the CIO community (example NASIO Issue Briefs).
- Participation in NASCIO work groups, committees, or other opportunities for collaboration between Archives and CIO groups. Aim: 2-5 committees or participation opportunities.

**II. Engage Creators**

- Develop one-page guidance documents for content creating organizations about low-impact ways to create content that is of higher archival quality.
- Distribute guidance documents to content creating organizations.
- Promote the review electronic records lifecycle with staff at content creating organizations to remind them of the key issues and encourage continued interest from them.

*Metrics for engaging creators:*

- Content creating organizations feature more prominently in the CoSA stakeholder organization list
- Content creating organizations seek information from CoSA and from their state archives

**III. Promote communication**

- Develop and encourage electronic records proposals, participation, conferences and meetings
- Get the word out about electronic records issues by encouraging CoSA members to participate in conferences and meetings by presenting
- Offer support to members:
  - Reminders about opportunities for proposals, submissions, and presentations



- Members review one another's proposals and submissions to offer support, refinement, and encouragement

*Metrics for promote communication*

- Track the rate of member participation around CoSA supported electronic records issues at 3-5 key conferences. Determine rate of increase.

**IV. Connect with allied organizations and elected officials**

- Leverage partnerships that CoSA has with NASS and NASCIO to engage more with the National Governors Association
- Outline the challenges faced by the State Archives community by electronic records and their preservation
- Resource allocation – seek more support for long-term access and preservation of digital government records and information
  - More effective allocation of funds for the management of electronic records
  - Determine solutions for how to allocate for long-term access of electronic records

*Metrics for connect with allied organizations and elected officials*

- Write a brief piece to be shared with the NGA and other professional associations (example: The State of State e-Records that communicates the challenges and opportunities faced by the states and territories regarding electronic records)
  - Track interest level from stakeholder organizations in a report
  - Track citations and references to the report
  - Track contacts to CoSA or to CoSA members based on the report and its contents.
  - Consider publishing every 2 years alternating with state survey
- NASS and/or NASCIO support content promoting the care and long-term access of electronic records

**V. Manage and foster partnerships**

- Prioritize relationships such as the ones CoSA has with SAA, NAGARA, and NARA. Encourage and deepen partnerships by developing projects that can be completed with these organizations that support their missions as well as that of CoSA

*Metrics for manage and foster partnerships*

- Track number of follow ups, conversation replies, frequency of contact with the organizations

**VI. Highlight and promote individual state electronic records programs**

- Collect information on the work and advancements of state electronic records programs
- Promote the work via the CoSA newsletter, specifically timed Twitter campaigns, and inclusion in conference presentations
- Create an annual award that recognizes outstanding work by state electronic records programs
- Share individual state work and advancements with:
  - All states and territories to promote recognition and replicable results
  - CoSA key partners and stakeholders to promote awareness of advances

*Metrics for highlighting and promoting individual state electronic records programs*

- Determine how frequently individual state work, accomplishments, and advancements are shared. Keep a record of publications, events, and presentations in or at which state work and advancements are featured.
- Report this number back to the CoSA members to increase awareness

**VII. Develop and promote Social Media**

- Develop campaigns around specific events, dates and products around electronic records encouraging archives, archivists, and stakeholders to get a specific message out
  - Develop drafts of the message to be sent to all potential participants. Encourage customization of the message by participants
- Follow the interests of the SERI working group and guidance of contributors to determine which additional electronic records awareness materials should be developed

*Metrics for develop and promote social media*

- Track tweets and hashtag usage over the course of a year. Analyze number of tweets, retweets, and hashtag use prior to launch of campaigns and post campaigns
  - Example: one way to continue to enhance and promote Electronic Records Day (10.10.XX)
- Goal:
  - 10% increase of tweets around campaigns
  - 20% increase of CoSA related hashtags
- Develop 1-2 awareness focused materials per year
- Distribute these materials to all CoSA members as well as to relevant content creators, CoSA partners, stakeholder organizations and others via social media and other mechanisms

## Strategies for Thought Leadership

**Goal:** CoSA provides critical opportunities for community response to emerging or ongoing digital preservation problem areas. It is important to prioritize issues relevant to the CoSA community to avoid alienating core members.

**I. Galvanize external stakeholder groups:** CoSA acts as a thought leader among external stakeholder groups around new and emerging issues relating to long-term access to electronic state government information. CoSA finds commonalities with other external stakeholder and publishes recommendations around those areas.

- Issue reports, case studies, and/or recommendations to the CoSA community and to the broader stakeholder community
- Facilitate connections across boundaries, engaging groups that do not necessarily already connect with one another
- Pursue grant funding to enhance role as critical convener and/or facilitator in the areas of access to and preservation of electronic information. Work with funders to determine areas of mutual interest to pursue

*Metrics for galvanizing external stakeholder groups:*

- Engagement with stakeholder community to determine cross-sector interest and issues
- Production of 1-3 documents that address cross-sector interest and issues around the long-term access of electronic government records
- Dissemination of documents to broadest stakeholder community group possible
- Add questions to existing surveys to determine which documents are of the greatest interest and are most useful to the CoSA audience. Use this information to refine future document development

**II. Catalyze communication and sharing among the states and territories**

- Establish a mechanism for states and territories to share work informally
- Develop opportunities for states and territories to communicate about incremental progress and developing work
- Develop online meeting place for states to participate in online collaborations/meet ups around specific issues related to long-term access of state electronic records. Schedule regular meet ups. Use the meet ups to develop, produce, or refine documents that support the work of the states.

*Metrics for catalyzing communication and sharing among the states and territories*

- Increase of sharing between states and territories

- Increased number of states and territories communicating with one another via conference call, webinar, listserv, or email
- Increased number of states and territories participating in informal sharing sessions

### **III. Develop a framework for improvement of long-term access and preservation of state electronic records**

- Develop a framework for various levels of improvement specifically for providing long-term access and preservation of state electronic records
- Consider as a model the National Digital Stewardship Alliances' levels of preservation which could be customized for state use

#### *Metrics for developing a framework for improvement of long-term access and preservation of state electronic records*

- Produce and distribute a framework
- Collect statistics on use of the framework by state and territory archives

## Strategies for Standards and Best Practices

**Goal:** CoSA is considered a critical resource by the archives and preservation community bolstering its reputation and influence. Grant funding would speed the process and ensure early materials were published and disseminated to maximize impact and attention.

### I. **Develop Documents** such as:

- Templates
- Examples
- Sample policies (or working policies that states are willing to share either with state identification or anonymously)
- Sample records schedules that apply to traditional and electronic records
- Sample survey language
- Guidelines on how surveys have been handled and how to manage ongoing or repeating surveys.

#### *Metrics for developing documents:*

- Produces 1-3 standards, best practices, guidelines, or other sample documents that relate to the CoSA community, its stakeholders, and others

### II. **Publish Documents** via

- PERTTS portal
- Co-branded publications with external stakeholder partners and participants, examples:
  - NASCIO
  - NASS
  - NAGARA

#### *Metrics for publishing documents:*

- Publish all developed standards, best practices, guidelines, or other documents that relate to the CoSA community, its stakeholders, and others.
- Produce 1-2 co-branded publications with most influential partners
- Build an online resource of published material at the CoSA website
- Track interest level from stakeholder organizations in documents
- Track citations and references to documents
- Track contacts to CoSA or to CoSA members based on documents

### III. Disseminate Documents

- Broadly disseminate all standards, best practices, and guidelines documents to the widest audience possible.

#### *Metrics for Disseminating Documents:*

- Circulating and providing documents to individual agencies or departments
- Track adoption, pickup, or use rates of the information presented in the documents. Focus on links, hits, citations, etc.
- Document number of instances in which states, agencies, or other stakeholders customize CoSA standards, best practices, or other documents for their own use. Optimal metric is for between 1-4 customized.

### IV. Engage committees and interest groups

- Engage existing committees and interest groups in generating materials that can be refined or transformed into standards, best practices, policies, and case studies documents.

#### *Metrics for engaging committees and interest groups*

- Galvanize committee interest
- Develop 4-6 ideas for materials that could be developed into standards, best practices, policies, or case study documents
- Work closely with committees and interest groups to transform these ideas into 1-2 finished standards, best practices, policies, or case study documents

### V. Mentoring Program

- Develop a mentoring program among the states and territories to aid institutions needing additional assistance to move their electronic records program forward
- Collaborate with Library Studies and Information graduate school programs
  - Make sure government archives and electronic records needs are adequately represented

#### *Metrics for a mentoring program*

- Create mentoring opportunities to meet the ongoing and changing needs of the field
- Contact 1-2 graduate school programs each year to offer mentoring opportunities

**VI. PERTTS Portal Review and Enhancement**

- Establish and implement a peer review of PERTTS resources and continue to enhance the PERTTS Portal

*Metrics for PERTTS Portal review and enhancement*

- Determine number of resources that have been peer reviewed.
- Determine rate of increase for resources that have been peer reviewed.

**VII. Governance Models and Standards**

- Create and distribute governance models and standards to assist CoSA members in navigating government information management decision-making processes and identify appropriate archives participation

*Metrics for governance models and standards*

- CoSA members demonstrate an increased understanding of how to engage with the key organizations in their state
- State organizations increase appropriate engagement with archives around long-term access of electronic records and their lifecycle management.



## Appendix I. Proposed Connections Between CoSA and Stakeholder Organizations

### **Partnership:**

Active engagement with the agency/organization. CoSA is a contributor to the partnership and the partner organization has equal or nearly equal sway in making decisions and executing goals. Partners are carefully chosen so as not to distract from the core audience that CoSA needs to serve. Partners are decision makers in our hierarchy – not influencers.

1. Chief Officers of State Library Agencies
2. National Archives and Records Administration
3. National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS)
4. National Association of State Chief Information Officers
5. National Association of State Technology Directors

### **Participation:**

CoSA engages these organizations in specific goals that CoSA is pursuing -- garners small contributions from these organizations in service of a larger goal that serves CoSA's strategic plan. Attempts to capitalize on existing strong relationships, strong interest on the part of the stakeholder organization, or other correlations that increase the likelihood of success in participation.

1. American Society of Access Professionals
2. Amigos Library Services
3. Ancestry
4. Council of State Governments
5. FamilySearch
6. Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS)
7. National Association of Government Archives and Records Administrators (NAGARA)
8. National Association of Appellate Court Clerks
9. National Association of Attorneys General
10. National Association of State Auditors, Comptrollers & Treasurers
11. National Association of State Budget Officers (NASBO)
12. National Association of Public Health Statistics and Information Systems (NAPHSIS)
13. National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers
14. National Council of State Legislatures
15. National League of Cities
16. National Governors Association
17. National Historical Publications and Records Commission
18. Society of American Archivists (SAA)
19. Sunlight Foundation

**Consultation:**

These organizations are encouraged to provide feedback on materials produced by CoSA, invited to attend the yearly Briefing, and provide important insight and suggestions to CoSA.

1. American Association for State and Local History (AASLH)
2. American Association of Law Libraries (AALL)
3. American Library Association (ALA)
4. American Public Human Services Association
5. ARMA International
6. Center for Research Libraries (CRL)
7. Center for Technology in Government
8. Coalition for Networked Information (CNI)
9. Council of Library and Information Resources
10. Digital Preservation Coalition (DPC)
11. Digital Public Library of America (DPLA)
12. EDRM
13. Educopia
14. Electronic Frontier Foundation
15. Internet Archive
16. Legal Information Preservation Alliance
17. Library of Congress
18. MA Board of Library Commissioners
19. Mellon Foundation
20. National Association of Counties (NACo)
21. National Coalition for History
22. National Council for History Education
23. National Digital Stewardship Alliance (NDSA)
24. National Press Photographers Association (NPPA)
25. Open Government Partnership, U.S. Department of State
26. Roy Rosenzweig Center for History and New Media, George Mason University
27. Sedona Conference
28. Tessella (Preservica)

***Push/Pull:***

These organizations are kept in the loop about CoSA and the work it is doing via the newsletter, emails, the CoSA website and other strategic communication practices. They are invited to attend the annual Briefing.

1. AIIM (Association for Information and Image Management)
2. American Alliance of Museums
3. American Bar Association
4. American Historical Association
5. Association for Library and Information Science Education (ALISE)
6. Conference of State Court Administrators
7. Federal Library and Information Network (FEDLINK)
8. Governance Lab @ NYU
9. Government Printing Office (GPO)
10. International Association of County Recorders, Election Officials, and Treasurers (IACREOT)
11. International City/County Management Association
12. International Institute of Municipal Clerks
13. iSchools
14. Knight Foundation
15. Lyris
16. Microsoft
17. National Council for the Social Studies
18. National Council on Public History
19. National Endowment for the Humanities
20. National Genealogical Society
21. National Science Foundation
22. National Security Archive
23. OCLC
24. Open Knowledge Foundation
25. Organization of American Historians
26. Property Records Industry Association (PRIA)
27. Society of Professional Journalists
28. Supercomputing Center University of California, San Diego

## Appendix II. Communication Plan for Stakeholder Organizations

### **Partnership:**

Active engagement with the agency/organization. CoSA is a contributor to the partnership and the partner organization has equal or nearly equal sway in making decisions and executing goals. Partners are carefully chosen so as not to distract from the core audience that CoSA needs to serve. Partners are decision makers in our hierarchy – not influencers.

Partner organizations are engaged in the planning, defining, and producing phases of work as well as in review and revision. Contacts at these organizations are sent:

- Planned topics to address for feedback and suggestions (i.e. “are these the right topics?”)
- Outlines for new products for comment and revision
- Drafted materials for review and revision
- Structured materials for general feedback (i.e. “this is the topic we are addressing, are these the right issues to raise?”)
- Structured, clearly defined requests for assistance in areas of the contact’s expertise
- Specific, clearly defined questions and requests for feedback about materials CoSA is producing. Note: these requests should be tailored to the interests of the contact and the stakeholder organization. (i.e. “would your audience be interested in these materials? Is there language we could use that would help this message better resonate with your audience?”)
- Invitations to the annual CoSA Briefing
- The CoSA newsletter
- Copies of final reports, whitepapers, articles, or other finished documents

### **Participation:**

CoSA engages these organizations in specific goals that CoSA is pursuing -- garners small contributions from these organizations in service of a larger goal that serves CoSA's strategic plan. Attempts to capitalize on existing strong relationships, strong interest on the part of the stakeholder organization, or other correlations that increase the likelihood of success in participation.

CoSA pursues active participation from contacts within these stakeholder organizations. Contacts are sent:

- Structured materials for general feedback (i.e. “this is the topic we are addressing, are these the right issues to raise?”)
- Structured, clearly defined requests for assistance in areas of the contacts expertise
- Specific, clearly defined questions and requests for feedback about materials CoSA is producing. Note: these requests should be tailored to the interests of the contact and the stakeholder organization.

(i.e. “would your audience be interested in these materials? Is there language we could use that would help this message better resonate with your audience?”)

- Invitations to the annual CoSA Briefing
- The CoSA newsletter
- Copies of final reports, whitepapers, articles, or other finished documents

***Consultation:***

These organizations are encouraged to provide feedback on materials produced by CoSA, attend the yearly Briefing, and provide important insight and suggestions to CoSA.

CoSA requests feedback from its contacts at these organizations about materials that it is drafting or finalizing. Contacts are sent:

- Specific, clearly defined questions and requests for feedback about materials CoSA is producing. Note: these requests should be tailored to the interests of the contact and the stakeholder organization. (i.e. “would your audience be interested in these materials? Is there language we could use that would help this message better resonate with your audience?”)
- Invitations to the annual CoSA Briefing
- The CoSA newsletter
- Copies of final reports, whitepapers, articles, or other finished documents

***Push/Pull:***

These organizations are kept in the loop about CoSA and the work it is doing via the newsletter, emails, the CoSA website and other strategic communication practices.

CoSA distributes communication to each of its contacts at these organizations. These contacts are sent:

- Invitations to the annual CoSA Briefing
- The CoSA newsletter
- Copies of final reports, whitepapers, articles, or other finished documents