

CLIC

COMMUNITY-LED IMAGE COLLECTIONS

IMAGE COLLECTION PROVIDER SURVEY

CLIC PROJECT

The Community-Led Image Collection (CLIC) scoping study, funded by the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC), reviewed current community image collection activity from a national cross-subject perspective and related this activity to the needs of users, and made recommendations on how to provide better access to high-quality educational image material. We surveyed the socio-cultural, political and institutional barriers that owners of community-led image collections face when building image resources.

IMAGE COLLECTION PROVIDER SURVEY

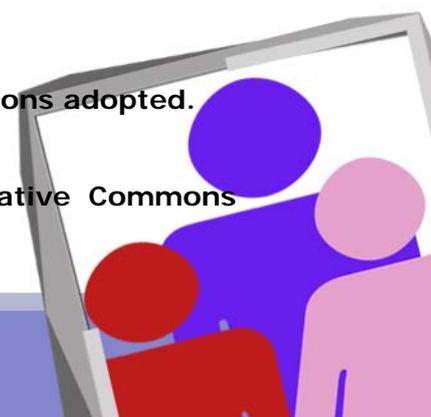
In liaison with the Technical Advisory Service for Images (TASI) a survey of 49 themed questions was delivered to as many as possible of the 500 community-based image projects identified by the project.

The survey investigated the attitudes of image collection providers to the obstacles and hurdles that they face in collection building, and any needs that could be met by national initiatives.

The survey also asked questions about the access and rights that govern the use of their material, and the attitudes of collection owners to sharing their material with educational users. In January 2006, 81 image providers completed the online and paper based survey.

The survey gathered the following data:

- **The intended audience of the repository, and the actual audience.**
- **The rate of growth of the repository, its perceived lifetime, and the size of its audience.**
- **Community-nurturing features such as commenting, forums, user additions.**
- **Access restrictions and rights management.**
- **Content monitoring and content quality.**
- **Obstacles faced during setup, and the technical solutions adopted.**
- **Needs that could be met by national initiatives.**
- **Mapping of attitudes to sharing material with Creative Commons licences.**



RESEARCH QUESTIONS

What are the key barriers to growth, and what are the technical support needs that could be addressed centrally?

The major hurdle in collection building was lack of time (56%), next was insufficient funding (54%), and then lack of technical knowledge. Technical support (46%), marketing (42%) and search facilities (41%) were identified as helpful services that could be provided nationally.

The response suggests support for a directory of collections held nationally to promote discovery, or for a portal that allows cross-searching.

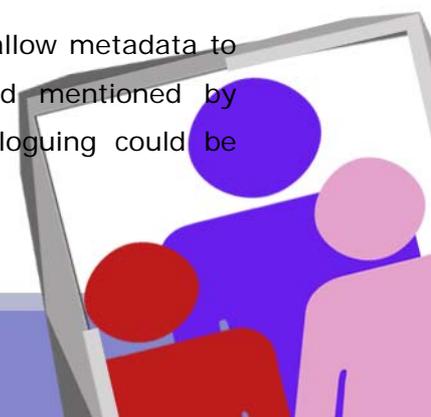
Most image collections highlighted specific technical expertise issues that inhibited the future growth of the collection or that hindered the continual management of the collection. It was observed that the original development team was often disbanded once the collection infrastructure had been completed, usually coinciding with the end of the initial funding for the project. A number of the providers had received money from digitization schemes such as the heritage based National Opportunities for Funding (NOF) which have now ended. Furthermore, there was usually no individual dedicated solely to the management of the collection, and that the primary contributor to the collection was also responsible for its overall management.

What missing technical infrastructure needs could be solved by a national CLIC network or service?

Respondents to our survey were cautious about how any of the proposed three centralised services could affect them, expressing the fear that a centralised system would lead to marginalisation of smaller collections. The majority of respondents support a central directory (84%) or a service containing metadata from image collections (76%) rather than direct donation of images to a centralised collection (31%), and are generally supportive of any moves that might help publicise their collections or support long-term funding and technical support.

What metadata exists locally that could be exposed to a national service (portal or directory)?

Most image providers did not have sophisticated systems that would allow metadata to be easily harvested or exported. The common metadata standard mentioned by providers was Dublin Core; commonly that their own internal cataloguing could be mapped to the Dublin Core standard.



RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Is the collection part of a community? Is there a demand for sharing material?

Nearly all the collections surveyed are part of a community (subject/research areas through to general public interest). Historical and Political subjects received considerably coverage (commonly through digitisation of museum and heritage image collections); many collections catered to Creative Arts and Design; and Mathematics, Business and Finance received the least coverage. Providers often selected multiple subject areas to which they felt their image collection was of value. The majority of the providers accepted donations from people with material relevant to the collection, with some actively seeking out material: 62% had contributions from people outside the immediate organisation. Surprisingly few collections allowed viewers to annotate the material online.

The image collections covered the entire range of disciplines covered by the JACS subject coding:

- Historical, Archaeology and Philosophical studies: 63%
- Creative Arts, Music, Cinema and Design: 56%
- Social studies, Politics, Human/Social Geography: 51%
- Education: 37%
- Architecture, Building and Planning: 37%

What are the collection owners' attitudes to sharing and allowing open access for educational use?

The majority of collections were open access web collections that allowed an unregistered guest to view the thumbnail image and the associated higher quality image. Most collections were happy for the images to be used for individual research, or by an individual for educational purposes. However, most respondents felt that sharing images more widely would result in unauthorised commercial reuse, publication without recompense and loss of copyright control.

83% of the collections were open access web based systems and 91% cited their collection as of interest to the general public, therefore suggesting that most collections surveyed are arranged for a general educated audience.



TYPICAL COMMUNITY-LED IMAGE COLLECTION

- Built as a bespoke system running on a dedicated in-house server providing open access via the web.
- Contains over 1,000 images and expects to grow to contain 10,000 images within 2 years.
- Not targeted specifically at education, though it has a policy on the educational use of images.
- Provides information about items in its collection as Dublin Core metadata, if it provides metadata at all.
- Would expect attribution of the collection as the source of any material reused.
- Wants to maintain copyright over the images in its collection.
- Would expect payment for high quality printing or commercial reuse of its images.
- Does not watermark its images, though it states its ownership of the images on the site.
- Considers time, money, and technical knowledge to be the greatest barriers to future development of the collection.
- Would like technical support and marketing assistance from a centralised service.

For further information about this project, including links to image resources, visit the CLIC website: <http://clic.oucs.ox.ac.uk/>

