

The Role of Trustworthy Digital Repositories in Sustainability

David Giaretta, Giaretta Associates

Can all repositories be trusted to keep their holdings usable over the long-term? Will any of them be funded forever? Trustworthy Digital Repositories are part of a chain of preservation which begins with the creation of the data and proceeds to the handover to the next in the chain. A necessary but not sufficient condition is that the appropriate “metadata” be collected at each stage.

How can repositories be independently evaluated, what is the role preservation plays in interoperability and sustainability, and what metadata must be collected at which stage?

In brief, preservation requires ensuring continued usability/ understandability, first by those intimately connected to the creation of the data and eventually probably by those who know nothing about its origin or even the specific discipline. How can this be achieved?

This presentation outlines the concepts and processes which are needed to ensure this is possible and how to judge whether it is being done correctly. It will briefly describe how to justify preservation, how to help with interoperability here and now – as an integral part of the chain of preservation – and how to be confident that a repository can play its part in preserving the information.